

AN EPIC JOURNEY FROM CREATION TO DESTRUCTION

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ABSTRACT

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For the past three decades, critics have argued about the allegorical features of C. S. Lewis's Chronicles of Narnia. The premise of this thesis expands the concept that, rather than allegory, Lewis writes supposals--inventions giving imaginary answers to questions that help to reify Christ and his teaching for his readers, both young and old. Lewis creates a microcosm in his fantasy world of Narnia where supposals closely resemble the Christian history of this world. The events unlayered chronologically form an archetypal epic journey from stasis to chaos, the quest from creation to apocalypse, and represent the journey of everyman, for the journey we have taken in fiction is the one mankind has taken throughout his existence.

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CHAPTER I

THE JOURNEY'S BEGINNING

Much speculation has come from literary critics over the past three or four decades about C. S. Lewis's purpose and meaning in The Chronicles of Narnia. Some critics refuse to accept Lewis's statement that the Chronicles were never to serve as biblical allegory. Indeed this critical position merits further investigation because readers question why an established author of Christian apology and a professor of Medieval and Renaissance literature would write seven children's novels. It does seem remote that one of the great Christian apologist of the first half of the twentieth century would have written these narratives with so many biblical parallels by accident; nonetheless, they are not allegory--characters and events in Narnia do not truly represent anything.

Even though the novels are not strictly allegorical, an informed reader cannot help but note that many biblical recastings exist in these narratives. The reason according to Walter Hooper why so many critics have differed with Lewis concerning the term allegory stems from a discrepancy in linguistics. Lewis uses the ancient definition of the

term where allegory means the use of something real and tangible to stand for that which is real but intangible (Schakel 110). Rather than personifying, Lewis reifies abstract ideas such as love and honesty. To construct his narrative, he writes what he calls "supposals" or inventions giving imaginary answers to questions. For example, Aslan, the talking Lion of Narnia, reifies, through Lewis's supposal, "What might Christ become like, if there really were a world like Narnia and He chose to be incarnate and die and rise again in that world as He actually has done in ours?" (W. H. Lewis 283).

This thesis will not dispute Lewis's claim that he did not write allegory, yet it will explore through the realm of fantasy the dominant biblical supposals that are so obvious in the seven-volume series entitled The Chronicles of Narnia. Steeped in the lore of mythology and the classics, Lewis chooses fantasy as the genre he prefers in his essay "Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say What's Best to Be Said" that concludes "most great fantasy is addressed to everyone" (3).

Fantasy serves Lewis as "the genre best suited for what he wanted to say" about mankind, life, and good and evil (Sammons 25). Fantasy intrigues many people, and more importantly, it also allows for Lewis's theory that "no

book is really worth reading at the age of ten which is not equally (and often far more) worth reading at the age of fifty . . ." ("Sometimes" 3). G. K. Chesterton additionally argues in "The Ethics of Elfland" that "it is really adults who need fairy tales, not children, for children still have a sense of awe and wonder at the world simply as it is" (qtd. in Sammons 26-27).

J. R. R. Tolkien, who establishes criteria for fantasy in the essay "On Fairy Stories," maintains that an author is a subcreator when he creates a fantasy world. One major aim in fantasy is to communicate with other living beings. Many of the "creatures in Narnia seem to come straight from the pages of classical mythology" (Sammons 51), for aside from the anthropomorphic animals that inhabit this land, so too do giants, centaurs, unicorns, dragons, and dwarfs. They live in a land of castles, caves, and magic gardens. Sammons believes that "Narnia grows out of Lewis's intriguing idea that what is myth and legend in our world may be factual in another" (48) and "that the presence of beings other than humans who behave humanly . . . is a central element to all fairy tales" (102).

In "On Three Ways of Writing for Children," Lewis defends his choice of the genre of fairy tale saying that we would give children a false impression of the world if

we withheld from them the knowledge that they were "born into a world of death, violence, wounds, adventure, heroism and cowardice, good and evil" (Of Other Wrolds 31). Perhaps by experiencing evil in Narnia, learning to recognize it, and seeing temptation in this world, one can better understand it and learn to overcome it. This hypothesis conforms to Walter Hooper's essay "Past Watchful Dragons" where he argues that despite what some critics may think, Lewis, in his Narnia stories, strives to surpass the traditional religious concepts that society teaches in childhood (Kilby, Imagination). To this end Lewis explores the possibility of casting many of Christianity's teachings into an imaginary world to examine their true potency. Sammons asserts that while no exact biblical parallels exist in the narratives, Lewis does spotlight Christian virtues in a world of fantasy to make them more accessible to readers (124). The closest biblical recasting occurs in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe when Aslan lays down his life to save Edmund, yet even here Lewis does not provide a perfect equivalent of Christ's death; nevertheless, in each of the Chronicles the will of God proves to be the true source of delight with obedience the key to happiness.

Reflected in many great works of literature is the conflict of good and evil. If Aslan is indeed Lewis's

many-faceted Christ figure, what better sources of temptation from which the heroes may be saved than the seven deadly sins. "Lewis, a medieval scholar, had an intimate knowledge of the medieval ecclesiastical and literary tradition of seven deadly sins" (14). The most widely accepted list, developed by Pope Gregory the Great (540-605), includes the sins of pride, greed, luxury (which later became lust), gluttony, anger, and sloth. Lewis deals with multiple sins in his Narnia series; however, each book reflects one deadly sin above all others and illustrates its effects on the characters.

These effects become an integral part of the journey of everyman as told in the Chronicles. From magnificent inception through tormented times to everlasting joy, from the realization of error to a moment of supreme vision--this range is the scope of the Chronicles. The events unlayered chronologically form an archetypal epic journey from stasis to chaos, the quest from creation to apocalypse, and represent the journey of everyman, for the journey we have taken in fiction is the one mankind has taken throughout his existence.

Every epic, by tradition, must have a protagonist, the hero, and an antagonist, the villain; and between these characters the odds must be evenly balanced. Most of the

characteristics of the epic as a literary type stem from the purpose of arousing admiration for the heroes whose story it tells. Lewis tells of brave, and not so brave, children who are basically good, but nevertheless human and imperfect who succumb occasionally to the cardinal sins of anger, pride, and envy, emotions that have governed epics from Homer through Milton. To relate the actions of these heroes, Lewis consciously depicts the setting, which often evokes the force of an arena, through which the children make their journey. These frequent descriptive passages of the beauty of Narnia as well as the battles inevitably waged between the forces of good and evil serve as a carefully designed arena where readers can view each supposal.

Just as in Milton's Paradise Lost where Christ does not fill the role of protagonist because the distance between Him and Satan is too wide, so too does Aslan not fill the role of hero in the Chronicles. Mankind, as represented by the children, is the protagonist against whom the antagonist works. If man were isolated, he would stand no chance at all against evil. In early Greek and Roman times, no pagan god could save a favorite from the consequences of his own sins. Retribution was a law inherent in the universe that not even the gods could break; however, according to Christian belief, man does not

stand alone. If he follows the precepts of Christ, he has God with him. Similarly, in Narnia those who hold to the principle being illustrated in a supposal have Aslan on their side. Like the heroes Adam and Eve of Paradise Lost, Narnia's heroes succeed in their battle against evil, and the rewards of their victorious journey are postponed to another day and indeed another life.

To treat the protagonists's journey from this world through Narnia to Chaos chronologically, the Chronicles will be analyzed not in the order of their publication, but in the chronological or historical order that begins with The Magician's Nephew and follows in turn with The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, The Horse and His Boy, Prince Caspian, The Voyage of the "Dawn Treader," The Silver Chair, and The Last Battle ("PWD" 32; W. H. Lewis 68). Approaching the series in this order will expose more easily the biblical parallels that Lewis utilizes in his recasting of them. A further advantage for a reader stems from the fact that because the passage of time in Narnia and this world does not coincide, reading the Chronicles in their chronological order juxtaposes more easily time in the other world, Narnia, and this world.

CHAPTER II

CREATION, SIN, ATONEMENT, AND REDEMPTION

The Magician's Nephew, written next to the last, functions as the Genesis of the Chronicles, for here Narnia is created. The cast of characters includes a twelve-year-old boy Digory Kirke, his friend Polly, Digory's Uncle Andrew, the witch Jadis, and the animals of Narnia. For his newly created Narnia, Lewis expands the concept of a parallel world when he allows Digory and Polly to enter the other world by magic. Special rings, though only one of the various devices by which the children arrive in Narnia, transport Digory and Polly to the Wood between the Worlds, an interim station from which they can proceed to other worlds by touching Yellow Rings made by Uncle Andrew from dust gathered at Atlantis. Conversely, it is by touching Green Rings that one can exit from the Wood into another world.

According to Lewis's time line, Narnia is created in 1900. The setting of this volume is divided among three locations: London, Charn, and Narnia. Lewis employs the traditional pattern of fairy tales by including the quest, the test, trial temptation, and final success. This

adventure begins in England as Digory and Polly find themselves in Uncle Andrew's secret attic study. By tricking Polly into touching one of the Yellow Rings made from magical dust, Uncle Andrew, a magician, causes Polly's unwitting departure to the Wood between the Worlds, which initiates the epic journey towards mankind's destruction.

