

# A Guide Through Narnia

Revised and Expanded Edition

Martha C. Sammons



a guide through  
**NARNIA**

Martha C. Sammons

Harold Shaw Publishers  
Wheaton, Illinois

to Marty

*Scripture passages quoted from the Revised Standard Version and The Living Bible are designated RSV and TLB respectively.*

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## A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S

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*Faltering, with bowed heads, our altered parents  
Slowly descended from their holy hill,  
All their good fortune left behind and done with,  
Out through the one-way pass*

*Into the dangerous world, these strange countries.  
No rumour in Eden had reached the human pair  
Of things not men, yet half like men, that wandered  
The earth beyond its walls;*

*But now they heard the mountains stirred and shaken,  
All the heap'd crags re-echoing, the deep tarns  
And caverns shuddering and the abysmal gorges  
With dismal drums of Dwarfs;*

*Or, some prodigious night, waked by a thumping  
Shock as of piles being driven two miles away,  
Ran till the sunrise shone upon the bouncing  
Monopods at their heels;*

*Or held their breath, hiding, and saw their elders,  
The race of giants—the bulldozer's pace,  
Heads like balloons, toad-thick, ungainly torsos—  
Dotting the plain like ricks. . . .*

*Memory, not built upon a fake from Piltdown,  
Reaches us. We know more than bones can teach. . . .*

*Before we're born we have heard it.  
Long-silenced ogres boom, voices like gongs  
Reverberate in the mind, a Dwarf-drum rolls,  
Trolls wind unchancy horns.*

C. S. Lewis, "The Adam Unparadised"



## I N T R O D U C T I O N

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The purpose of this book is to tell you something about the creator of the seven Narnia books, how he came to write them, to summarize the history of Narnia, and then to talk about what the Pevensie children learn during their adventures, and their meaning to readers of these Chronicles.

Published during a relatively brief time—only about 6 years—the Narnia tales achieved quick success, especially as children read them and their parents eagerly grabbed them up to see what their offspring were so excited about. Lewis's friend, Walter Hooper, tells of a boy in Oxford, for instance, whose parents found him chopping away at the back of their wardrobe and into the bricks of their house, trying to get into Narnia. *The Last Battle* received the Carnegie Medal for the best children's book of 1955. Yet these "fairy tales" are not just for children, as we shall see. In fact, in recent years these stories have become Lewis's most

widely read and best selling books, especially around college campuses. Readers range from four-and-a-half year olds to monks, who read them for their theology, to college students analyzing them in depth for college courses and masters' theses. Of all Lewis's works, ranging from literary criticism to Christian apologetics to fiction, many believe the seven Narnia Chronicles to be his best and most lasting work.

C. S. Lewis once wrote that the test of a good book is 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." Although this "test" seems to hold true for all of Lewis's novels, the Narnia tales seem overwhelmingly packed with adventure, suspense, humor and sorrow, philosophy and theology. Of course, Lewis would be the first to urge a reader not to "try" to find things he didn't see himself in these books or have inherently within him to begin with. You may think of them simply as good children's stories or may sense the many virtues the young heroes and heroines learn during their visits. In response to the announcement that the Narnia books would be televised beginning in early 1979, Walter Cronkite said, "*The Chronicles of Narnia* have genuine family appeal. In a dramatic and compelling way these classics present human values often lacking in today's television: loyalty, courage, caring, responsibility, truthfulness and compassion. Produced with care for these values, *The Chronicles of Narnia* can, and I believe will, become the classics in television that they are in literature."<sup>1</sup>

A unique view of man, especially in our modern world, can be seen in four ordinary English children becoming Kings and Queens, for Lewis believed in the potential of each individual to some day be a King or Queen of heaven. Eustace, turned into a dragon and literally peeled out of his sins by Aslan, plus others like him, are turned inside-out, their prideful personalities remade by Aslan. Further-

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more, each individual learns to obey and to perform his particular task when summoned into Aslan's world. This harmonious plan of things is jarred out of tune by evil, which is not only confronted and defeated in a personal, internal warfare, but externally—in perpetual battles with wolves, bad dwarfs, White and Green Witches, and their like. By experiencing the effects of evil on Narnia, by learning to recognize the various shapes and disguises of evil, and by perceiving the nature of temptation, we can certainly better understand it in our own world and learn to overcome it.

After reading these stories, you may return to the "real world" changed, with a new way of looking at things, your mind opened to the possibilities of an unseen spiritual world and the limits of merely human intellect and undeveloped imagination. On an even deeper level, though, perhaps you may be touched in a special and personal way by the Great Lion, Aslan himself—and the infinite, bounding joy he brings and bestows on his country, or the terror he evokes in those who fear and hate him. Or you may hear echoes of some Christian concept presented in a startling new way, without its "stained-glass-and-Sunday-school associations." No matter what you have enjoyed about these stories, we hope this book helps you understand a little more about the author of the Narnia Chronicles and, more important, about the Creator Author depicted within its pages, whose story "no one on earth has read: which goes on for ever: in which every chapter is better than the one before."

—*Martha C. Sammons*





## CHAPTER 1

# The Creator of the Narnia Chronicles

*"He has made everything beautiful in its time;  
also he has put eternity into man's mind."*  
Ecclesiastes 3:11

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C. S. Lewis is becoming increasingly well known as the author of an overwhelmingly varied range of books other than the Narnia tales. He is a well-respected authority on Medieval and Renaissance literature and Milton; he has written key theological works such as *Miracles* and *The Problem of Pain*; and his book, *Mere Christianity*, was instrumental in the conversion of people as diverse as Watergate felon Charles Colson and black radical Eldridge Cleaver. *The Screwtape Letters* is a unique classic whose main character is a devil advising his nephew on how to corrupt a human soul. The slim volume *The Abolition of Man* may well be one of the great philosophical books of our time; and the science fiction trilogy (*Out of the Silent Planet*, *Perelandra*, *That Hideous Strength*) are to be found in every bookstore.

Lewis is now read three times as much as he was in his lifetime, and book sales have increased six fold since his

death. In 1978, for example, two million of his books were sold in the U.S. and England—over one million of the Narnia Chronicles alone—and the trend is increasing. When asked what quality about Lewis impressed them most, members of the New York C. S. Lewis Society gave a wide range of responses, mentioning such qualities as “joy,” “truth,” “imagination,” “wholeness,” “belief,” “holiness,” “light” and “beauty.”

But why would a bachelor Professor of Medieval and Renaissance Literature at Cambridge University write seven children’s stories when he was in his fifties? While it is always difficult to point categorically to elements of an author’s life as influences in his writings, we will look at some of the most important events in Lewis’s life which helped to mold so creative an imagination and which led to the writing of the Narnian Chronicles. If you are interested in learning more, Lewis’s life is described at length by Walter Hooper and Roger Green in *C. S. Lewis: A Biography*, and by Lewis himself in his autobiography, *Surprised By Joy*.

Clive Staples Lewis was born on November 29, 1898 in Belfast. He died on November 22, 1963—the same day John F. Kennedy was assassinated. When his mother died before he was ten, Lewis was very angry at God for not miraculously healing her, like a Magician. Perhaps some of his deep distress at his mother’s long illness is reflected in Digory’s sorrow over his dying mother and her joyous recovery through the life-giving apple from Aslan.

When Lewis was five, his family moved to a huge house whose atmosphere had a profound influence on him and his older brother, Warren. Lewis said: “I am a product of long corridors, empty sunlit rooms, distant noises of gurgling cisterns and pipes, and the noise of wind under the tiles.” Because of the typical cold wetness of the climate of Great Britain, the boys were often driven to entertain themselves indoors. In *The Magician’s Nephew*, Digory and Polly

explore the attic above their houses just as Lewis did: "Their adventures began chiefly because it was one of the wettest and coldest summers there had been for years. That drove them to do indoor things: you might say, indoor exploration."

Such a setting became the matrix for Lewis's fertile imagination to grow in. Fascinated by Beatrix Potter's books and by animal cartoons, plus the quantities of books stacked in every available nook in the house, Lewis began writing his own stories before he was six and up until the time he was 12. He attributes his turn to writing to the fact that he had only one joint in his thumb and thus was clumsy at everything else. So, he tells us in his autobiography, he "staked out a claim to one of the attics" and decorated it with his own pictures or those from magazines. Polly Plummer "had used the bit of the tunnel just beside the cistern as a smuggler's cave. She had brought up bits of old packing cases and the seats of broken kitchen chairs, and things of that sort, and spread them across from rafter to rafter so as to make a bit of floor. Here she kept a cash-box containing various treasures, and a story she was writing."

Polly's creator, C. S. Lewis, wrote his first stories in this kind of hideaway, too: "Here my first stories were written, and illustrated, with enormous satisfaction. They were an attempt to combine my two chief literary pleasures—'dressed animals' and 'knights-in-armor.' As a result, I wrote about chivalrous mice and rabbits who rode out in complete mail to kill not giants but cats." His stories were about a medieval country called Animal-Land, inhabited by an array of characters such as Bublish I; a frog, Lord John Big; a horse, Samuel Macgoullah; and an owl, Viscount Puddiphat. The first book, called *The King's Ring*, centered around the theft of some crown jewels in the reign of Benjamin I. Another book, *The Locked Door*, was written when he was 12, yet shows a style and vocabulary mature for such a young boy.

There is some evidence that Lewis's brother Warren was also writing his own stories, set in modern India with trains and steamships, and Lewis may have decided to combine the two worlds and their inhabitants. At any rate, he created a mythical land called Boxen. He thus became interested in the setting of Animal-Land and systematically recorded its 700 year history, then its geography, complete with maps, steamship routes and elaborate illustrations of boats.

