

Biblical references in c.s. lewis' the chronicles of narnia essay sample

[Religion](#), [Bible](#)



The first installment in The Chronicles of Narnia by C. S. Lewis, entitled “ The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe,” has several biblical references. It contains themes inspired by the concepts of good and evil, temptation, death, betrayal, resurrection, and redemption. These themes are presented in the book by showing counterparts in the bible as a Christian allegory. In his book, Lewis used symbolism and adopted biblical ideas from the Old Testament by using various characters and events from the bible.

As soon as the story began, Lewis used several symbolisms which depict Christian allegories. One of these includes the manor where the main characters (Peter, Lucy, Edmund, and Susan) were sent by their parents in the midst of World War II . In the manor, the children find a magical wardrobe, which is actually a doorway into an alternate world called Narnia. “ The manor can be considered as the symbolism of the church, while the wardrobe symbolizes the bible. The four children also have counterparts in the Holy Bible.

The eldest among the four, Peter (who becomes the High King later in the story) is the representation of Peter the apostle. On the other hand, the women who saw Aslan’s lifeless body, Susan and Lucy, represent Mary and Martha who were the last people to see Jesus on the cross and are the faithful followers of Christ. Lucy could also be a representation of St John the Beloved, one of Jesus’ most dedicated followers. Edmund is the analogy of Saul who is the first persecutor of the first Christians, and later becomes the great missionary Paul” (Hammond).

“ The gifts of the Holy Spirit are similar to the gifts received by the children in the story. The sword and the shield received by Peter could be the representation of the Sword of the Spirit or the Word of God. Thus, armed with faith, power and courage, Peter leads the battle with the White Witch. Susan acquires a horn to mobilize help in times of needs. She also receives a bow and arrows. This can be considered as the counterpart of the ministry of prayer, which also includes the imprecatory prayer. This is a powerful prayer used to ask for the Lord’s assistance in times of distress from the wicked” (Hammond).

Another character who has a counterpart in the Holy Bible is Aslan. As the leader of the kingdom of Narnia, Aslan can be compared to Jesus Christ. There are many similarities in the character of Aslan and Jesus Christ. The noble and mighty lion Aslan is considered as the epitome of goodness in the story. Similarly, Jesus embodies purity, holiness, and goodness.

Both sacrificed their lives in place of a person or people who deserved to be punished. Jesus died on the cross to save humankind from their sins. Likewise, Aslan saved Edmund, even though the latter was a traitor. “ While Jesus died on the cross, Aslan died on the stone table which represents the veil of the temple splitting when Jesus died. Lewis also retold the story of the death and resurrection of Jesus in the context of Aslan and Narnia” (Brennan).

God loves all people in the same way that Aslan cared for Edmund in the book. God seeks a spiritual relationship with each person individually.

Humility, compassion, and putting the welfare of others ahead of self are important Christian virtues. Christians regard Jesus as the ultimate example of self-sacrifice." Jesus became the " propitiation" for human sin when He allowed himself to be crucified" (Smith). Similarly, by sacrificing himself, Aslan was able to save Edmund.

If Lewis depicted Jesus in his book through the character of Aslan, he also created a character that represents Satan: Queen Jadis or The White Witch. However, she may not be an exact representation of Satan, as the imagery that surrounds her does not quite fit that of the devil himself. Perhaps, she is a servant of Satan and an overlord of Narnia who acts as its special patron demon. " The Witch claims the lives of all Narnians who sin irrevocably, an allusion to Satan's claim of the souls of such sinners" (Hourihan).

Through the character of the White Witch, evil has entered Narnia. " She has an antagonistic aura that wishes to destroy and take Aslan's life by an iron bar. She raised her arm and flung the iron bar straight at its head" (Lewis 99). As the story progressed, it was proven that she really demonstrated evil upon entering Narnia. " There is an evil witch abroad in my new land of Narnia," said the might lion Aslan, pertaining to the White Witch (Lewis 125).

The setting itself seems to have a biblical references as well. The alternate world of Narnia could very well be the counterpart of the Garden of Eden, despite the existence of talking animals and mythical creatures such as giants and centaurs in Narnia. Although both places seem like a paradise, evil lurks in somewhere as it lures the beings into darkness. As mentioned

earlier, the White Witch, who is epitome of the darkness in the book, represents Satan. While the White Witch lives in the shadows of Narnia, Satan exists in the form of a serpent tempting Eve to disobey God's command.

There were also certain events in the book which may be based from the Bible. These events demonstrate the contest between good and evil. They also show that giving in to temptation only leads to misery. For instance, when Edmund condescended to serve the White Witch, the terrible fate of those who give in to gluttony was presented (Hourihan). Hourihan writes:

This began during his frantic consumption of the magic Turkish Delight. Since this is enchanted Turkish Delight, Edmund cannot be held accountable for his gluttony as if he were overindulging in ordinary candy. The real sin occurs when Edmund allows himself to fixate on the Turkish Delight long after he leaves the Witch.

The consumption of Turkish Delight by Edmund is the counterpart of the sin of Adam and Eve when they ate from the Tree of Knowledge. Just like Adam and Eve, Edmund also committed a sin of consuming a forbidden food and should be punished accordingly. Edmund is a traitor in the story. " His life is forfeit to the White Witch, just as any sinner's life is forfeit to Satan after death without the intervention of God" (Hourihan).

The gluttonous behavior of Edmund is like the approach of Adam when he allowed himself to be tempted by the serpent to eat the forbidden fruit. He was also tempted to gain power to become a prince when the witch offered

her the opportunity to become one by eating the Turkish Delight. This can also be related to the bible when Jesus was tempted by Satan in the desert. Satan, like the Witch, tempts Jesus with power in exchange for service: " The devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. " All this I will give you," he said, " if you bow down and worship me." (Matt 4: 8-9).

Edmund can also be considered as the counterpart of Judas who betrays his friend. However, just like Jesus, Aslan forgave him easily. Guilty of his deed, Edmund's life was bound to be condemned forever. However, Aslan found a way to save him and make good triumph over evil by sacrificing himself. Aslan gave up his life the way Jesus gave his life to save the sins of the world. " Through Aslan's sacrifice, Edmund was redeemed from the clutches of the White Witch and is allowed to live. Likewise, through the death of Jesus, the original sin of Adam was washed away. As a result, the souls of the dead may be permitted to live in heaven when the Judgment Day arrives" (Hourihan). This turn of events may be a reflection of Lewis' interpretation of the Christian faith.

Indeed, The Chronicles of Narnia is a remarkable story which teaches the readers to have courage, love, and faith. It also reminds the readers that the greed will not bring good to anyone. Thus, one must be content with the blessing he or she received and believe in his or her own power to overcome the challenges in life.

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