To return Polly safely home, Digory is compelled to follow. When he leaves Uncle Andrew's study, he pockets two Green Rings that will effect their safe return. Once together in the Wood between the Worlds, the two children discover many pools of water through which they can enter various other worlds. Their trial and error journey leads them to Charn, a dying world where everyone is frozen in immobility. Here they encounter Jadis, the Witch, frozen. Curious Digory and Polly both spy a tiny bell with an inscription directing the reader to "strike a bell and bide the danger" or wonder "till it drives you mad" (MN 50). Digory wants to ring the bell; Polly does not. Motivated primarily by anger at Polly and his own curiosity, Digory rings the bell and releases evil into Narnia when Jadis awakens. By grabbing hold of Digory as the children retreat, Jadis returns to England through the power of the Green Rings.

Once home, Digory makes supreme efforts to rid his world of Jadis. Nonetheless, Jadis's destructive rampage

diverts his efforts. In the confusion that develops, Digory, Polly, a cabby and his horse, as well as Jadis, all arrive through the magic of the Yellow Rings in what will be known as Narnia. At first, they enter a world of Nothing--nothing until the voice of Aslan, the Lion, is heard. With the entrance of Aslan's voice, Lewis begins his Creation story as Aslan sings his universe, the world of Narnia, into existence. According to Sammons, the concept of God's creating the universe through song borrows from a medieval concept which uses music as a metaphor for the harmony of the universe. The universe is a musical instrument with the hand of God as its tuner (47).

In The Art of Enchantment, Donald Glover argues that "Aslan is the symbol of true creation, of originality, and his song . . . is the archetype of all earthly literary or musical creations" (173). Aslan's creation, Narnia, is flawed with evil, too. Evil personified, Jadis, descended from a long line of evil forces, has destroyed her own world Charn with her pride and greed. Awakened from her frozen world by Digory, who does not resist Jadis's temptation of knowledge, Jadis seduces him because his main faults are curiosity and impatience. Nevertheless, these are minor flows compared to the deadly sins of anger, pride, and greed.

The birth of Narnia, as the chief episode in The Magician's Nephew, is not an allegorical representation of the Genesis story. Traditionally, God's Word creates the universe, but Lewis extends the phenomena of creation through Aslan's song. Charles Huttar maintains that "variations in the music communicate Aslan's commands and call forth responses--from the ground, life; from the spectators, fear, hatred, or joy. And when the stars join in harmony, they too are a part of the creative activity" (Schakel 124). The traditional order of creation first separates light from darkness; then, land from the seas; next the creation of the sun, moon, and stars before the creation of the fish, birds, and animals. Finally, God creates man who is to have dominion over all. But Narnia comes through a song, the archetypal inspiration of goodness. When Aslan sings, the stars appear first and then the sun. As the sun rises, a landscape void of vegetation appears; then come the grass, trees, and flowers followed by the animals including birds. Man need not be created, for he has been transported to Narnia in the children from London.

Huttar notes that "the creation of man in Genesis is paralleled [in the Chronicles] by the elevation of selected animals to be Talking beasts" (Schakel 125). Instead of

creating man as the ruler of all living things, Aslan chooses two of each animal, reminiscent of Noah and the Ark, to be given the gift of speech. These Talking Beasts, however, do not replace mankind, for though mankind is not created in Narnia, he definitely plays a part--a two-fold role of rulership and service--and just as on Earth, mankind in Narnia is directly responsible for the entry of evil into Narnia. Just as Satan promises Eve she will be as gods if she will but disobey God and eat the forbidden fruit, Digory's curiosity, roused through the inscription near the bell, awakens Jadis, thereby opening the door for evil's entrance into Narnia. Mankind, however, is also able to bring about the help Narnia needs to govern and protect herself from that evil.

After Aslan completes the creation process, he sends Digory on a quest mission which involves the testing of his faith, courage, and love. His quest shows that only by doing for others can he be given what he needs and desires. His task, to be obedient to Aslan's command, causes him to put aside his own desires and to strive to remove the evil he has brought, pride and the other six sins, into Narnia.

Assisted by the winged-horse Fledge, Aslan sends Digory to an enclosed Garden where grows the tree that

will become for Digory the Tree of Life. Digory, instructed by Aslan, plucks a silver-gold apple from the tree and returns it to Aslan without tasting it or picking another for himself. During his trial, Jadis continues the role of Satan the tempter as she encourages Digory to indulge himself with an apple as she does. As a result of eating her apple, Jadis is granted her desire for strength and endless days; nevertheless, she also receives eternal misery. An even greater temptation, Jadis suggests that Digory should take an apple home to cure his ill mother. Digory, however, remains loyal to Aslan, and in reward for obeying, Aslan gives him an apple which will heal his mother. In thanksgiving, Digory buries the core of this apple in his back yard, and from this tree's wood is made the wardrobe through which other children will later enter Narnia. This scene obviously parallels Eve's temptation in the Garden of Eden, yet evil already exists in Narnia; consequently, Lewis uses the temptation as a vehicle for showing Digory's faith and loyalty, which in turn emphasizes that the "covenant between Narnia and Aslan will be realized by his presence in the midst of his creation because he has given himself to it. . . ." Nevertheless, "the offer has its conditions. . . . Narnia will benefit by Aslan's favor so long as it recognizes that it depends

on him and consequently is obedient to his will" (Morrison, "Idea" 3).

To show his supreme goodness, Aslan faces not only evil in the form of Jadis, but he also extends to the flawed children salvation. Pride, considered the worst of Pope Gregory's cardinal sins, functions as the underlying cause of temptation or the primary reason why characters are themselves evil. Jadis, who boasts of her being descended from the Kings and Queens of Charn and of her knowledge of the "Deplorable Word," reveals her only real interests lie in how events and people can help her recover her world or spread evil into other worlds.

Uncle Andrew, the human counterpart to Jadis, is convinced that people like him who have unusual powers (magicians) are above the law, that they may do anything they wish. Greed for wisdom and power dominates Andrew's actions. Not only does he experiment with magic, but he also tries to capitalize monetarily on the phenomenon that things grow so rapidly in Narnia, such as trees that grow gold and silver coins.

Even though King argues that the most deadly sin in The Magician's Nephew is anger and even though each of the major characters except Aslan exhibits wrath during the story, the anger exhibited is derived from pride. Upon

finding out what Andrew has done with Polly, Digory's anger flares. Later when Digory and Polly disagree angrily about ringing the bell in Charn, his uncontrollable curiosity coupled with his prideful anger drives him to ring the bell in spite of Polly's caution and thus awakens Jadis.

Once Jadis enters the story, prideful anger shifts to her. She behaves abominably during her short destructive stay in London. Before she can do any more damage, Digory makes use of the magic ring to transport them out of London and into Narnia where Jadis, like Digory, Polly, Andrew, and the cabby, witnesses the creation of Narnia which for her inspires a feeling of hatred: "She could have smashed that whole world, or all worlds, to pieces, if [Aslan] would only stop singing" (MN 101). In anger she hurls at Aslan the piece of the lamp-post transported from London in her unexpected departure. It strikes him between the eyes, but it does not hurt him. Instead, it, like many other objects in Narnia, begins to grow, becoming the lamp-post that will later guide the Earth visitors back to where they can return to London.

Regardless of the argument between critics and Lewis concerning the allegorical aspects of the tales, no one appears in conflict about Jadis's representing Supreme evil--Satan. Even Uncle Andrew repeats several times the

idea that she had a devilish temper. King thinks "Lewis hints at the key problem of wrath; it is of the devil . . . and he would have us see that anger, uncontrollable rage, is another form of blindness" (18).

Lewis concludes The Magician's Nephew with what Aslan terms a warning. Fantasy allows the reader to see in other worlds what he may overlook in his own. Lewis incorporates this concept in Aslan's warning when the Lion explains that the children's world more and more resembles Charn. The possibility always exists for someone to discover "a secret as evil as the Deplorable Word and use it to destroy all living things. . . . Let your world beware" (MN 178). Ford believes that Lewis not only is referring to the atom bomb and genetic engineering so prevalent in this century but also the very human inclination "to let curiosity and desire for control threaten the moral and natural order of things" (42), for no matter how obvious evil's effects may be, evil itself is not always easily detected.

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe further extends Lewis's epic journey of everyman from creation into the realm of sin, atonement, death, and resurrection. Although written as the first of the Narnian series, this narrative takes place forty Earth years after The Magician's Nephew. Time, a significant aspect of fantasy, affects from this

point on the discussion of the Chronicles. Narnia, a parallel world to ours, employs a unique calibration for measuring years. Lewis explores an idea that "other worlds might enjoy a time not so linear as ours" (Kilby, Imagination 297). Narnia from creation to its destruction encompasses 2555 Narnian years, but only fifty-two Earth years, thereby allowing The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe to begin in 1940, forty Earth years after Narnia is created but one-thousand Narnian years later.

Digory, now a fifty-two-year-old professor, allows four children, Peter, Susan, Lucy, and Edmund Pevensie, to come live with him in the country after being routinely evacuated from London during World War II. He explains to them that "if there really is a door in this house that leads to some other world, it would be very likely that the other world has a separate time of its own so that however long one stays there, it will never take up any time on Earth" (LWW 46). As a result the reader comes to accept the difference in measuring time and the absence of parallelism and consistency between Narnian and Earth year equivalents. For example, between 1940 and 1941 Earth time, 1303 Narnian years pass; however, between 1941 and 1942 only three Narnian years pass.