Although we can see how this might have been the embryo of what later would grow into Narnia, Lewis emphasized that *none* of the Narnian stories or characters were drawn from these childhood tales: "Animal-Land had nothing whatever in common with Narnia except the anthropomorphic beasts. Animal-Land, by its whole quality, excluded the least hint of wonder. . . . My invented world was (for me) of interest, bustle, humour, and character; but there was no poetry, even no romance in it. It was almost astonishingly prosaic." The stories dealt mainly with politics rather than with the more imaginative events and the sense of joy—the "kind of happiness and wonder that makes you serious"—that pervade Narnia.

A second element runs as a thread throughout all of Lewis' life—the search for joy. It began as a series of "aesthetic" experiences scattered through his younger years. Once, Warren made a miniature garden in the lid of a biscuit tin with moss, twigs, and flowers. "That was the first beauty I ever knew. . . . It made me aware of nature . . . as something cool, dewy, fresh, exuberant." Similarly, the low line of the Castlereagh Hills which he could see from his nursery window—perhaps contoured like the mountains of Aslan's country—taught him longing, or *Sehnsucht*. One day he stood beside a flowering currant bush and the same sensation came over him—"a desire; but desire for what? . . . in a certain sense everything else that had ever happened to me was insignificant in comparison."

Later in his life, an Arthur Rackham illustration from *Siegfried and the Twilight of the Gods* and a line from this retelling of the Norse myth engulfed Lewis in what he described as "Pure Northernness": "a vision of huge, clear spaces hanging above the Atlantic in the endless twilight of Northern summer, remoteness, severity," and he felt a return of the sense of distant joy for which he had long searched. The myth also contained elements he looked for in religion, and he admitted that he loved the god Balder before he loved Christ. Throughout all the Narnia tales we can sense the spell of Aslan's country or a glimpse of something no one can quite put their finger on.

But we should also mention that Lewis's life had another side: "I am telling a story of two lives. They have nothing to do with each other." On the one side was the inner, secret world of imagination; on the other, that of the intellect. "The two hemispheres of my mind were in the sharpest contrast. On the one side a many-islanded sea of poetry and myth; on the other a glib and shallow 'rationalism.' Nearly all that I loved I believed to be imaginary; nearly all that I believed to be real I thought grim and meaningless."

Part of this other half of Lewis's life can be associated with his strict formal schooling in one boarding school after another. Undertones of his feelings about school are certainly obvious in the Narnia stories. At 11, he attended his first boarding school, dressed in the stiff Eton collar which he came to hate. (Naturally, in Narnia and Aslan's country, not a bit of elastic, flannel, or starch is to be found!) Setting off for school at the start of a new term he must have felt much like the four Pevensie children awaiting the train at the station: "they were all rather gloomy and no-one could think of anything to say." Lewis's somewhat irrational schoolmaster, "Oldie," flogged the boys liberally and indiscriminately. At 12, Lewis switched to Campbell College in Belfast where he was introduced to literature by his

teacher "Octie" and read fairy tales, especially enjoying stories about the Dwarfs. Then, while attending prep school, he ceased to be a Christian.

Up until this time, Lewis viewed God as more or less a "Magician" whom he wished would go away, believing in the doctrines of Christianity simply because he feared hell. At Malvern, though, the Matron introduced Lewis to the spirit world of the occult, where he became further frustrated at trying hard to "feel" something when he prayed.

And it was at Malvern College ("Wyvern"), which he attended at 15, where Lewis probably learned the great distaste he thenceforth showed for the British school system. Although he was an excellent student and his teacher, "Smewgy," further nourished his love for literature, including Greek and Roman myth, he was lonely and miserable at this school. A "tart" or "fagging" system required that all the younger boys wait continually on the older boys and be ready to serve their whims or succumb to pranks like being locked up in a dark, underground room. It was all probably much like the misery Jill and Eustace experience at Experiment House, where they are bullied or "attended to" by "mean," "conceited," "cruel," "sneaky" schoolmates with names like Cholmondely Major, Edith Winterblott, "Spotty" Sorner, and the two "loathesome" Garrett twins. At that time, he felt paradoxically that God did not exist and he was angry at him for not existing.

Next, his tutor, W. T. Kirkpatrick, after whom Kirke the professor in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is perhaps patterned, further influenced Lewis with his atheistic, positivist logic. But it was with the help of "Kirke's" excellent coaching that Lewis won a scholarship to Oxford. He later became a Fellow of Magdalen College. Lewis's great love for learning and his endless reading—from Homer and Plato to classical writers to fairy tales—despite the tendency of his schooling to discourage his belief in God, is reflected in the Narnia tales. Patched

together out of his vast memory, they contain fragments reminiscent of Malory and the Arthurian tradition; Norse, Celtic, Greek and Arabian myths; and children's books such as those of Potter, Nesbit, and George MacDonald.

A combination of events led to Lewis's eventual conversion to Christianity, and he has since become noted as one of its chief apologists. First, a number of his closest friends, including Owen Barfield and Nevill Coghill, discussed, or more properly, argued Christian beliefs with him and began to influence his thinking. He was especially flabbergasted when an atheist friend admitted that the historical evidence for Christianity was quite good. Also, all of the authors Lewis especially liked, such as Spenser, Milton, G. K. Chesterton, and even Norse myths, conveyed a certain "religious" quality that others lacked. In fact, Lewis regarded most of his reading as a kind of "trap" for him. George MacDonald's adult fantasy *Phantastes* presented him with the "bright shadow" he later identified as "holiness." Later, MacDonald's children's books greatly inspired Lewis's own writing.

Then, Lewis discovered a book by Samuel Alexander called *Space, Time and Deity* in which he read that it was impossible to think about something and experience it simultaneously. What this showed him was that everything he had been searching for all his life and mistaking for joy were merely its by-products, only pointers signaling with all fingers that they had their source elsewhere. They were only "appearances of the Absolute," of God himself, in which we all are rooted. So too, all the children discover in Aslan's country their real home, the real Narnia and England of which all others had been only shoddy reflections. Thus, in 1929, a man who had once stubbornly refused to give in, knelt down and reluctantly admitted that God was God. Two years later, when he set out on a trip to Whipsnade zoo, "I did not believe that Jesus Christ is the



Son of God, and when we reached the zoo I did." Aslan's cure had begun!

## CHAPTER 2

# The Creation of the Narnia Tales

*"I am concerned with a certain way of looking at life,  
which was created in me by the fairy tales,  
but has since been meekly ratified by the mere facts."*  
G. K. Chesterton—"The Ethics of Elfland"

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It is interesting that Lewis's creativity started to flourish in earnest after his conversion. One important influence was undoubtedly that of a group of friends—his brother Warren, J. R. R. Tolkien, Owen Barfield, Hugo Dyson, and others—who gathered regularly to read their manuscripts aloud to each other, then criticize or debate.

But how did Lewis come to write his Narnia books? Were they simply written for his god-daughter Lucy Barfield, as he suggests in the dedication letter at the beginning of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*? "I wrote this story for you, but when I began it I had not realized that girls grow quicker than books. As a result you are already too old for fairy tales, and by the time it is printed and bound you will be older still. But some day you will be old enough to start reading fairy tales again. . . ." Or was his purpose to entertain children, perhaps in the process teaching them subtle truths about Christianity and Christian virtues?

To begin with, Lewis had only one book in mind: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, and he says he had no notion of writing any others. A “hazy sequel” only came to mind long after the idea for this book was conceived. In Autumn 1939, four schoolgirls—evacuees from London—came to spend some time with Mrs. Moore, Lewis’s adopted mother, and Lewis entertained them. On the back of another book written by Lewis was found the original opening to *The Lion*: “This book is about four children whose names were Ann, Martin, Rose, and Peter. But it is most about Peter who was the youngest. They all had to go away from London suddenly because of the Air Raids, and because Father, who was in the army, had gone off to the War and Mother was doing some kind of war work. They were sent to stay with a relation of Mother’s who was a very old Professor who lived by himself in the country.”<sup>2</sup> Thus we can see some similarities between the basic plot and events in Lewis’s own life at the time.

Lewis says he is not positive what made him, “in a particular year of my life, feel that not only a fairy tale, but a fairy tale addressed to children, was exactly what I must write—or burst.” Unsure of *how* he actually got his ideas, he is certain that all seven of his books began by “seeing pictures in my head. At first they were not a story, just pictures. *The Lion* all began with a picture of a Faun carrying an umbrella and parcels in a snowy wood. The picture had been in my mind since I was about 16. Then one day when I was about 40, I said to myself: ‘Let’s try to make a story about it.’ ” Other pictures he had in his mind were a queen on a sledge, and a magnificent lion. Then he had to invent reasons why they should appear in those particular situations, and the ideas began to “bubble up” into story form.

Still, even after he had begun, Lewis says he was unsure of where the book was really going, and he turned to writing some of his theological books. *The Lion* sat thus for

10 years, uncompleted. Then from somewhere, "suddenly Aslan came bounding into it. I think I had been having a good many dreams of lions about that time. Apart from that, I don't know where the Lion came from or why He came. But once He was there He pulled the whole story together, and soon He pulled the six other Narnian stories in after Him."

By the time Lewis's American friend Chad Walsh visited in the summer of 1948, Lewis spoke "vaguely of completing a children's book which he [had] begun 'in the tradition of E. Nesbit.'" By March 10, 1949, he read the first two chapters of *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe* to his friend Roger Lancelyn Green and completed this first book in the Narnia series by the end of the month. So Narnia had begun!