The principal Earth characters in this tale are the four children staying with Professor Kirke. According to

Glover, "though they have roles to play: Edmund the betrayer, a Judas; Peter, the Knight, a St. George against the Dragon; Lucy and Susan as the two Marys; the action has swept them up into great events, the significance of which they can hardly realize" (139). While playing hide-and-seek in the Professor's house, Lucy disappears into an old wardrobe, thus becoming the first person to discover the wardrobe as a doorway into Narnia--the magical otherworld on the other side of the wardrobe. Narnia now lies under the curse of the evil White Witch who has cast a spell so that the land is plagued with Endless Winter, a literary archetype which symbolizes the powers of darkness (Frye 16). On another level winter symbolizes the biblical concept of the effects of evil in the world. Although some critics disagree, Ford claims that the White Witch and Jadis are one and the same: "characterizations of evil which cannot really be killed but must be watched for and confronted over and over again" (440).

Ford also reminds the reader that four books intervene between The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe and The Magician's Nephew; in fact, when this book was written, Lewis had not even considered writing The Magician's Nephew. Even though Lewis attempts to give background on all the characters and events, some discrepancies and

unanswered questions remain. At the end of The Magician's Nephew, Digory plants the Tree of Protection and Jadis flees to the North, yet sometime prior to the Narnian year 1000, she manages to gain entrance into Narnia and casts the entire land into an Endless Winter; however, the reader is never told what happened during the interim years to allow evil to become so powerful.

When Lucy accidentally tumbles into Narnia, Mr. Tumnus, a Faun, befriends her and helps her return home. As a result he is later turned into stone by the Witch for this treachery because the duty of all the creatures who inhabit Narnia is to bring all new-comers to the Witch. On a subsequent occasion, Edmund enters Narnia through the wardrobe where he meets the Witch who promises that if he will bring his brother and sisters to her, she will make him a Prince and feed him on Turkist Delight daily.

Following this temptation, all four of the Pevensie children find their way into Narnia and meet the Beavers, from whom they learn that Aslan, the Lord of Narnia, is on the move and that the White Witch will be overthrown when four sons of Adam and daughters of Eve are enthroned at the castle of Cair Paravel, the castle of the Kings and Queens in the Golden Age of Narnia. The Beavers operate on both a surface and metaphorical level. On the surface they

assist the heroes; metaphorically, Kath Filmer believes they parallel the apostles of Christ. Both are fishermen, and both function as prophets. When Mr. Beaver announces the coming of Aslan, he may easily be associated with John the Baptist who announces the coming of Christ (17-18).

The terms sons of Adam and daughters of Eve, used to refer to the four children, extend the theological backdrop against which the stories unfold and act as a central Christian unifying device in the Chronicles. Aslan uses these terms consistently in addressing the children. Although Aslan may be seen as the redeemer of Narnia, this narrative does not utilize the biblical feature of Incarnation. Aslan comes to Narnia already a lion; he does not become a lion to save Narnia as Jesus became man to save the world. Nevertheless, there are many recastings leading up to Aslan's death and resurrection. The most obvious extension is that both Christ and Aslan willingly give up their lives so that others might live; however, according to Hooper, nowhere "does Lewis provide us with a geometrically perfect equivalent of anything in the Bible or Christian doctrine" (Schakel 111). The major difference in this recasting is that Christ laid down his life so that mankind might be saved while Aslan agrees to his death to save the one child Edmund.

Edmund, as one might expect, becomes a pawn in the White Witch's plan to destroy the future Kings and Queens of Narnia. He so craves the Turkish Delight and is so desirous of the Witch's other promises that he deserts his brother and sisters, as well as Aslan, in order to tell the Witch where she may find her victim. Upon the Witch's arrival at Aslan's Table, which every night is set with a banquet, Aslan negotiates a deal with the Witch--his life in return for Edmund's. The Witch understands the Deep Magic (demands of justice) to mean that a traitor's life belongs to her. Aslan knows there is Deeper Magic (a self-sacrificing compassion) from before the dawn of time that allows a willing and innocent victim to substitute himself for the traitor. If these conditions are met, death is undone and the need for the sacrifice under Deep Magic is canceled.

Even though a number of biblical similarities exist between Christ's and Aslan's deaths, in no way is Aslan's death an exact biblical parallel. It does, however, evoke the idea of atonement and rebirth in Christ. For instance, both Christ and Aslan seek the comfort of a few close friends prior to their submission to the executioners. Aslan's walk into the woods, although not as solemn as Jesus's night in the Garden of Gethsemane, serves the same

function. Both redeemers are quite positive of future events, yet both still wish they did not have to endure their passion. Each suffers ridicule and torture, verbal as well as physical humiliation, at the hands of his enemies. Both Christ and Aslan are cruelly tied down and savagely executed--Christ's Crucifixion on the Cross and Aslan's stabbing on the Stone Table.

The Stone Table is, according to the Witch, where killing has always taken place; so too was Calvary known as the place of execution. Unknown to the Witch, however, is the decree from before the dawn of time that the Table will crack when a willing and innocent victim is killed to protect a traitor (the exact circumstances of Aslan's sacrifice) and that time will begin to run backwards. After she stabs Aslan with the Stone Knife, the majority of the spectators depart. Suddenly at daybreak Lucy and Susan, who have remained at Aslan's side throughout the night, hear a deafening sound and the Stone Table breaks in two. When the girls turn around to see the cause of the noise, Aslan is once again alive, more beautiful than ever.

Suddenly . . . a great crackling, deafening noise was heard as if a giant had broken a giant's plate. . . . The Stone Table was broken into two pieces by a crack that ran

down it from end to end; and there was no
Aslan. . . . Is it more Magic? . . . Yes! . . .
There, shining in the sunrise, larger than
they had seen him before, shaking his
mane . . . stood Aslan himself. (158-59)

This passage calls to mind Christ's death and resurrection, perhaps even of the splitting of the veil in the Tabernacle after Christ's Crucifixion; however, it again is not a biblical allegory; it is merely a supposal of what these events look like in an imaginary world like Narnia.

In discussing events occurring after Aslan's resurrection, Ford says "Aslan's roar, his run to the Witch's castle, and his leap over its walls are all Narnian supposals of what Christ's ascension would look like in this imaginary world" (21). Prior to Christ's ascension into heaven, he descended into hell; Narnia's "hell" in this book might be the poor souls turned to stone by the Witch. Aslan, in a form very reminiscent of Jesus's breathing on His apostles and saying "Receive the Holy Spirit," breathes on the creatures turned to stone in the Witch's Castle, at which time they return to life and help defeat evil. With the death of the White Witch, the Long Winter ends, and the children are crowned Kings and Queens of Narnia, thereby fulfilling the prophecy that said when

four sons of Adam and daughters of Eve gain the throne, the White Witch's rein will end.

To further the epic journey of mankind from beginning to end, Lewis capitalizes on the deadly sins of pride, greed, and gluttony. The inclination toward greed, according to Ford, is frequently seen as the deadly sin in the truly evil characters in Narnia; however, it is also a temptation faced by many of the good characters (217). Ford also says Lewis believes "vanity [pride]--the desire to be loved beyond the limits God sets--is the chink in a person's armor that allows evil to enter in. In the Chronicles, pride and vanity are shown transmuted into greed and love of power" (434). The Witch tempts Edmund with Turkish Delight, a candy that makes one crave it above all else. The strong desire causes one to gorge on it until it kills him. Edmund also very much covets the idea of being prince as the Witch promises, another temptation. Under these conditions the other children would be his subjects, not his peers. Greed is "the first tool of enchantment" (Lindskoog 97), and as Edmund desires to be prince and is tempted through the enchanted foods, his greed causes him to betray his family and Aslan, thereby setting up the circumstances that allow for Aslan's execution and resurrection.

King maintains that Edmund personifies gluttony and the Witch exploits this weakness when she offers him the addictive candy. Driven by his uncontrollable desire for more, Edmund willingly tells the Witch whatever she wants to know. King argues "Lewis's point in emphasizing Edmund's gluttony is to illustrate vividly the effects of sins in general and this sin in particular; over indulgence blinds us to the truth, turning us inward, making us slaves to our own insatiable desires" (15).

This chapter discusses three of the most important steps in mankind's epic journey. Lewis creates a microcosm in his fantasy world of Narnia where supposals closely resemble the Christian history of this world. As Aslan sings Narnia into existence, Narnia, created from a void, becomes a lush paradise inhabited by various types of creatures ranging from dragons and dwarfs to Talking Beasts. Man need not be created, for he already exists in the form of the visitors from Earth. Unfortunately Narnia's utopian atmosphere quickly dissipates as evil in the form of Jadis invades the newly created world. As a result of evil's intrusion, flaws become inherent in Narnia, thus necessitating the intervention of Aslan as a redeemer. The most dramatic examples of Aslan's help, the poignant recasting of Christ's dying that mankind might

live and His subsequent Resurrection, function as significant guideposts in the epic journey of everyman.

CHAPTER III

SALVATION

The Horse and His Boy, the fifth book published, occurs in 1940 Earth time, the same year as The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe; however, the four Pevensie children are not the central characters. Although the reader has never been led in the previous books to believe that Narnia is an isolated island in the middle of nowhere, Lewis only alludes to surrounding geography. In this and the two succeeding volumes of the Chronicles, Lewis continues to extend his journey from creation to chaos by expanding Narnia's previous cast of characters, thus recasting the Christian concept of universal salvation. This enlargement requires the exploration of new lands.

A well-delineated hierarchy exists in both Calormen and Narnia. In Narnia the Emperor-Over-Sea and his son Aslan constitute the peak, followed by Peter the High King, Queen Susan the Gentle, Queen Lucy the Valiant, and King Edmund the Just who rule from the castle Cair Paravel which means "'inferior court,' implying Narnia's administration is still subordinate to the Emperor-Over-Sea" (Sammons 51). The next rung on the ladder includes minor nobility, followed by the Talking beasts and creatures such

as centaurs. The lowest status in Narnia falls to the Dumb Beasts. Although the Calormenes do not believe in Aslan as a diety, they too have a strict hierarchy lead by Tash, a vulture-like creature with four arms. The Calormen ruler, called the Tisroc, is followed by his lesser nobility, Tarkhans (lords) and Tarkheenas (ladies).

The Horse and His Boy tells the story of two young people and their horses who are valiantly trying to escape from their homeland Calormen to Narnia; consequently, the narrative focuses on the themes of freedom, justice, humility, and the courage to face adversity. The two horses, kidnapped from Narnia when mere foals, have retained their gift of speech. The boy Shasta discovers the man with whom he lives is not his real father. In fact, Shasta over-hears Arsheesh discussing the possibility of selling him to a Tarkhan. Shasta then decides to flee to the north and take Bree, the Tarkhan's horse. While in flight, this pair of runaways encounters Hwin, another horse, and her rider Aravis, a Calormene princess running away to escape a marriage proposal. Lewis employs lions pursuing Shasta and Bree as a method of getting the four characters together. Since each character has a different concept of freedom, Ford says it is "the Lion's purpose to help all four and the reader understand freedom" (35).

Ford also believes "The Horse and His Boy is the chronicle of Aravis's transformation from arrogance and self-centeredness into an example of true Narnian nobility" (12), thus recasting the concept of salvation.

All of the main characters encounter Aslan several times during their journey, yet his guiding hand remains a mystery to them until each is ready to accept salvation. Shasta first experiences Aslan the Lion as the pursuer. Next he meets Aslan disguised as a cat whose presence reassures and comforts the lonely boy as he awaits his other three companions. Shasta, at last able to sleep, suddenly awakens to the sound of jackals. A lion roars and scares them away; however, unexpectedly the Lion resumes the cat-like appearance. When Shasta awakens in the morning, the cat is gone. The most dramatic, yet unknown presence of Aslan, occurs at night while Shasta walks near a cliff. Although aware of a presence breathing next to him, Shasta remains unaware that the presence consistently stays between him and the edge of the cliff, thus protecting him. After the Lion reveals to Shasta the difference between fate and providence, Aslan tells him that he has been present at all the most crucial times in the boy's life. Shasta, who has previously questioned the Lion concerning his true identity, then asks for the third time who

the Lion is. Aslan's response "Myself . . . Myself . . . Myself" serves as Aslan's revelation of the Trinity (Ford 159). Finally Shasta understands, as Lewis means the reader to, that at times "where God seems quite uncomfortable, He is probably keeping the uncomfortable person from still greater dangers" (Ford 37). Shasta's salvation is accomplished when he finally acknowledges "the living and loving Person who has cared for and will always care for him" (Ford 379).

Aslan later deals with the horses Bree and Hwin. Although fearful, Hwin quickly surrenders to Aslan; however, Bree, reminiscent of the doubting Thomas, must be convinced of Aslan's reality: "Touch me. Smell me. Here are my paws, here is my tail, these are my whiskers. I am a true Beast. . . . Happy the Horse who knows that while he is still young. Or the Human either" (193).

The deadly sin of pride serves as the catalyst for virtually the entire story. Arrogance, especially evident in Aravis's attitude toward Shasta, causes her to view him as a common horse thief. Even after Bree confirms that if anything he stole Shasta, Aravis still resents Shasta's presence on the journey to Narnia and speaks to him only when necessary. Bree attempts to humble her when he converses first with her horse; however, little is

accomplished. Later Aravis must enter the city of Tashbaan as a slave in order to protect her identity. Her encounter with her very frivolous friend Lasaraleen shows her exactly what she might become; hence, for the first time she admits she would rather travel with a peasant to Narnia to be free than to stay and be "someone" in Calormen. Aravis's conversion regresses some during the trip through the desert when she again thinks herself better than Shasta. During her recuperation from Aslan's attack where she is scratched ten times in retribution for treatment she caused a slave to endure, Aravis like Shasta, learns "that providence, not luck, has spared her more serious hurt" (Ford 14). She realizes that Shasta rescued her and that she must apologize to him before she can be worthy to enter Narnia. Later when she again encounters Shasta, now recognized as the long-lost son of King Lune of Archenland, Aravis, with her salvation accomplished, is ready to reign as the new prince's queen.

Some of the animals in this narrative also suffer from the human weakness of pride. Even though Bree claims superior knowledge over Hwin of the capabilities of horses, in an ironic twist of events, Hwin sets the pace and keeps the group moving as rapidly as possible in their journey toward Narnia and salvation. She also identifies soldiers

that Bree has mistakenly identified as a sandstorm. At one point Bree, convinced that he is galloping at his fastest pace, finds true motivation to move only when he hears the Lion's roar. Suffering from self-pity, Bree openly regrets his refusal to return to help Hwin and Aravis against the Lion's attack. Further, he exhibits pride through his vanity by being ashamed of his shortened tail. When he attempts to apologize to Aravis for not helping her and Hwin, he patronizes her by excusing her inability to understand because of her age. Aslan finally intervenes, at which point Bree admits to being very foolish.

Aslan's last appearance in The Horse and His Boy involves Rabadash, the Calormene who has attacked Archenland hoping to provoke war with Narnia in retaliation and anger for Queen Susan's refusal to marry him. Rabadash, defeated by King Edmund and King Lune with the help of some of the animals from Narnia, refuses to humble himself and accept surrender terms. Aslan appears and says "Forget your pride (what have you to be proud of?) and your anger (who has done you wrong?) and accept the mercy of these good Kings" (HHB 208). When Rabadash lashes out at Aslan and evokes the aid of Tash, Aslan again warns him to beware. Still Rabadash abuses Aslan, and the Lion turns him into a donkey. King notes that "in Rabadash, Lewis reminds [the

reader] that 'pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling' (Proverbs 16:18)" (17), thus extending the Christian concept that mankind possesses a free will capable not only of accepting salvation but also of rejecting it.

The fourth tale in the series, Prince Caspian, allows the four Pevensie children from The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe to find themselves again drawn unexpectedly into Narnia, just one year after their return to Earth. It really astonishes them that 1303 Narnian years have passed, thus causing much change in Narnia. Cair Paravel lies in ruins; in fact, it is only after the children locate the gifts Father Christmas gave them in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe that they are positive it is truly their old castle. Peter finds his sword; Edmund locates his shield; Lucy spies the cordial full of medicine. Though she fails to find her horn, Susan discovers her bow and quiver of arrows.

Prior to the children's arrival, Prince Caspian learns from his tutor Dr. Cornelius that Caspian's Uncle Miraz wants the boy dead. The boy's father was Narnia's king, but upon his death Miraz usurped the throne. Now Miraz and his wife have a new baby son, and the real Prince must be eliminated. Dr. Cornelius, who himself is part dwarf,

helps Caspian escape from his uncle and gives Caspian Susan's horn. In desperation after several defeats by Miraz's army, Caspian blows the horn which summons the children back to Narnia. Legend holds that Aslan too will hear and perhaps come as a result of blowing the horn.

At Cair Paravel the children meet a dwarf, Trumpkin, who has been sent by Prince Caspian to the old Narnian capital to await the possible return of the four Kings and Queens. Trumpkin, not a true believer in Aslan or the Golden Age of Narnia when the children were the four Kings and Queens, cannot believe the children are really the help that Caspian's army needs. After the four convince him of their royalty, the group travels to Aslan's How, a mound that has been built around the Stone Table to help preserve it and the sight where Caspian's army is camped. On their journey from Cair Paravel to Aslan's How, the children discover that because the landmarks are no longer what they remember after many years, they get lost.