Unsure what should come next, Lewis decided to move on to explain how the lamp-post came to be in Narnia. Walter Hooper says that very few original manuscripts of the Narnia tales exist—only some fragments—but they do indicate that Lewis did work on ideas which later found their ways into some of the books or were tossed out with the trash. A good example is his story of Digory and his godmother, Mrs. LeFay, a magician. Then he got a better idea and wanted to see what it would be like to be pulled by magic into a new land. So what started as a book called *Drawn into Narnia*, then *A Horn in Narnia*, became what we know as *Prince Caspian*.

By the end of February 1950, the manuscript of *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* was ready, since Lewis liked his first draft of the story and it had come to him quickly and easily. He seems to have worked from a brief outline of the book, although it contains some plot fragments which Lewis never used or else incorporated into *Prince Caspian*. By July, a book first called *Narnia and the North* (then *The Desert Road to Narnia, The Horse and the Boy, Cor of Archenland, The Horse Stole the Boy, Over the Border, The*

*Horse Bree*), and finally, as you must by now have guessed, *The Horse and His Boy*, was completed. As you can see, Lewis had difficulty deciding on titles, and many of them were suggested by his publisher.

*The Silver Chair* (originally *Night Under Narnia, The Wild Waste Lands*) soon followed. *The Magician's Nephew* came next, now with the characters of both Digory and Polly, and Mrs. LeFay transformed into Andrew's godmother. At last, two and one-half years later, came *The Last Battle*, finished by the end of May 1954. The books were published between 1950 and 1956, and when Roger Green suggested the name "The Chronicles of Narnia" for the series, it stuck.

As a result of his series, Lewis, unlike many authors, seems to have achieved almost instant success. We can perhaps understand why his friend, J. R. R. Tolkien, who labored over *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion* for most of his life, was somewhat critical of the Narnia books; he also thought the religion too obvious. But Lewis received quantities of fan letters, especially from children who seemed to react naturally to the ideas in the books, but mainly to Aslan himself. In fact, they wanted more! Lewis, however, felt he had written enough: "There are only two times at which you can stop a thing: one is before everyone is tired of it, and the other is after!" As for the adult readers, Lewis was pleased with those who wanted to know the sources of his ideas. At first, a number of mothers and school mistresses felt the books might frighten children. "But," says Lewis, "the real children like it, and I am astonished how some *very* young ones seem to understand it. I think it frightens some adults, but very few children." Most parents read them to find out what all "the fuss" was about and, according to Walter Hooper, "became converted and pressed them on their friends." Now, over one million are sold yearly, half of them bought by college students.

## Illustrations

All the illustrations in every edition of the Narnia series were drawn by Pauline Baynes, who was commissioned to illustrate the books. Many letters were written from Lewis to Miss Baynes and demonstrate his approval of her pictures—with the exception of the “disproportion” of the children in *The Lion*: “could you possibly pretty them up a little?” Her pictures are based on Lewis’s own sketches (of the map of Narnia, the monopods) or his answers to her questions (about Puddleglum, for example). In fact, Lewis attributed much of the success of his stories to her illustrations.

Maps of the various lands and oceans are found on the end papers of the Geoffrey Bles and Puffin editions of *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, *The Silver Chair*, and *The Horse and His Boy*. Macmillan paper back editions contain neither the maps nor all the illustrations.

## Lewis’s View of Fairy Stories

In his letters, but especially in the essays collected in a book called *Of Other Worlds*, Lewis presents some of his views on fairy tales and writing for children. He says that when the imagination in him led him to write the Narnia tales, he did not begin by first “asking what children want and then endeavoring to adapt myself (this was not needed).” In Lewis’s opinion, such an approach results in what he considered “bad” children’s literature, the type that only attempts to dish up to them what they want or treats them like a distinct and inferior race. Instead, he decided that the fairy tale was the genre best fitted for what he wanted to say—the “ideal Form” which his ideas demanded.

The only real effect this form had on his style was on the level of his vocabulary, lack of erotic love or analytical passages, and composition of chapters of almost equal length for reading aloud. But his style is remarkably clear and vivid, like that of many fairy stories. Who can forget

the many, long-awaited meals the Pevensie children sit down to eat—the “nice brown eggs, lightly boiled . . . sardines on toast, and then buttered toast, and then toast with honey, and then a sugar topped cake” with Mr. Tumnus; or the freshly caught trout, boiled potatoes, and sticky marmalade rolls with the Beavers; or the turkeys, geese, peacocks, boar’s heads, sides of venison, pies shaped like ships or dragons or elephants, ice puddings, bright lobsters, gleaming salmon, nuts, grapes, pineapples, peaches, pomegranates, melons, and tomatoes at Aslan’s Table? Lewis gives us deep, unforgettable images like Eustace’s undragoning and the tiniest details, down to the dead blue-bottle on the window-sill or the slight blister on Susan’s heel.

A good children’s story, says Lewis, should not be written “down” as if told to a child. In fact, we are wrong in believing that children’s stories are written just for children. Most great fantasy and fairy tales are addressed to *everyone*, and thus the author should speak to his reader simply as one person speaking to another. Only bad stories are enjoyed just by children: “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—except, of course, books of information.” The only reason most fairy tales unfortunately “gravitated” to the nursery is because their elders ceased to like them. Lewis says when he was ten, “I read fairy tales in secret and would have been ashamed if I had been found doing so. Now that I am fifty I read them openly. When I became a man I put away childish things, including the fear of childishness and the desire to be very grown up.” In a sense, we grow through stages when we are first attracted to fairy tales, then ashamed of reading them, and finally perhaps return to them as adults. “Some day you will be old enough to start reading fairy tales again,” Lewis wrote to Lucy Barfield.

Actually, according to G. K. Chesterton, 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. Lewis also agrees with Tolkien's assertions in his significant essay, "On Fairy Stories," that fantasy can give us "recovery"—a cleansing of our vision of the world, thereby strengthening our relish for real life. Thus, after reading, we return to the "real world" with renewed pleasure, awe, and satisfaction. "The boy does not despise real woods because he has read of enchanted woods," writes Lewis; "the reading makes all real woods a little enchanted."

Certainly, no one of the children returns from Narnia to earth unchanged. Polly, for example, notes how the mysterious tunnels in her house seem tame after sojourning in Charn. Eustace, of course, is *inwardly* turned around. Through reading, we too learn not to treat things as *mere* objects, as Ramandu teaches: "even in your world that is not what a star is but only what it is made of." An interesting turnabout of this "renewed vision" comes about in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, when Caspian is amazed to hear that the children come from a round world. He had only read about them in fairy tales.

"But I've always wished there were and I've always longed to live in one, Oh, I'd give anything—I wonder why you can get into our world and we never get into yours? If only I had the chance! It must be exciting to live on a thing like a ball."

"There's nothing particularly exciting about a round world when you're there," says Edmund.

Another result of fairy stories, in Tolkien's view, is the fulfillment of our desires: to communicate with other living beings and escape death. Certainly Narnia fulfills both these desires. Caspian, for example, says, "If I hadn't believed in him before now, I would now. Back there among the Humans the people who laughed at Aslan would have laughed at stories about talking beasts and Dwarfs. Sometimes I did wonder if there really was such a person as Aslan:



but then I sometimes wondered if there were really people like you. Yet there you are." This, of course, is a quite common aspect of children's stories, though in not many stories are the children actually allowed to die in a railway accident. Yet escape from death is found in the glorious afterlife with Aslan in what Tolkien calls Eucatastrophe, or a truly happy ending.

Are such stories merely escapism or wish fulfillment then? No, says Lewis. Instead, their true significance lies in their ability to arouse in one's mind "a longing for he knows not what. It stirs and troubles him (to his life-long enrichment) with the dim sense of something beyond his reach and, far from dulling or emptying the actual world, gives it a new dimension of depth. . . . This is a special kind of longing." This longing, says Lewis, is "*askesis*," or a spiritual exercise. Since we long for another world, to see beauty and be united with it, "that is why we have peopled air and earth and water with gods and goddesses and nymphs and elves—that, though we cannot, yet these projections can, enjoy in themselves that beauty, grace, and power of which Nature is the image." Furthermore, such stories not only present to us a whole spectrum of experiences in concrete form but, in giving us experiences we never had before, thus *add* to life. So although the tales may not be exactly *like* real life, they may show us what reality may be like "at some more central region."

This leads us to one of the most important aspects of the Narnia tales: the quality of "joy" which Tolkien says results from good fantasy—a "sudden glimpse of the underlying reality or truth." For in every "eucatastrophe" we see a glimmer of an even deeper reality—the Christian story itself. The "fairy story" found in the gospels embraces the essence of all fairy stories, says Tolkien: "The Birth of Christ is the eucatastrophe of the story of the Incarnation. This story begins and ends in joy. It has pre-eminently the 'inner consistency of reality.' There is no tale ever told that men would rather find was true."

## CHAPTER 3

# The Chronicles of Narnia

*“ It was about a cup and a sword and a tree and a green hill, I know that much. But I can't remember and what shall I do? ” And she never could remember; and ever since that day what Lucy means by a good story is a story which reminds her of the forgotten story in the Magician's Book. ”*

—The Voyage of the Dawn Treader

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Although the Narnia books are numbered in the sequence of their writing, beginning with *The Lion*, the correct *chronological* order of the events narrated is as follows: *The Magician's Nephew*, *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*. We will not only briefly review each story, but fill in the events between the stories from information provided by an outline of Narnian history which Lewis wrote after the stories were published and which is reproduced in Walter Hooper's essay "Past Watchful Dragons" in *Imagination and the Spirit*.