A theme that pervades this book is what Ford calls "faith-suspension spectrum" (23). Glover refers to it as belief: "Each major character either accepts the truth, tests and accepts it, or rejects it without test. . . ." He continues "It is the test of faith in Aslan which forms the basic and central theme of the book since it is Aslan

who comes across the sea to put all things right" (145). The children's faith in Aslan, tested as well as Caspian's that help will indeed come, determines when they finally see Aslan and complete their journey towards salvation. Lucy, the child closest to Aslan, sees him first. None of the four children are sure which way to go on their journey to the Mound. Lucy momentarily sees Aslan going in the opposite direction and interprets this to mean they should follow him. Unfortunately she cannot convince her brothers and sister of her vision, and she is afraid to follow Aslan by herself. Later that night Lucy sees Aslan again and actually talks to him. Without saying a word, Aslan conveys his disappointment in Lucy's lack of true faith. She understands then that she should have left the others; Aslan would have protected her just as he always has, yet her belief failed to be coupled with obedience. Morrison observes that "in the Gospels, we are frequently reminded that the claims of Jesus take precedence over family obligations. . . ." He also observes "that in the Christian fairy tale the reader learns that it is difficult to choose a way that separates him from his family and friends" ("Obedience" 2). Aslan then instructs Lucy to wake the others, and depending on their faith they will see him and follow. Although the others do not yet

believe, they follow Lucy because of her faith and determination. Edmund sees the outline of Aslan next although it is not a clear vision, followed by Peter, Susan, and finally Trumpkin, the agnostic dwarf.

True to her role as one of Aslan's closest friends, Lucy first notices that Aslan has grown in size since she last saw him in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. Aslan confirms Lucy's faith when he responds that "Every year you grow, you will find me bigger" (117). Sammons asserts that spiritual growth permits Lucy to have this clearer vision of Aslan (89). At the opposite end of the spectrum stands Susan who is the last of the Pevensie children to see Aslan and who admits she lacks enough faith to believe. This idea coupled with Shasta's remark in The Horse and His Boy about Susan's not being at all like Lucy foreshadows Susan's ultimately being denied entrance into Aslan's Country because her faith just is not strong enough.

A dual plot line that duplicates the theme of salvation develops from this point. Caspian, aided by the children and the Animals, attempts to defeat his Uncle. Meanwhile Aslan must rejuvenate Narnia; the Trees must be brought back to life as well as the power of speech restored to some of the Animals. Along the way several other human characters are encountered including a

schoolmistress and Caspian's aging nurse who professes her faith in Aslan. As a result Aslan restores her failing health. For her and the others who have joined Aslan, water turned into wine is served. Such an act, reminiscent of various miracles that Jesus performed while on Earth as well as the life-giving qualities of Christ's blood in the form of wine, reinforces the concept of salvation.

At this point the two plots merge. Aslan arrives on the battlefield and strikes terror in the hearts of his opponents. The Old Narnians that Caspian and the children have located react to Aslan's presence with joy much as Christ's followers felt exhaltation in His presence. Later Aslan questions Caspian as to his fitness to rule Narnia. Because of Caspian's humility in admitting his inexperience, Aslan deems him worthy of the title of King of Narnia. Many parallels exist in the Old Testament when God chooses his prophets from ordinary people.

Another of the new characters introduced in Prince Caspian is Reepicheep, the valiant mouse who exhibits real courage and honor, the qualities of a true Narnian. He so impresses Aslan that after the battle where Caspian's army defeats Miraz, Aslan not only allows Lucy's cordial of medicine to heal all of Reepicheep's wounds but also deems him worthy of a new tail.

The virtues of courage and honor are opposed by the deadly sin of luxury--the lust or greed for power. Critics suggest that Lewis's interpretation of luxury is a lust for things in general not a sexual passion (King 15). For instance, in this narrative King Miraz desires excessive power and wealth and willingly allows the end to justify the means. After the death of Caspian's father, Miraz ruled as the Lord Protector; however, after Caspian's mother died, Miraz eliminated all others loyal to the child. Later it is disclosed that Miraz murdered Caspian's father to ascend to the throne. To retain it, Miraz now plans to murder Caspian since Miraz's wife has given birth to a son. King observes that Lewis is demonstrating through Miraz the effect that a ruler's greed and lust for power can have on a society (15). During his rule Miraz suppresses the truth about Old Narnia. Those who speak of it, such as Caspian's Nurse, are disciplined. As a result even the creatures of Narnia lose faith in one another. At one point some are even willing to call on the spirit of Jadis to help defeat Miraz. It does not matter who helps them at that point, just so someone helps: "Such a disintegration of society is to be expected when government becomes first concerned with consolidating its own power and authority and only later with the welfare of its

people" (King 15). Such intrigue dispells the peace of salvation and makes difficult a journey towards it.

As a result of Aslan's closing comments in Prince Caspian stating that Peter and Susan are too old to return to Narnia, only Edmund and Lucy play key roles in The Voyage of the "Dawn Treader." The Pevensie parents and Susan have journeyed to America while Peter has remained in England to study for an examination; hence, the two younger children have been sent to their aunt's and uncle's. Lewis uses this premise to introduce a Pevensie cousin Eustace Scrubb.

Only one Earth year elapses, but three Narnian years pass before the children are again magically transported into the land of Narnia. Kirke correctly concludes in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe that the children can never get into Narnia a second time by the same route; indeed, the children cannot try to get there at all. They must await Aslan's call. This time Lewis employs a picture of a ship as the doorway into fantasy. All three children unexpectedly see the picture on the wall of Eustace's bedroom begin to move. Suddenly they find themselves aboard Caspian's ship, the "Dawn Treader," in search of Seven Loyal Lords whom Caspian's uncle sent on a perilous journey some years ago. None have returned home, nor has any sent

messages back to Narnia or Telmar. Also among the crew is Reepicheep, the valiant mouse whose courage knows no limits and who searches for Aslan's Country at the End of the World. When he arrives at his locus amoenis, he will have completed his journey towards salvation and demonstrated that "the success of his quest is the culmination of all that he has lived before" (Schakel 145). Aslan's Country, a metaphor for Heaven, serves as the crew's destination, thus allowing the reader to explore further surrounding areas near Narnia. The journey is progressively eastward, an archetypal avatar for movement towards a locus amoenis. The Great Sea contains all the Eastern Islands where Caspian searches for the Lost Lords. The journey ultimately culminates in Reepicheep's finding Aslan's Country and the end of time. Glover explains that the "journey is the quest for holiness, the penetration into the mystery of the lamb and the lion, mercy and justice, meakness and power" (151). In other words, it is every man's quest for salvation.

As the goal of all who believe in Aslan, Lewis depicts a multi-sensory vision of heaven in his description of the End of the World. The children feel different--they have no desire for food, drink, or sleep. The light and smell associated with approaching Aslan's Country is mentioned

repeatedly. The sun seems many times its normal size, and the sea of white lilies reflects light so much that dark glasses are not sufficient to stop the glare. Frequently in the Bible the metaphor of light symbolizes God or the nearness of God. Accompanying this light, a lonely smell pervades the air, and the water tastes sweet. As they approach the End of the World, the children see a landscape of forest-covered mountains from which comes not only a smell but also a musical sound "that would break your heart" (VDT 212).

It is interesting to consider why Lewis chose to portray his Christ figure as a Lion. Sammons emphasizes that "Aslan is not allegorically Christ; in other words, no one-to-one correspondence exists between characters and events and what they stand for--between the characteristics and acts of Christ and those of Aslan . . ." (77). Nevertheless, for Lewis Aslan is "an invention giving an imaginary answer to the question 'What might Christ become like, if there really were a world like Narnia and He chose to be incarnate and die and rise again in that world as He actually has done in ours?'" (W. H. Lewis 261). In a world of Animals, a very logical choice for a Supreme Ruler would be the Lion with his gentleness, majesty, awesomeness, and terribleness, who also possesses the power to alter his image.

Like the cat and the unseen presence in The Horse and His Boy who give Shasta the courage to persevere, Aslan, in the form of an albatross, breathes courage to Lucy in response to her prayer for help in the darkness as "The Dawn Treader" nears the land where nightmares come true. Symbol of good luck to sailors, Ford says the albatross is "a likely symbol for Christ." When Lucy calls on Aslan for help, he appears "looking like a cross." As an albatross, Aslan "tells her to take courage." Then, "the ship is soon out of the darkness, and the albatross disappears, unnoticed" (5). When the children reach their destination of the End of the World, they see a Lamb who invites them to breakfast. His whiteness prevents their seeing him clearly. Suddenly he changes into Aslan. The metaphors for savior--lion, albatross, lamb--bring the reader to the biblical context. Jesus not only is associated with the concept of shepharding a flock but also being the sacrificial lamb that serves as the catalyst between the faithful and their God. In addition Jesus is frequently referred to as the Lamb of God, and Revelation 5:5-6 provides the reader with the story of "the Lion of the Tribe of Judah And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, I saw a Lamb standing as though it had been slain."

Salvation serves as one of the major biblical supposals addressed in the series. Just as Edmund, the traitor in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe is changed by his association with Aslan into the Just King, so too is Eustace changed. Eustace, greedy, insolent, and snobbish epitomizes the person still desperately in need of salvation. While "sleeping on a dragon's hoard with greedy thoughts in his heart, he [becomes] a dragon himself" (VDT 75), thus cleverly illustrating "the loss of humanity that accompanies the shrinking of the heart and mind" (Ford 259). Through his loneliness, Eustace learns the meaning and importance of friendship. Once he understands he is cut off from humanity, he begins an examination of his conscience; however, only through Christ can true change come; likewise, only when Eustace allows Aslan, surrounded by a halo of moonlight on a moonless night, to undress him from his dragon scales can a new person emerge. Aslan then tosses him into cold, clear water; not only does his physical pain subside, but also a cure begins. The allusion to baptism is obvious. Eustace emerges dressed in new clothes, and everyone notices the changes in his behavior. Sammons points out that "this episode is a perfect illustration of what happens when Christ gets hold of a sinner and makes him a new creature." She also

observes that "the experience of letting Christ do it for us may hurt, but he bathes us in the water of new life, and reclothes us as new creations" (130-31). A biblical parallel exists: "When someone becomes a Christian, he becomes a brand new person inside. He is not the same person any more. A brand new life has begun!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

In addition to Eustace, both Caspian and Lucy are tempted to sin. Lucy suffers from vanity that promises untold beauty, which holds a special lure for Lucy since it has always been Susan who was considered the beautiful one. Lucy manages with the help of Aslan to avoid succumbing to this temptation; however, she gives in to the lure of knowing what her friends think about her. Caspian, also flawed by the sin of pride, wants to abandon his ship and country and sail for the End of the World. Aslan appears to him and consoles him while saying Reepicheep and the children should continue. After a year of travel, Caspian regretfully heads the "Dawn Treader" back to Narnia.

Repeatedly throughout the series, Aslan serves as the savior of the children; likewise, throughout the Bible water symbolizes new life and the blessings flowing from the heart of the believer, which they find in God (Revelation 22:1-2; John 7:37-39). Very appropriately, Aslan's

Country lies across a river from all countries, and Aslan refers to himself as the great Bridge Builder, thereby fulfilling his promise to the children that he will guide them into Narnia from their own world. He never says how long it takes to arrive in his country, but the journey always requires crossing the river of death. Most importantly, however, he tells the children not to fear death because he is the Pontifex Maximus one of the earliest christological titles. In so doing Aslan bridges "the gap--death--between life and life" (Ford 30).

In addition to Aslan's promise of salvation, his breath and the fragrance from his mane endow the characters with a feeling of strength as well as peacefulness, reminiscent of the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Earlier in The Magician's Nephew, Aslan tells King Frank "You know [me] better than you think you know, and you shall live to know me better yet" (137). He repeats this concept at the end of The Voyage of the "Dawn Treader" when he tells Lucy and Edmund that, even though they will never see him again in Narnia because they are too old to return, he has another name in England: "You must learn to know me by that name. This was the very reason why you were brought to Narnia, that by knowing me here for a little, you may know me better there" (216).

A final biblical recasting in this narrative deals with Aslan's Table which is not only reminiscent of the Last Supper communion table and the breakfast table that the risen Christ prepares for his apostles (John 20) but also parallels the manna God provided for the Israelites in that the food is eaten and renewed every day. The travellers are invited to eat at the Table, and a great white bird brings Ramandu a fire-berry which rejuvenates him little by little. This passage echoes the angel's bringing Isaiah a coal from the altar which purges him of his sins. In a prominent location on Aslan's Table lies the Stone Knife, the weapon used by the White Witch to kill Aslan in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. Ford maintains that the knife is "enshrined as a holy relic . . . like the cross of Christ, this ugly instrument of Aslan's death has become a revered symbol of the atonement" (394).

The central focus of this chapter discusses the quest for universal salvation. In order for mankind's journey towards destruction to retain the element of hope, all of the characters must have the opportunity of salvation; however, since mankind is by nature flawed, salvation requires not only accepting Aslan's teachings but also turning away from sin, the perils of this journey towards salvation. Many of the characters falter by succumbing to sin;

however, as long as the traveller remains faithful and diligent in his efforts, Aslan continues to surreptitiously guide him toward his destination. Just as in the great epics when the voyager returns home and stasis once again exists, so too have the characters of Narnia reached their locus amoenis. Universal salvation, coupled with an individual's free will to accept or reject this saving grace, advances this epic journey of everyman, thus providing a hopeful atmosphere as the voyagers make their way toward not only chaos but also toward the complete harmony and perfection of Aslan's Country.

CHAPTER IV

FAITH AND OBEDIENCE

As Lewis's epic journey approaches its culmination, Jill, an additional character seen for the first time in the Chronicles, is offered the gift of salvation. She joins the other pilgrims as they move towards the end. Throughout the episodes in this part of the journey, found in The Silver Chair and The Last Battle, the pilgrims have their commitment to Aslan tested through their demonstration of faith and obedience.

The Silver Chair takes place during the same year, 1942, as The Voyage of the "Dawn Treader"; however, fifty Narnian years have passed since Eustace visited Narnia with Lucy and Edmund. Eustace, a miserable and unhappy student at Experiment House, and Jill Pole, a fellow student, try to escape harrassment by their peers by praying to enter Narnia. Unexpectedly they discover the gate in the school's outer wall open and suddenly find themselves walking on a cliff in Aslan's Country overlooking Narnia. As a result of Eustace's fear of height, he falls over the side of the cliff, leaving Jill alone to face Aslan.

Jill finds herself in a position where she must come in contact with Aslan. He tells her that the stream he is

near provides the only water in the area. Although fearful, yet very thirsty, she kneels and drinks the coldest, most refreshing, thirst quenching water she has ever tasted. This episode recasts Jesus's telling the woman "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (John 4:13-14). Jill is thus baptized by "drinking the living waters of Aslan's grace" (Glover 163). After this experience she learns the true reason why she and Eustace were called to Narnia (they were under the misguided notion that they called to Aslan and he answered, when in reality had Aslan not called to them, they never would have thought of escaping to Narnia). The reader can infer, therefore, that Aslan like Christ "wants us to call on him first" (Sammons 84), thus furthering the themes of faith and providence. Next, "Aslan explains one of the meanings of grace and prayer, namely that he is behind every effort of ours, even the desire for prayer" (Ford 31).

The quest for the children in this Chronicle is to search for King Caspian's long-lost son, Prince Rilian, and along the way discover some things about themselves. In order to find Rilian, Jill and Eustace must obey four Signs. Glover says these can be seen as commandments (163).

The children must greet an old friend whom they will meet, then journey north to a ruined giant city. Here they will find some ancient writing which they must obey. Prince Rilian will be recognized by the fact he will be the first person to ask the children to do something in Aslan's name. Aslan, however, warns Jill that the Signs will be difficult to recognize in Narnia, so she needs to "Remember, remember, remember the Signs. Say them to yourself when you wake in the morning, and when you lie down at night, and when you wake in the middle of the night" (SC 21). In like manner God commanded the Israelites, "These words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way and when you lie down, and when you rise" (Deuteronomy 6:6-8).

After Jill's learning the Signs, Aslan blows her to Narnia where she joins Eustace who found himself in Narnia via the same method after he fell off the cliff in Ashlan's Country. Aslan's breath serves as a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The children, however, do not follow the Signs in their quest. They learn that Caspian, now sixty-six and consequently unrecognizable to Eustace, is making ready to sail in search of Aslan to ask his advice on finding

Rilian. As a result of Eustace's inability to recognize Caspian, the children ignore the first Sign. Glimfeather the Owl carries the children north where they encounter Puddlegum the Marshwiggle, who according to Sammons, is "perhaps Lewis's most unique creation" (105). He has long legs and arms, and webbed hands and feet like a frog. He has a remarkable amount of faith and helps the children locate the land of the giants. Here they encounter the Lady of the Green Kirtle and an armored knight. She is really the Green Witch, who like Jadis is very beautiful but whose true nature is revealed when she later turns into the serpent, the traditional symbol of Evil and Satan.

The Green Witch directs the children and Puddlegum to Harfang, the ruined city. They finally reach the castle and are welcomed; however, along the way Jill has given up her ritual of reciting the Signs twice a day. Ford says "all this points to the fact that knowledge needs more than itself in order to fulfill itself." Lewis believes faith "helps to keep reason alive and fighting when feelings, circumstances, and imagination tempt one to abandon what one knows to be true" (261). Lewis, stressing "the importance of remembering as a spiritual discipline" (Ford 287), thereby parallels the power of prayer in Christianity. Puddlegum, the epitome of true faith, remembers Aslan's

rules when the children forget. His profession of faith that "Aslan's instructions always work; there are no exceptions" (SC 104) emphasizes Puddlegum as Lewis's figure depicting the "way in which Christians adhere to their faith after it has been once formed" (Ford 337).

After arriving in Harfang, the children discover to their horror that they are to serve as the delicacy at the Autumn Feast. That night Aslan appears to Jill in a dream and tells her of the inscription Under Me that they have overlooked. The next day they escape from the castle and slip through a crack in the ruins, the third Sign. Beneath the earth in Underworld, the children encounter all sorts of creatures, predominantly Earthmen or gnomes. Wedged between Narnia and Bism, Underland is the true home of the Earthmen. Even Father Time, asleep until the End of the World, resides in Underland where the Green Witch rules. In her castle resides an enchanted knight who is really Prince Rilian. Convinced that she has rescued him and will one day make him her king, Rilian obeys her every command. In reality she killed his mother and enchanted him when he came in search of his mother's murderer.

One hour a day, while under a spell where he becomes violent and transforms into a serpent, Rilian is strapped into a silver chair to protect him from harm. The children,

left alone with Rilian, witness his being bound in the silver chair. Suddenly he begins to implore their help to free him from the bonds of the Witch. He claims this one hour is the only time he is truly himself. When the children hesitate to help, he invokes the name of Aslan. Recognizing the fourth Sign and also the possible danger in obeying it, Puddlegum again affirms his faith in Aslan when he says there are not accidents because Aslan, who was present at creation, foresaw every event and each person's reaction (Ford 32). The children then decide to unbind the Prince, who in turn destroys the silver chair.