### **The Magician's Nephew**

The events in *The Magician's Nephew* take place in 1900. Chronologically, this is the first book of the series because it describes how Narnia was created. The whole adventure

begins one day in England when a 12 year old boy named Digory peers over a wall and meets a little girl named Polly Plummer. One day, they accidently find themselves in the secret attic study of Digory's eccentric Uncle Andrew, a dabbler in magic. By tricking Polly into touching a special ring he has created out of magic dust, Uncle Andrew sends Polly off into a place called the Wood Between the Worlds.

Bravely deciding to rescue her, Digory follows with another magic ring, and two different ones to bring them back. The two children discover that through dozens of small pools in this drowsy, quiet woodland they can enter various other worlds. Diving into one of the pools they find themselves in Charn, a dead world where everyone, including Jadis the Witch, is frozen into immobility by means of an enchantment. Digory, insatiably curious, strikes a tiny bell which wakes the Witch. By grabbing hold of Digory, she comes back with them to England—much to the children's dismay!

After causing havoc with Uncle Andrew and his sister, as well as the police and a cabby (English taxi driver), the Witch is yanked back into still another world by Digory and a magic ring. Unfortunately, Polly, Andrew, the Cabby and his horse Strawberry are also transported into this new world of Nothing—nothing, that is, until they hear the voice of a magnificent Lion who sings life into being and gradually creates a world before their eyes: sun, flowers, grass, beasts. Two of each animal are chosen by the Lion to be Talking Beasts and set over all the other animals. The Cabby's wife, Helen, is summoned into Narnia, soapsuds still on her arms, and she and the Cabby become the first King and Queen of Narnia, for in that land only humans can rule.

Meanwhile, Digory is sent on the task of getting an apple from a hill far away in the Western Wilds. He is provided with aid from Polly and Strawberry—who has now become Fledge, a Flying Horse. When they arrive at the garden,

Digory again encounters Jadis, who tempts him convincingly to eat an apple as she is doing. Although Digory is certainly hungry and also desperately wishes to take an apple back to his mother to cure her of her illness, he does not submit to the witch's enticement but obediently returns with an apple to Aslan the Lion. From this apple comes the Tree of Protection which guards Narnia against the Witch for many years. Aslan rewards Digory's obedience and patience by presenting him with an apple which wonderfully cures his mother. The seed of this apple grows into a tree in England, from the wood of which Digory later builds a magic wardrobe.

During the years that follow, 40 earth years and 1000 Narnian years pass before humans return to Narnia, and, according to Lewis's outline, several events occur involving surrounding countries. King Frank and Queen Helen's youngest son, Col, leads followers into Archenland, which lies just south of Narnia, and becomes its first king. Then outlaws from Archenland set up a kingdom further south, called Calormen. The Calormenes, in turn, colonize Telmar (to the west of Narnia), but behave so wickedly that Aslan turns them into dumb beasts. The Lone Islands in the Great Sea east of Narnia are given to King Gale as his reward for delivering the inhabitants from a dragon. Then, 898 Narnian years after its creation, Jadis returns out of the North and the long winter begins.

### **The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe**

The events in this book take place 1000 Narnian years after the creation of Narnia, or the year 1940 in England. By now Digory is old professor Kirke, and the four Pevensie children—Peter, Edmund, Susan, and Lucy—come to stay with him to get away from the air-raids in London. One day, Lucy, hiding in the professor's magic wardrobe, accidentally discovers, not the expected back wall of the closet,

but the crunch of snow underfoot and lines of dark fir trees ahead of her. She meets a faun, Mr. Tumnus, who explains that this is Narnia, a land where it is always winter and never Christmas because of the reign of the White Witch. When Lucy returns home, however, it is not only the exact same moment as when she entered, but, worse, none of her brothers and sisters believe her story of entering Narnia.

Next, Edmund accidentally enters Narnia through the same wardrobe and unfortunately encounters the Witch herself, who appears to him exceedingly beautiful. Enticing him with Turkish Delight and the promise of being King of Narnia, she convinces him to return, bringing the others with him for her to destroy, for a prophecy says that when four humans gain the throne, her reign will be ended. Edmund returns to the professor's house but, having become increasingly nasty from his contact with the Witch, refuses to admit that Lucy was right about Narnia all along.

Finally, all four children enter the wardrobe one day. They discover that Mr. Tumnus has been punished for disobeying the Witch, and a robin leads them to Mr. and Mrs. Beaver, who help them. The Beavers explain that Aslan, King of Narnia and of all the Beasts—the Great Lion himself—is on the move and has returned to Narnia, and all four children experience totally different reactions to his name. Peter, Susan and Lucy decide to hurry to Aslan as soon as possible. Edmund, however quietly slips off to find the Witch, only to discover that she seems quite a different person than before. Horrified that Aslan has returned, she wildly sets off in her sledge, dragging with her poor, cold, hungry Edmund. All around them Springtime gradually but steadily reverses the frozen enchantment which has paralyzed Narnia for 100 years. Celandines, crocuses, primroses, laburnums, bluebells all begin to bloom—and in the very same order as they bloom in our own world!

The three children reach Aslan in time to be ensnared in a brief battle in which Peter bravely kills the Witch's chief,

Fenris Ulf, and Edmund is rescued. He ashamedly asks forgiveness but, according to the Deep Magic, the law of the Emperor-Over-Sea, he must be killed as a traitor. Aslan offers to be sacrificed instead. Lucy and Susan then watch that terrible scene when Aslan willingly submits himself to the mockery and jests of the Witch's horrible lackeys and is stabbed with a Stone Knife on the great Stone Table.

But Aslan knew that according to a Deeper Magic, if a willing and perfect victim were sacrificed in a traitor's stead, the Witch would not only lose her claim on the individual, but death would start working backwards. While Lucy and Susan are mourning his death, Aslan opens his eyes, leaps from the broken table and appears to the girls more vibrant and alive than ever, romping joyously with them to the castle. Aslan breathes on every statue of a creature frozen by the Witch and frees them, leading them all in a victorious battle against the Witch and her forces.

Peter becomes High King of Narnia and the three other children, Kings and Queens. They rule in Narnia for 15 Narnian years. During their reign, the next story takes place.

### **The Horse and His Boy**

A boy named Shasta, living in Calormen with Arsheesh the fisherman, discovers one day that Arsheesh is not his real father. In fact, he overhears him bargaining to sell him to a Tarkhan, or great lord. He decides to fly to the north to Narnia with the Tarkhan's horse Bree, a Narnian Talking Horse, who was stolen from his homeland. In an effort to outrun what they believe are several lions pursuing them, Shasta and Bree overtake Hwin, another Narnian Talking Horse, and her rider Aravis. Aravis is a Calormen "princess" who is also running away to escape a distasteful marriage to an old lord.

To get to Narnia, the group must pass in disguise through the Calormen capital of Tashbaan. Shasta becomes

separated from the others when the visiting Narnian King Edmund and Queen Susan mistake him for the Prince Corin. Shasta is taken to their quarters where he overhears Susan's plot to secretly escape Calormen instead of marrying Rabadash. Shasta comes face-to-face with his look-alike, Corin, who helps him escape. He awaits the others at the designated meeting place, the deserted Tombs of the Ancient Kings outside the city. There a giant Cat comforts and protects him at night.

Meanwhile, Aravis is aided by an old but silly friend, Lasaraleen, another Calormen "princess." By accident, the two girls overhear Rabadash's plans to win Susan by conquering Archenland and later Narnia. Lasaraleen helps Aravis escape the city, and she and Shasta and their two horses are once again reunited.

Quickly they begin the tiring and lengthy journey north, over the mountains, the desert, and a valley. During the ride, a Lion snaps at the horses and scratches Aravis on the back. While a Hermit cares for Aravis and the horses, a tired and disheartened Shasta must travel on alone to Archenland and warn King Lune of Rabadash's plans.

He alerts Lune, but gets separated for a time from his army. That night, lost on a mountain pass, Shasta is joined by a giant Shadow in the darkness, who explains to him that all along there has been but one Lion who has protected him, spurred him on to his duty, and even helped a boat bring him to Calormen as a baby. Shasta recognizes the glory of Aslan himself, and refreshed by a tiny stream Aslan provides for him, Shasta sets off in the morning.

He rejoins the battle, though wounded during most of it. Rabadash's army is soundly defeated and Aslan punishes Rabadash by turning him into a donkey if he strays from Tash's temple. Shasta learns that he is the twin brother of Corin, stolen as a baby because of a prophecy that he would one day save Archenland. He eventually becomes King Cor of Archenland.

One day after they have long been reigning in Narnia, the four Kings and Queens set out to hunt for the White Stag. Upon discovering the very same lamp-post where they entered Narnia, they return home through the wardrobe to find that no time has elapsed since they entered.

Many years after the children leave Narnia, the Telmarines invade and conquer it and Caspian I becomes King. The Telmarines silence the Talking Beasts and spread false rumors about Aslan and the "Old Narnia." One of Caspian's descendants, Caspian IX, is murdered by his own brother Miraz, who usurps the throne. Caspian X is born, and the story of his attempts to defeat his wicked uncle and restore the Old Narnia is told in the next book.

### **Prince Caspian**

Young Caspian, raised by his uncle Miraz, is told the real story of his past by his tutor, Dr. Cornelius, who is part Dwarf. Caspian runs away in order to find the Old Narnian Talking Beasts. He meets Trufflehunter the badger, the dwarfs Nikabrik and Trumpkin, and eventually, many other Narnian beasts. At the Council of Dancing Lawn, the small army of Narnian creatures plan to make war on Miraz. After minor skirmishes and defeats, Caspian decides to blow the magic horn that will send for help. Though skeptical, Trumpkin offers to journey to Cair Paravel, once the Narnian capital, to await the possible return of the four Kings and Queens.

Thus, just one year after the Pevensies had returned to England, they find themselves "pulled" back into Narnia by the blast of Caspian's horn. But they are horrified to find that 1303 years have passed since they were last in Narnia. Trumpkin, on the other hand, cannot believe that these four children are the help they had been awaiting and has to be convinced that they are indeed royal material!

As the group travels to the meeting place at Aslan's How, they find that after all these years the landmarks and terrain



of Narnia are so altered that they get lost. Aslan appears to Lucy and points the way, but the rest of the children stubbornly continue in the opposite direction. Naturally, they reach a dead end, barely miss a confrontation with Miraz's forces, and must re-track to where they started. Aslan appears to Lucy once more and, though the others cannot see him, this time they grudgingly follow his leading. One by one, each child begins to see the Great Lion guiding them easily to the How.

Arriving just in time to overhear Nikabrik's plan to call on the Witch for aid, they defeat him and his evil cohorts, a werewolf and a hag, in hand-to-hand combat. Next, Peter challenges Miraz to a duel, and Sopespian and Glozelle, Miraz's lords, dupe their monarch into accepting. The duel culminates in a battle between both armies; Miraz is killed and his army defeated.

Aslan leads a band of joyous revellers (including Bacchus himself!) through the villages, celebrating Caspian's restoration to the throne. Then Aslan prepares a doorway in the sky for the Telmarines who wish to return to their homeland in the South Seas. Peter and Susan sadly learn that they are now too old ever to return to Narnia, and all four children step through the doorway, back into their own world.

### **The Voyage of the Dawn Treader**

Three Narnian years and one earth year pass before Lucy and Edmund are called back to Narnia. The two Pevensie children are staying with their bumptious young cousin, Eustace Clarence Scrubb, and one day all three are drawn into a picture on Eustace's wall into Narnia's Eastern Sea and Caspian's ship, the *Dawn Treader*. Caspian, they learn, is setting out for the Eastern Islands to find seven of his father's lost lords who long before were sent off by his evil uncle, Miraz, on a voyage of exploration. On the journey too is Reepicheep, King of the Talking Mice and most valiant

of the beasts of Narnia. He is seeking Aslan's country at the End of the World. Eustace is miserably seasick and indignant at the whole affair, but the Pevensie children eagerly anticipate a new adventure.

Their first stop after several days of sailing is the island of Felimath where they find the first lost lord, Lord Bern. Felimath is one of the Lone Islands, and although Lewis hints that he would like to tell their story in another book, we learn no more about them. The children are captured by slave traders, but Caspian is bought by Lord Bern, who, on learning Caspian is Narnia's king, helps them plan their escape. Felimath is ruled by an incompetent and bumbling man named Gumpas, the stereotyped politician who sticks solely to statistics, graphs, and appointments on his calendar. By feigning to have an entire fleet of forces, Caspian overthrows Gumpas and declares Lord Bern ruler of the Lone Islands.

After nearly three weeks on Felimath, the little company leaves to continue its mission. Twenty six days later, badly damaged by a storm, the ship and its crew find haven on an island which they dub Dragon Island. In order to escape work, Eustace wanders off and comes upon a dying dragon. But Eustace, who has read all the wrong books, has no idea what the creature is. Taking shelter in the dragon's cave, Eustace discovers a cache of magnificent treasures and, after slipping a bracelet on his arm and cramming his pockets full of precious things, he falls asleep. But when he awakens, feeling not quite himself, he finds he is walking on all fours and breathing smoke. Peering into a stream, he discovers he has turned into a dragon!

When the others figure out what has happened, they find their cousin's plight has much improved him, causing him to become more helpful and reasonable. Then one night Aslan appears and orders Eustace to follow him. After Eustace unsuccessfully attempts to remove his skin by shedding it like a banana peel, Aslan tears off the last

layer of painful scales and bathes him in a clear pool, restoring him to true boyhood. Thereafter, Eustace's behavior is markedly changed. The children deduce that Lord Octesian was probably the other dragon or had been destroyed by the dragon.

After the *Dawn Treader* visits Burnt Island (which has been ravaged by fire) the crew battles a fearful Sea Serpent who almost engulfs the ship.

Five days of sailing bring them to Deathwater Island, where the crew discovers a pool which turns anything dropped in it to gold. Lord Restimar, they realize, must have bathed in this water and been turned into a gold "statue." When they begin to quarrel over the great possibilities of capitalizing on the wealth this magic pool would give, Aslan sternly appears to bring them to their senses.

On the next island, the Island of the Voices, Lucy is asked by the Dufflepuds, strange creatures who hop around on one umbrella-like foot, to find a spell to make them visible. To accomplish this, she must go into a Magician's House and read his Magic Book. Among other things, Lucy finds a spell to make herself beautiful, a wonderful story about a cup, sword and green hill, as well as a spell to let her know what her friends think of her. When Lucy says this spell, Aslan appears to her. He introduces her to the Magician, and the invisible Dufflepuds turn into visible Monopods.

Then, for thirteen days they sail for the Dark Island where nightmarish dreams come true. There, the group discovers haggard and white-haired Lord Rhoop, and Aslan appears as an albatross to guide them out.

At World's End Island, the group finds the last three of the lost lords—Revilian, Argoz and Mavramorn—sleeping at a sumptuous banquet table. There they also meet Ramandu, a "retired" star, and his beautiful daughter. This is Aslan's Table where the food, renewed daily, is served for those who travel this far. The three lords had quarreled over the sacred Stone Knife (once used by the

White Witch to stab Aslan). At the moment they touched it they had been cast into an enchanted sleep.

All but one sailor set off for the End of the World. The light grows brighter and brighter, the sea smoother and white with lilies, and the water, clear and luminous like "drinkable light," keeps the group nourished and unwearied. Quivering with excitement, Reepicheep sails off alone to Aslan's Country. Now, after a year of travelling, Caspian regretfully decides to turn back with the ship to Narnia. The three children meet Aslan who appears to them first as a Lamb, then a Lion, and promises them that they can come to his land from all worlds and will know him even better in their own. Through a rip in the sky, they return to Cambridge. Thus ends Lucy's and Edmund's last adventure in Narnia.

Caspian returns to Narnia to marry Ramandu's daughter three years after his voyage. Fifteen years later a son, Rilian, is born. One day, as Ramandu's daughter is riding in Narnia she stops to rest. A Green Serpent stings her, and she dies. Twenty year old Rilian sets off to avenge her death and, entranced by a beautiful lady dressed in green, is not heard from again, though many seek for him. Ten years later, Eustace and his schoolmate Jill Pole are called into Narnia to find Rilian.

### **The Silver Chair**

Although it is still 1942, the year of the *Dawn Treader* voyage, 50 Narnian years have now passed since Eustace visited Narnia. Miserably unhappy and desperate to leave their school, Experiment House, Jill and Eustace enter Narnia through a gate in the wall. They find themselves high on a precipice in Aslan's country, overlooking all of Narnia. After Eustace accidently tumbles off the cliff and floats away, Jill finds herself alone with Aslan. Their task, she learns, is to find the lost Rilian, which they will accom-

plish only if they obey four "signs": First, they will meet an old, dear friend whom they must greet if they are to receive help, then they must journey from Narnia north to a ruined giant city where they will find writing on a stone. They must do what it says. Prince Rilian will be recognized by the fact that he will be the first person who asks them to do something in Aslan's name. Jill is then blown softly on Aslan's sweet breath to Narnia where she rejoins Eustace.

Caspian, now 66 and thus unrecognizable by Eustace, is preparing to sail to Terebinthia in hopes of finding Aslan and seeking his advice. Glimfeather the Owl carries the children first to Cair Paravel, then to a Parliament of Owls where they are briefed on Rilian's story, then North to the swampy home of a gloomy, lanky, frog-like creature named Puddleglum, a Marshwiggler who becomes a member of their team.

On their mission of search and rescue the three head north to Ettinsmoor, the land of the giants. A lovely lady, the Lady of the Green Kirtle who is accompanied by an armored knight, advises them to press on to the giant city of Harfang where they will receive food and shelter. Against Puddleglum's better judgment, the children desperately insist on finding the city to get relief from the bitter, snowy cold. Through a series of ruins and trenches, they reach the castle where they are welcomed, fed and bathed. Aslan appears to Jill in a dream and shows her the inscription UNDER ME written outside on the ruins. When the three discover that the giants mean to have them as the main course of their Autumn Feast, they slip through a crack in the ruins—the third sign. They now realize they have missed the first three signs.

Beneath the earth, they descend through tunnel after dark tunnel into a strange land where the varied faces of Earthmen sadly and silently labor in the city. Among a variety of creatures, they even see Father Time himself

sleeping until the world's end. They are taken to the castle of a Green Witch who is the cruel ruler of this country called the Shallow Lands. In her castle also lives a knight (Rilian himself) whom the witch has charmed into believing she is a beautiful and benevolent ruler. She bewitches Rilian into thinking she has saved him from a thousand dangers and cares for him most tenderly. He is well content to obey the counsel of the Lady who he thinks will one day be his Queen for she has promised him he will be King of Overland once the Earthmen dig through to the surface. During one hour of every day, however, he is under a spell by which he becomes enraged and supposedly is transformed into a serpent. Daily, during this hour, the Witch binds him to a silver chair. The children fearfully watch as the awful change comes over him—and then he bids them in Aslan's name to free him! Recognizing the last sign as well as the danger of obeying it, the three nevertheless unbind the Prince, who destroys the awful chair.