Later when the Witch discovers what has happened, she causes green smoke and mandolin music to fill the room, both of which make everyone in the room enchanted to believe no world exists but hers. Jill fights the enchantment long enough to declare that if nothing else exists, at least Aslan does. With the help of Puddlegum, however, Rilian manages to kill the Witch as she transforms herself into a serpent. He then shows his deep faith when he interprets his miraculously changed shield as a sign that "Aslan will be our good lord, whether he means us to live or die. And all's one, for that" (SC 168). In turn they all pay homage to the beautiful image of Aslan on Rilian's shield. This adoration affirms their obedience and faith that strengthens their commitment to continue their journey.

There is much celebration at the Witch's death. She has instructed the Earthmen to dig tunnels to the Overworld. Passageways also exist downward to Bism. The Earthmen immediately decide to return to their homeland; through one of the tunnels to the Overworld, the children escape and find themselves back in Narnia where they are rescued by dwarfs. Rilian arrives in time to greet his dying father. Although Caspian dies, the children are taken to Aslan's Country, where on Aslan's Mountain, they witness Caspian's resurrection. Sammons details a biblical parallel:

In a striking image of the saving power of Christ's blood and the thornes which pierced his brow to shed some of that blood, Eustace is told to drive a thorn into Aslan's paw. The blood splashes onto the dead Caspian and then the miraculous change begins as we see death truly working backward, fulfilling the Deeper Magic. (134)

Like Jesus over the death of his friend Lazarus, Aslan weeps and brings Caspian back to life. After performing such a miracle, Aslan also promises the children that they too will return to his Country some day to stay forever. For the meantime Aslan returns them to Experiment House

where he permits the teachers and other children to see only his back. Even this small glimpse creates a "single expression of terror" (SC 215) on their faces, thus recasting God's allowing Moses to see only his back because God's glory is too great for the sinful to bare (Exodus 33:21-23).

The effects of evil contribute to the unification of the story and act as a foil for faith and obedience. Shallowlands, the Green Witch's domain, sharply parallels Charn, Jadis's dead world in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. Evil unfortunately is not always so apparent, especially when it sets out to corrupt the truths about reality. Through the aid of enchantment, the Witch tries to convince the others that the only true world is hers; theirs is but a copy of hers. Sammons indicates that this illustrates "what can happen when our experiences of God and heaven become further and further removed from the experiences of the ancient biblical writers. We begin to view what they say as simply metaphors rather than solid facts" (117). Another example of evil's deceptiveness, portrayed through the fact that both Jadis and the Green Witch are beautiful, with soothing voices, causes both Rilian and the children to fail to recognize the Green Witch as evil.

In addition to the totally malevolent witch, who intentionally tries to corrupt other characters, the deadly sin of sloth nearly destroys the entire quest. Sloth, "a disgust with the spiritual because of the physical effort involved" (King 16), causes Jill to become too lazy to recite the Signs, thus the children miss over half the Signs at first glance. As mentioned earlier, a clear biblical parallel exists between the Signs and God's Commandments, thereby showing that "just as God gives man certain rules, commands, and signs to live by, so Aslan gives his followers similar rules. The stress in each case is on binding or remembering the signs in order that life be lived in accord with the controller" (King 16). Sloth causes a gradual loss of devotion regarding the spiritual tasks Aslan has given Jill, and it is only through Aslan's intervention that Jill's faithfulness is reawakened. King feels that "in Jill [,] Lewis portrays all who fail to persevere. . . . Yet like Jill too, Lewis suggests we can break the chains of sloth; we too can regain a spiritual vision" (King 16).

Lewis concludes his epic journey of mankind in The Last Battle. Set in 1949 earth time and 5222 Narnian time, this narrative recasts many of the biblical predictions concerning the end of the world and is, therefore, one of the

more theological of the Chronicles. Glover suggests that "in terms of theme, it was inevitable that having given thought to the genesis and redemption of Narnia from evil, Lewis would inevitably give the apocalypse" (179-80). Jill asks wouldn't it be lovely if Narnia went on forever, but the inevitable answer is all worlds draw to an end, except Aslan's Country. Just as Lewis creates a beautiful conception of the creation of Narnia in The Magician's Nephew, so too does he create a spell-binding interpretation of its destruction.

Contributing to the unification of The Last Battle lie "the themes of deception, disbelief, and skepticism which appear as the tools used by the unscrupulous for the manipulation of the gullible" (Glover 181). Ford agrees that "Evil has taken over most of Narnia, and its presence is evidenced by the depression and gloom that hang over the world like a poisonous cloud" (180). The final days of Narnia reflect the appearance of a false god. Shift, the Ape, finds a lion's skin and convinces Puzzle, the Donkey, to wear it and pretend to be Aslan, thus creating an "almost ridiculous anti-Christ figure" (Sammons 133). Through the false Aslan cruel orders are given, and consequently many Narnians lose faith in the true Lion because they think the changes in Narnia are a punishment for

something they did wrong. In this narrative "the key theme is that of faith since it is King Tirian's firm faith which leads him to perceive the deception and to call upon Aslan and the children for help" (Glover 182). Tirian and Jewel, the Unicorn, attempt to stop the perpetrators; however, both are captured. In desperation Tirian summons help from the past Kings and Queens. Ford says that in Christian mythology the unicorn frequently is the symbol of the Word of God or even Jesus himself. Although Jewel is not Aslan, he could certainly be recast as one similar to St. Michael, the Archangel, "one like God" (241).

In a dream Tirian sees all the past friends of Narnia, and his plea for help is answered by the appearance of Jill and Eustace. An earth reunion is really held simultaneously with Tirian's plea to all those who have been to Narnia. Edmund and Peter go to London to dig up the Magic Rings that Digory and Polly used to first enter Narnia in The Magician's Nephew. The brothers are scheduled to meet the train carrying Lucy, Jill, Eustace, Digory, and Polly, and unexpectedly the Pevensie parents. Suddenly the train crashes at the station killing everyone, and it is at that moment that Aslan brings Jill and Eustace to Narnia to help Tirian.

Tirian and the children attempt to overthrow the imposter, but the enemy is victorious and overtakes

Cair Paravel. Shift erects a stable at his camp where he claims Aslan resides and thus convinces the Narnians that Aslan and Tash are the same, even going to the extent of merging the two names into one--Tashlan. Ginger, the atheist Cat, enters the Stable to prove that neither Aslan nor Tash really exists, only to find the real Tash inside. Tash, whose name means "blemish" (Sammons 117) is the Calormene god who requires human sacrifices. Ginger, so terrified that he loses his power of speech, fulfills Aslan's prophecy that Talking Beasts would revert to dumb animals if they chose evil as their course in life. Here Lewis not only shows that demons do indeed exist but also retells Jesus's warning the people of the events that would signal His return and the end of the world: "Don't let anyone fool you. For many will come claiming to be the Messiah, and will lead you astray. . . . Many false prophets will appear and lead you astray (John 24:4, 11).

As the final battle rages, Eustace, thrown into the Stable, expects to find Tash. To his surprise he sees the seven Kings and Queens of Narnia and Aslan himself. On the other side of the Stable door, for a true believer, lies a beautiful country. Aslan shows all those inside the Stable that the Narnia they know is ending. Father Time blows his horn, and the creation Digory and Polly

witnessed in The Magician's Nephew reverses itself as the stars begin to fall to the ground. Then "with terrible beauty that almost makes the heart ache. . . . Aslan goes to the Stable door and holds his Last Judgement" (Schakel 116). Those who truly love him, pass through the door. If the animals hate and fear him, they are excluded. Dragons and lizards devour the vegetation, and a wall of water covers the land. Both the sun and the moon turn blood red, and Father Time squeezes the sun until it loses all its light. These events retell Matthew 24:29-31 when Jesus describes the end of the earth: "Immediately after the persecution of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give light, and the stars will seem to fall from the heavens; and the powers overshadowing the earth will be convulsed." The passage continues "and I shall send forth my angels with the sound of a mighty trumpet blast, and they shall gather my chosen ones from the farthest ends of the earth and heaven." Jesus also says "the sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood" (Acts 2:19-20), thus ending time as mankind knows it and beginning eternity.

The Stable door serves as the entrance to Aslan's Country. Lucy remarks that "in our world, too, a Stable once had something inside it that was bigger than our whole

world" (LB 140-41). Jesus also equates himself as an entrance when he says "I am the door; if anyone enters by me, he will be saved" (John 10:9). Lewis's choice of name for the eldest Pevensie child now seems very appropriate, for like the Apostle Peter upon whom Christ built His Church and to whom He gave the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven, Peter Pevensie is now given the keys to Aslan's Kingdom.