The Witch returns to discover what has been done and causes a drowsy smoke and music to fill the room, enchanting them into believing there is no other world but hers. But stout-hearted Puddleglum stamps out the fire and, after renouncing her world, leads Rilian into killing the Witch as she turns into a snake.

Noisy fireworks signal the Earthmen's glee at the end of the Witch's hold over them. Golg, a gnome, explains that beneath the Witch's land is the Really Deep Land of Bism, inhabited by gnomes and salamanders—a fiery world of live gems and a delicious smell. The gnomes dive into that realm through a crack before a shift in the earth closes it forever.

Through one of the tunnels to the Overworld, the four escape the Witch's Realm to discover that they are back in Narnia itself! They are rescued by Dwarfs performing the Great Snow Dance. Riding on centaurs, the children arrive in time to see Rilian greeting his sick father's returning

ship. Although Caspian dies, the children are taken to Aslan's country where, on Aslan's Mountain, they witness Caspian's restoration to life with a drop of blood from the great Lion's paw. Promising that some day they too will return to stay forever, Aslan leads them triumphantly back to their school, where he terrifies the children and Headmistress so badly that there is a grand shake-up and Experiment House ends up as a much better school!

Other than the uprising of outlaws in Lantern Waste and the building of towers to guard the region, we know little of the 199 years of Narnian history between *The Silver Chair* and the final book.

### **The Last Battle**

During the final days of Narnia, Shift the Ape who lives near Lantern Waste finds a lion's skin in the water. He convinces his poor, gullible donkey follower Puzzle to put it on and pose as Aslan. Then he spreads false rumors that Aslan has returned and aggressively demanded changes in Narnia—trees felled, Talking Animals driven to work, Dwarfs and animals sold as slaves to the Calormenes. The Narnians begin to believe that Aslan is not at all like the Lion they have heard about in stories and legends.

Meanwhile, King Tirian of Narnia, seventh in descent from Rilian, and his dear friend Jewel the Unicorn hear of all these changes and believe them to be lies. Tirian angrily murders two Calormenes and is captured. Desperate and only half-believing that the changes are from Aslan, he calls for help from the past Kings and Queens. In a dream he sees all seven "friends" of Narnia—Digory and Polly (now in their sixties), Peter, Edmund, Lucy, Jill and Eustace—eating around a table. Immediately, Jill and Eustace (now teen-agers) appear before him rescuing not only Tirian, but Jewel and Puzzle as well.

During this time much has happened on earth: Digory

and Polly, feeling that they are somehow "needed" in Narnia, hold a sort of "reunion" for all who have been to Narnia. Peter and Edmund are sent to London to dig up the magic rings Digory used many years ago to first enter Narnia and are scheduled to meet the train to hand them over. Jill, Eustace, Digory, Polly, Lucy, and, it so happens, Mr. and Mrs. Pevensie, all go on the same train which crashes at the station, killing all of them, as well as Peter and Edmund. At that moment (nearly one earth week after seeing Tirian), Aslan brings Jill and Eustace into Narnia "in his own way."

Tirian and the children optimistically determine to explain the ape's deception to the Narnians and restore the old order. However, all Dwarfs except Poggin bitterly refuse to believe in anything but themselves. After Tirian's group sees the nightmarish, birdlike Calormen god, Tash, flying toward Shift's camp, they plan to join forces with a few loyal Narnians led by Roonwit, the centaur. A Calormene arrow kills Roonwit and the enemy takes over Cair Paravel. Thus the children hurry to Shift's camp, hoping to reveal the truth to the Narnians.

They find that Shift has set up a stable where the Narnians gather at night by a giant bonfire. His new cohorts, Rishda the Calormen captain and Ginger the Cat, have now convinced the Narnians that Aslan and Tash are the same. Ginger and the Ape frustrate all their hopes of unmasking the imposter by telling the Narnians that there is a donkey loose, masquerading as Aslan. Ginger the Cat cockily enters the Stable expecting to find nothing, but instead finds Tash and shoots out again, terrified out of speech. This of course fulfills Aslan's prophecy (given many years earlier when Narnia was created) that Talking Beasts would return to dumb beasts if they chose evil. A Calormen named Emeth bravely goes in next in hopes of meeting Tash and never returns.

The real battle then begins. While the dogs and moles join Tirian's side, the Dwarfs fight for themselves. In vast



confusion as the enemy presses in on them, Eustace is hurled into the Stable, followed by all eleven dwarfs, Rishda (taken by Tash), and Tirian. But instead of finding the fearful god Tash in the Stable, as he had feared, Tirian sees the seven glorious Kings and Queens of Narnia and Aslan himself standing before him. Beyond the Stable door he has entered a luscious, green and fragrant country. The Dwarfs, however, see only darkness, hear Aslan's voice as an angry snarl, and taste rotten food instead of the sumptuous banquet he spreads for them.

Aslan shows all the Kings and Queens that Narnia on the other side of the Stable Door is ending. First, Father Time is called to blow his horn, and the living stars fall gleaming to the ground. Next, all the animals stream to Aslan and either pass through the Door if they love him, or to his left and into his Shadow if they fear him. Giant dragons and lizards then devour the vegetation, and the sea rises to cover it all. The sun and moon turn red, flame into each other, and Father Time squeezes the burning ball like an orange until all is dark. Finally, Peter locks the door on Narnia—icy, cold and void.

Aslan then leads them "further up and further in" through the Stable Door to his own country. There they find not only the fragrant, green land they had always longed for, and discover their own bodies to be full of life and vigor, but they see all the old friends they had ever known or heard about. Susan, however, is not among them for she is "no longer a friend of Narnia." On the other hand, Emeth the Calormen is there, for he had always sought the truth. They scale the Great Waterfall and enter the golden gates of a garden with a tree at its center. Far below, Narnia and England stretch out like spurs jutting off from the mountains of Aslan's country. But they are the *real* Narnia and England—those which they had known before were only imitations. The children are now ready to begin the Great Story Lucy had once read about in the Magician's Magic Book, a story which goes on forever!

## CHAPTER 4

# The Country of Narnia

*"Nothing is yet in its true form."*  
—Till We Have Faces

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### **Other Worlds**

According to Lewis's friend, J. R. R. Tolkien, man is a "sub-creator" when he creates a fantasy world:

Although now long estranged,  
Man is not wholly lost nor wholly changed.  
Dis-graced he may be, yet is not de-throned,  
and keeps the rags of lordship once he owned:  
Man, Sub-creator, the refracted Light  
through whom is splintered from a single White  
to many hues, and endlessly combined  
in living shapes that move from mind to mind.  
Though all the crannies of the world we filled  
with Elves and Goblins, though we dared to build  
Gods and their houses out of dark and light,  
and sowed the seed of dragons—twas our right  
(used or misused). That right has not decayed:  
we make still by the law in which we're made.  
("On Fairy Stories," J. R. R. Tolkien)

Man thus *creates* because he is made in the image of the Creator and because there is a part of him which is unsatisfied by the rational, natural world. Using materials from the world around him and drawing on spiritual reality, he expresses truths that cannot be expressed or explained in any other way. But to create convincing "other worlds," Lewis believed that he must draw on the only real "other world" he knew, that of the spirit. In his essay "The Weight of Glory," he writes: "Do you think I am trying to weave a spell? Perhaps I am; but remember your fairy tales. Spells are used for breaking enchantments as well as for inducing them. And you and I have need of the strongest spell that can be found to wake us from the evil enchantment of worldliness which has been laid upon us for nearly a hundred years."

Professor Kirke suggests that there are probably other worlds right "around the corner." But the "chinks" or "chasms" which connect these worlds are growing rarer. Narnia is described as one of these secret countries that is real—"a really other world—another Nature—another universe—somewhere you would never reach even if you travelled through the space of this universe for ever and ever—a world that could be reached only by Magic." But first, the children enter an in-between place.

### **The Wood Between the Worlds**

Digory has the sensation of coming *up* into a new world, only to discover that he has entered not a new world, but an "in-between" place, from which he can get into other worlds. It contains dozens of pools with a different world at the bottom of each of them. Though a dreamy, sleepy place where nothing seems to happen, it is alive—warm and rich as a plumcake. The leafy trees grow so close together that they allow only a "green" daylight to seep in, and he can almost hear them growing! Digory feels as though he has always been there.

But when the children leave the Wood, they enter a world of Nothing.

### **The Creation of Narnia**

According to Lewis's time-line for Narnia, Narnia was created in 1900 A.D. Although the children enter a world of Nothingness, Narnia is still a potential, "waiting" to be born, and they feel solid earth beneath them. Aslan creates it by singing, "the most beautiful noise Digory had ever heard." Other voices blend in harmony with it, but in "higher, cold, tingling, silvery voices" which become stars, constellations, and planets bursting into sight in the sky. Next, as the sky becomes lighter, Digory can see the many colors of a "fresh, hot and vivid earth;" then a young sun arises, laughing with joy. A soft, rippling music produces first grass, then trees. By now, Polly notices a connection between the notes Aslan is singing and the things he is creating. For example, a series of deep, prolonged notes produces dark fir trees; light, rapid notes produce primroses. But a wild, invigorating tune produces humps in the ground from which a joyous menagerie of animals emerge: moles, dogs, stags, frogs, panthers, leopards, showers of birds, butterflies, bees, and elephants. It becomes clear that Aslan's creations are things he imagines and the song comes from these ideas in his mind, a song so special that it makes you hot and flushed, wanting to jump and shout!

This idea of God creating the universe through singing it into being is found also in Tolkien's *Silmarillion* in which Eru creates the Ainor, or Holy Ones, as offspring of his thought and propounds to them musical themes. Harmoniously they sing before him a Great Music, whereas evil and proud beings desire to sing their own music which results in discord. Both Lewis and Tolkien seem to be drawing on a medieval concept which uses music as a metaphor for the harmony of the universe. The ancients

believed that the planets, for example, were aligned in such exact mathematical relationships that they gave off a special music—the Music of the Spheres. In this scheme, the universe is represented as a musical instrument that includes *all* creation, from angels to stones. The hand of God stretches out to tune it. A common 17th century notion of the world pictures an organ with God as primal Organ Player.

After singing Narnia into being Aslan speaks: "Narnia, Narnia, Narnia, awake. Love. Think. Speak. Be walking trees. Be talking beasts. Be divine waters." Narnia, as Aslan first creates it, makes our world seem "hard and cruel" in comparison. For Narnia is a country of walking trees, visible naiads and dryads in the streams and trees, fauns and satyrs, dwarfs, giants, centaurs and Talking Beasts. The existence of mythological creatures such as these in Narnia grows out of an intriguing idea that occurs quite frequently in Lewis's works—that what is myth and legend in our world may be factual reality in another. Even Bacchus, the Greek god of wine, is seen romping through Narnia, changing the streams to wine. One of the books in Mr. Tumnus' home is titled, with faun humor, "Is Man a Myth?"

### **Narnian Geography and Government**

By gathering information from the seven Narnia tales, we get a fairly comprehensive idea of the geography of Narnia and the surrounding countries. Lewis mapped his own rough conception of Narnian topography, and from this sketch Pauline Baynes later drew a more detailed map for Lewis. This map is available in the Bles and Puffin editions of *Prince Caspian* and is also sold as a large poster. The map reproduced on the cover of this book and on page 50 was drawn by Sylvia Smith and is also the result of considerable research.

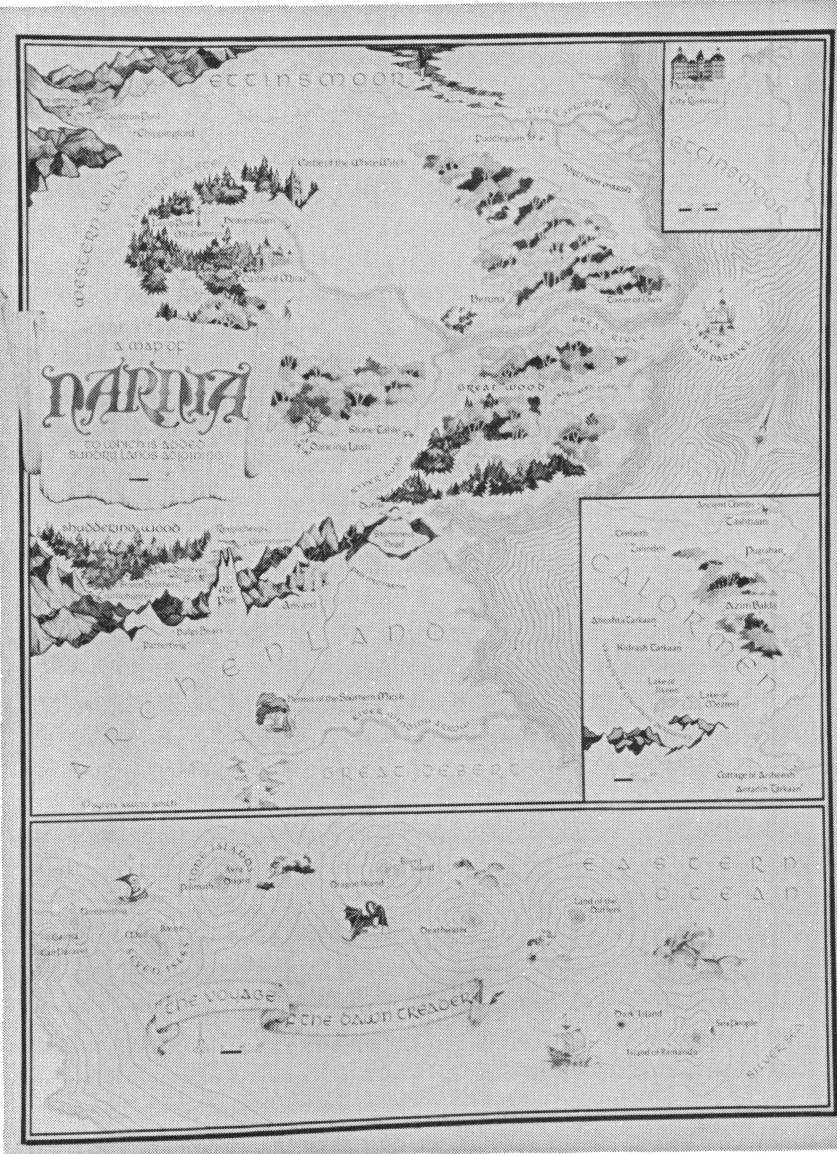
Narnia itself seems to resemble Lewis's favorite parts of the English and Irish countrysides with its avenues of

beeches, sunny oak glades, deep forests, and orchards of snow-white cherry trees; its windy slopes of gorse bushes, acres of blue flowers, wild valleys, and heathery mountains and ridges; its roaring waterfalls, winding rivers, plashy glens, mossy rocks and caverns.

The low hills to the *north* and the moorlands lead to the wild and desolate land of the giant stronghold, described predominantly in *The Silver Chair*. This Northern land of barren, rocky plains, frigid mountains, and stony boulders and ruins has a bleak, windy, snowy climate unlike the rich and dewy atmosphere of Narnia. To the *west* of Narnia is the Western Wild where one can see high, snow-crowned mountains and glaciers, and verdant valleys with streams tumbling down from the mountains, sparkling like blue jewelry. Here, the Great Waterfall crashes down to create the Caldron Pool, then the River of Narnia winds across the land to the Sea. This is where the beginning and ending of Narnia takes place. Lantern Waste is located on the east side, where the children enter Narnia in *The Lion* and where the Lamp-post springs up.

*South* of Narnia is another ridge of mountains across which lie two countries: Archenland, connected to Narnia by a pass, and Calormen, across a sandy desert. The Great Sea lying to the *east* of Narnia contains all the islands visited in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*: Galma, Terebinthia, the Seven Islands, the Lone Islands, the Dragon, Deathwater, Darkness, and World's End Islands. Beyond this is Aslan's Country and the End of the World. In *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, the topography of Narnia and these countries is described as being like a great, round but flat table with the waters of all the oceans pouring endlessly over the edge.

During the creation of Narnia, Aslan chooses two of each animal by touching their noses with his. These become Talking Beasts which are put in charge of the Dumb Beasts. Yet only a human can be a King or Queen of Narnia.



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The hierarchy is thus as follows:

The Emperor-Over-Sea and his son Aslan  
Peter (High King)  
Kings and Queens  
minor nobility  
Talking Beasts and *longaevi* ("long-livers," creatures  
such as nymphs, satyrs and centaurs.)  
Dumb Beasts

The Kings and Queens of Narnia rule from a castle on the eastern sea-coast named Cair Paravel (which means an "inferior court," implying its administration is still subordinate to the Emperor-Over-Sea). Life there is very reminiscent of the medieval Arthurian setting of coronations, feasts, falconry, rich clothing and courtly language. As in medieval courts, old epics are told aloud; for example, the children hear the story of *The Horse and His Boy* retold many years later. Battle clothes are bright tunics, steel or silver caps covered with jewels and with winged sides, and straight swords; their banner depicts a red Lion. Yet the subjects of this monarchy retain their freedom; in fact, there is no slavery at all in Narnia—not even marriage against one's will! Aslan instructs King Frank, first Narnian King, that a good King rules kindly and fairly, with no favorites, and is to be first in the charge and last in retreat from enemies.

The creatures in Narnia seem to come straight out of the pages of classical mythology: giants, centaurs, unicorns, dwarfs. The trees can hear and even assume human form: "strangely branchy and leafy" birch-girls, beech-girls, larch-girls; shaggy, wizened and hearty oak men with frizzled beards; lean and melancholy elms; and shock-headed hollies. Even common animals like foxes, badgers, mice, moles and squirrels are larger than in our world. As in the legends of the North American Indians, even the



stars, like Coriakin and Ramandu, are glistening real people, with white hot spears and whose long hair shines like burning silver. Narnia, in fact, has its own constellations—the Ship, Hammer, and Leopard—and stars—Spear-head (North star), Tarva, and Alambil.

Of course, there is not always peace in Narnia because it is surrounded by powerful enemies who could always invade it. (It is relatively small—one quarter the size of the smallest Calormen province.) But for the most part, there are years and years of peace and joyful activities—dances, feasts, and great tournaments; hunting parties, treasure-seeking, and midnight dances.