The land the children see on the other side of the Stable door reminds them of somewhere they have already been. Here they discover they can accomplish feats impossible to achieve in this world. They scale a waterfall to enter the Golden Gates of a garden, strangely reminiscent of the garden Digory visited in The Magician's Nephew. They finally realize that Aslan created Narnia in the image of his own country. Lucy explains, "This is still Narnia, and more real and more beautiful than the Narnia outside the Stable door. I see . . . world within world, Narnia within Narnia" (LB 180). She also sees England, looking like a cloud; "England within England, the real England just as this is the real Narnia" (LB 181). Aslan, who no longer appears as the Lion (the reader assumes he has taken a human form), now tells the children they are ready to begin the Great Story "which goes on forever: in which every chapter is better than the one before" (LB 184).

Evil, that is not a direct result of forces such as Jadis or the Green Witch, exists for the first time in Narnia. Glover contends that "good and right are questioned and deception and disguise are the tools for the manipulation of false and enslaving beliefs based on fear" (181). The focus of attention on a world of no belief and one far away from grace where evil has total control provides the framework for an apocalypse--the final stages of movement from the "decadent world, through its purging and destruction, into a celestial world" (Glover 182). In the epic journey of everyman, the Chronicles have given a "panoramic survey of the world's entire existence, centering on the themes of creation, sin, redemption, and apocalypse" (Schakel 123).

To unify the conclusion of this epic journey, Lewis employs the cardinal sin of envy, the "inordinate desire for someone else's possession or position" (King 18). The focus of envy in this tale, Shift, wants the power that Aslan has. Even though Shift does not believe in Aslan, he "deliberately sets about to appropriate the honor and authority associated with Aslan's name" (Kind 18). This envy and its subsequent deception result in total destruction, both socially and spiritually. Society virtually collapses as Shift turns all of Aslan's old laws into new

ones designed to enhance his (Shift's) position. Politically, Tirian's rule is overturned when Shift confiscates Tirian's authority. Even more devastating is the spiritual upheaval. As Shift substitutes his will for Aslan's, spiritual heresy begins. As animals begin to question Shift, he tries to instill fear in them by combining Aslan and Tash into one Tashlan. The result is the physical destruction of Narnia. Once again Lewis has shown the devastating power of a deadly sin, for The Last Battle is the "portrait of a society in degradation, and the final apocalypse and glory can only be truly understood and savored when mankind knows how much he has lost and what he has gained in place of the apparent loss" (Glover 186).

In Lewis's journey faith and obedience serve to dispell the forces of envy and make the archetypal struggle for all mankind possible as he travels his short path that opens from creation to destruction. The focus of this chapter stresses obedience and the subsequent reward of not only salvation but also more importantly resurrection. True faith must be accompanied by obedience, and the reward for the voyagers who remain loyal as well as obedient to Aslan during the time of great distress and turmoil is eternal happiness. The focus of attention on a world of no belief and one far away from grace where evil has total

control provides the framework for an apocalypse--the final stages from the "decadent world, through its purging and destruction, into a celestial world" (Glover 182). In the epic journey of everyman, the Chronicles have given a "panoramic survey of the world's entire existence, centering on the themes of creation, sin, redemption, and apocalypse" (Schakel 123).

CHAPTER V

ARRIVAL, THE JOURNEY'S END

The Chronicles of Narnia, modern-day fairy tales, designed not just for children but for all who enjoy the realm of fantasy, trace the epic journey of mankind from creation through destruction to everlasting happiness, stasis. Readers range from five-year-olds to advanced theology students. Of all Lewis's works that cover the broad spectrum of criticism to Christian apologetics, many critics believe he will be best remembered for this seven-volume series of Christian myth that depicts mankind's fate as voyagers through the unknown.

Lewis believes that the true test of a good book lies in "the number of times you can read it and find more in it than you did to start with--or find that your delight doesn't diminish with re-reading" ("Sometimes" 3). A good book, therefore, is equally worth reading at age ten as well as at fifty; the difference lies in one's perception of the same events.

Much precedent exists for the journey motif in epic tradition. From Homer to Bunyan, everyman in his journey of life traverses the valley of the shadow before he finds

true happiness, for he must suffer the pangs of sin and death before he attains his locus amoenis. This universal preoccupation with good and evil, happiness and misery, glory and shame form the universal themes of legend, myth, and epic. Many critics believe that Lewis's purpose in writing the Chronicles is "to entertain children, [and] perhaps in the process [to teach] them subtle truths about Christian virtues" (Sammons 21), for by experiencing both good and evil in Narnia and by learning to recognize the disguises of evil in its temptations, children can better understand these concepts in their own world and learn to deal with them. Tolkien's essay "On Fairy Stories" asserts that fantasy can cleanse one's vision of the world, thereby strengthening a relish for real life. After reading fantasy, one returns to the real world with renewed pleasure and satisfaction. After reading the Chronicles, one's view of this world does change. Perhaps only imagination has developed, yet one "may hear echoes of some Christian concept presented in a startling new way, without its 'stained-glass-and-Sunday-school associations'" ("PWD" qtd. in Sammons 11).

Tolkien also believes fantasy allows the reader to communicate with other living beings and escape death. Narnia is the magical land beyond the Wardrobe filled with

all sorts of creatures reminiscent of mythology, medieval legends, and children's books, and each one, even though he may not have the gift of speech, does communicate. Although the children physically die in a train wreck, they do escape from death into an afterlife with Aslan. Lewis maintains that the true significance of such stories lies not in escapism but in development of a spiritual desire, a longing for another world, a desire that everyone has experienced ("Sometimes" 3). Sammons furthers this argument with "such stories not only present the reader a whole spectrum of experiences in concrete form but, in giving [him] experiences [he] never had before, thus add to life." She continues "so although the tales may not be exactly like real life, they may show [the reader] what reality may be like in another world" (28).

The most important aspect of fantasy according to Tolkien is the quality of joy that it evokes in the reader. He believes "the fairy story found in the gospels embraces the essence of all fairy stories. . . . The Birth of Christ is the eucatastrophe of the story of the Incarnation." He concludes "this story begins and ends in joy. . . . There is no tale ever told that men would rather find is true" (qtd. in Sammons 28).

Although biblical extensions are very much a part of the Chronicles, they are certainly not allegory, for

characters and events in Narnia do not correspond identically with characters and events in the Bible. Glover insists that "authors never originate anything in the sense of creating it; they re-arrange the pieces in new kaleidoscopic combinations" (135). As the creator of this series, Lewis "rearranges elements God has already provided in this world and which already contain His meaning" (Sammons 122). Since spiritual truths lie often not only beyond mankind's experience but also beyond his understanding, attempts to describe them frequently make use of symbols, "just as the Bible uses Scriptural imagery to describe God and Heaven" (Sammons 77). Through the use of symbols, mankind gains a clearer knowledge of Christ. So it is in Narnia when Aslan explains to the children that by knowing him there for a short time, they might better know him here on earth. As a result the reader "must stretch and exercise [his imagination] and understanding of spiritual reality in order that [he] may use them in [the] everyday world" (Sammons 77-78). Several terms apply to what Lewis attempts in the Chronicles: transposition (the restatement of ideas in new terms) and supposition (what if God were to appear in a different form in another world?). Lewis begins his epic journey with the supposition that there is a world like Narnia that "needs redemption and

that the king of beasts is to carry out the roles of creator, redeemer, and judge as he does in our world" (Ford xxvi).

Fantasy, an invitation into other worlds, allows for "events whose significance can have a soul-expanding impact upon [the reader] and from which he returns a changed being" (Glover 56). For instance, by approaching the concepts of good and evil in terms of acceptable and unacceptable behavior in society's standards rather than religious standards, Lewis helps liberate his narratives from the "watchful dragons" he hoped to steal past. Aslan can be loved for himself, yet Lewis's real success lies in the possibility that a "reader, turning from the Chronicles to the gospels, would experience delight in recognition, and detect in the Biblical Christ the fun and the joy, as well as the solemnity and royalty, of his fictional counterpart" (Filmer 19).

Whether it is proper to consider the Chronicles of Narnia as allegories seems to be a persistent question that plagues both readers and interpreters of Lewis. There appears little doubt that Lewis intended to write didactic as well as entertaining prose for young and old alike; however "mistaking the genre of the Chronicles puts [one] in danger of reading them as [he] expects them to be rather than as they are" (Huttar 1).

The epic genre deals with the adventures of heroes. Such narratives frequently reflect society's own view of itself because they incorporate tales and legends that have been handed down for centuries. Beginning in medias res and full of heroic deeds and noble characters, the Chronicles of Narnia center on the pilgrims' wanderings and their struggles to find and understand themselves. Lewis's Chronicles form the journey, the questing, of mankind toward perfection to achieve his locus amoenis. Even though the narratives take place in another world, the genius of them lies in the fact that they constantly relate to this world. Any reader who follows the thread of the Chronicles will find some meaning in a literal interpretation; yet if he wishes, he may uncover a fuller meaning. Although not allegory, these narratives dramatize Christian beliefs. Redemption of the soul, man's free will to choose between salvation and damnation, and the conviction that this choice will endure for eternity constitute the major beliefs that help determine the course of the narratives. Nevertheless, for all its references to religion, The Chronicles of Narnia are still essentially a work of vivid imagination. By recasting mankind's epic pilgrimage in another world, and by deliberately avoiding allegory, Lewis encourages his readers to enlarge their

imagination, to ponder, to dream, thus accomplishing what all great writers have strived for regardless of genre.

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