The Great Snow Dance, described in *The Silver Chair*, is especially unique. On the first moonlit night when snow is on the ground, a ring of Dwarfs dressed in fine clothes throw snowballs in perfect time to the sound of wild music. If everyone is in the right place, no one gets hit. Here, Lewis may again be drawing on a rich metaphor of the Middle Ages which other writers, such as Tolkien and Madeleine L'Engle, have also used in their works. The Great Dance, like the Music of the Spheres, was a metaphor for the perfect harmony, joy, and unity of the universe, in which every person, animal, planet, and microorganism played its part in a precisely patterned rhythm. Ramandu, for example, says that when he has been rejuvenated, he will once again rise and tread the measures of this Great Dance.

### **Narnian History**

After Lewis wrote the seven stories, he drew up an outline of Narnia's history. An historical time-chart of Narnia, based on Lewis's outline and the information found in the stories themselves, is shown on pages 54-57. There are 2555 Narnian years between its creation and destruction, corresponding to 52 earth years. During the history of Narnia, there was an "Old Narnia" and a "New Narnia."

The former consisted of years of peace and joy, when every day and week was better than the last, and to recollect those happy years is like "looking down from a high hill onto a rich, lovely plain full of woods and waters and cornfields, which spread away and away till it got thin and misty from distance." Actually the story of the "New Narnia" begins with the story of Telmar.

### **Telmar**

Telmar, an island beyond the Western Mountains of Narnia, is first colonized by the Calormenes in the year 300 (Narnian time). When these Calormenes behave wickedly, Aslan turns them into dumb beasts and the country is laid waste. 160 years later, some pirates in our world are driven by storm onto an island in the South Seas. They kill the natives and take native women as their wives. One day they become drunk and quarrel. Six flee with the women to the center of the island, then climb up a mountain into a cave. This cave is a "chink" or "chasm" between worlds, and they fall through to the uninhabited land of Telmar.

Their descendants become fierce and proud. In the Narnian year 1998, there is a famine, and Caspian I of Telmar leads an invasion of Narnia and becomes king. But the Telmarines begin to change Narnia, for they silence the beasts, trees and fountains; kill and drive away the dwarfs and fauns, and try to erase all memory of them. Since they fear the Sea, they let woods grow up around Cair Paravel and the coast to separate them from the water. Then, because they hate the trees, they invent a story that these Black Woods are full of ghosts. So by the time of *Prince Caspian*, both the Telmarines and Old Narnians have forgotten the truth about Old Narnia—it is all "just stories." Caspian admits that he has often wondered if Aslan is real and if there actually were any Talking Beasts and dwarfs.

As we know from the story of *Prince Caspian*, Narnia is restored to the old order. At the end of the book, Aslan

# A N A R N I A N C H R O N O L O G Y

## Key Events

**Ruler**  
*Narnian*  
Archenland

Narnian  
Period

Narnian  
Time

Earth Time

Book in  
which events  
occur

1900	0	<i>Frank &amp; Helen</i>	Narnia created and witch flies north
	<u>100</u>		
1927	200	<i>(Frank V)</i> Col (son of Frank V)	Archenland established Calormen established
1930 1933	<u>300</u>	<i>Gale</i>  (also emperor of Lone Islands)	Telmar colonized by Calormenes Telmarines wicked and made dumb; land lies waste
	<u>400</u>		Olvin of Archenland kills Giant Fire Mt. Fire created
	<u>500</u>		Pirates take over Telmar

MN

Moonwood the Hare

600

700

800

Long Winter

900

*Jadis, White Witch*

1940

HHB  
LWW

Jadis returns to Narnia

1000

*Peter*

Aslan's sacrifice  
Peter raids N. giants

*Lune*

End of Pevensie Reign  
(Cor & Aravis)

Ram the Great (son of Cor)

"Golden Age"

1100

1200

1300

# A N A R N I A N C H R O N O L O G Y

## Key Events

Ruler  
Narnian  
Archenland

Narnian  
Period

Narnian  
Time

Earth Time

Book in  
which events  
occur

1400	
1500	<i>Queen Swartzohite</i>
1600	
1700	
1800	"Old Narnia"
1900	

2000	(Naim) Caspian I	Telmarines conquer Narnia
2100	"New Narnia"	
2200	Caspian IX	
2300	Miraz & Prunaprisma Caspian X (2290-2356) Caspian X & Ramandu's daughter Ramandu's daughter (Queen) dies Rilian (2325-?) (son of Caspian & Ramandu's daughter)	Caspian defeats N. giants
2400	Civil War	
2500	Final Days	Outlaws in Lantern waste; protective towers built
2555	(Erlian) (Tirian) (7th from Rilian)	Destruction of Narnia

Chronology based on information found in Lewis's outline of Narnian History so far as it is known, "Past Watchful Dragons," by Walter Hooper, IMAGINATION AND THE SPIRIT, pp. 298-301, and in the books themselves.

Key to abbreviations:  
 MN—The Magician's Nephew  
 HHB—The Horse and His Boy  
 LWW—The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe  
 PC—Prince Caspian  
 VDT—The Voyage of the Dawn Treader  
 SC—The Silver Chair  
 LB—The Last Battle

allows those who wish to go back to the South Sea island—a land of good wells, fresh water, fruitful soil, timber, and fish—through a special doorway. That chasm between the two worlds is then closed forever.

### **Calormen**

Far to the south of Narnia, below Archenland and across the mountains and a great desert, lies Calormen. As Lewis describes the Calormenes and their capital city, they are reminiscent of the Turks or Arabians. Supposedly, Lewis disliked *The Arabian Nights* and perhaps used that culture as a basis for his invention of the evil enemies of Narnia.

Calormen is created in Narnian year 204, when outlaws from Archenland flee south across the desert and set up the kingdom. A Calormene visitor is readily recognized: "The spike of a helmet projected from the middle of his silken turban and he wore a shirt of chain mail. By his side hung a curving scimitar, a round shield studded with bosses of brass hung at his back, and his right hand grasped a lance. His face was dark. . . . the man's beard . . . was dyed crimson, and curled and gleaming with scented oil."

Typical Calormenes are "grave," "mysterious," "wise," "cruel," and "ancient," wearing orange turbans, flowing robes and shoes turned up at the toe. Seeming to lack imagination and creativity, the Calormenes write poetry consisting only of maxims and apothegms—about topics other than love and war—and they must be *taught* to tell stories.

Tashbaan is the Calormen capital, located on an island between two rivers. Buildings rise on either side of the streets which zig-zag up the hill and completely cover the island. In between are masses of orange and lemon trees, roof gardens, balconies, archways, battlements, spires, and pinnacles. If you look closely, though, you can see crowded narrow streets full of rude, bumping people and sniff the pervasive smell of garlic, onions, refuse, and unwashed bodies.

The Calormenes adhere rigidly to a strict hierarchy. Although they care nothing for Aslan, they have a deity—Tash, a hideous, birdlike creature with a vulture's or eagle's head and four arms. The ruler is called the Tisroc, under whom are Tarkhans (lords) and Tarkheenas (ladies), such as Aravis or Lasaraleen in the story of *The Horse and His Boy*. Lasaraleen's lifestyle is much like that of a Turkish princess, as she rides proudly atop a platform carried by servants and shielded by lavish curtains.

### **Underland and Bism**

In *The Silver Chair*, we learn that Narnia's world has several layers. The Green Witch's world of Underland lies just beneath the ruins of an ancient Northern city and is a perversion of the real world. The children must descend through numerous caverns and suffocating tunnels, each cave lower than the last. There are no wind or birds but only a greenish light, batlike animals, and a city full of docile, miserable Earthmen. Like the River Styx in mythology, a river glides lazily to the Witch's castle.

But the Green Witch's world is sandwiched in between Narnia and another, deeper, wonderful realm. For beneath her false "Shallow-Lands" is Bism. This is the "Really Deep Land," 1000 fathoms beneath the Queen's realm. Bism is the real home of the gnomish Earthmen, to whom living on the Upper World sounds horrible: "You can't really *like* it—crawling about like flies on the top of the world!" Through a chasm in the earth (from which seeps a strong heat and a rich, sharp, exciting smell) the children can see brilliant fields and groves of hot, bright blues, reds, greens, and whites. The gems there, they learn, are *alive!* Through all this runs a river of fire inhabited by salamanders.

Lewis is drawing on the ancient tradition that subterranean fire—one of the four elements—was inhabited by gnomes and salamanders. In fact, he wrote a poem about "The True Nature of Gnomes":



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*... A gnome moves through earth like an arrow in the air,  
At home like a fish within the seamless, foamless  
Liberty of the water that yields to it everywhere.*

*Beguiled with pictures, I fancied in my childhood  
Subterranean rivers beside glimmering wharfs,  
Hammers upon anvils, pattering and yammering,  
Torches and tunnels, the cities of the dwarfs;*

*But in perfect blackness underneath the surface,  
In a silence unbroken till the planet cracks,  
Their sinewy bodies through the dense continuum  
Move without resistance and leave no tracks. . . .*

But Bism also seems to represent a far deeper reality which Rilian reluctantly decides not to explore. The gnomes plunge headlong into it, just as Robin, in Lewis' story "The Man Born Blind," dives into the light and warmth symbolic of the beauty Lewis says we long to bathe in.

### **Entering Narnia**

The idea of a parallel world reached only by magic is a favorite device in fantasy, and it is through magic that the children of our world enter Narnia:

"How did you get there?" said Jill . . .

"The only way you can—by Magic," said Eustace almost in a whisper.

But Professor Kirke explains that the children can never get into Narnia a second time by the same route. In fact, they can't *try* to get there at all. Instead, Aslan calls them in his own way and time, and it happens when they aren't expecting it. The children are usually called to Narnia when someone "in a pinch" needs them, although they are

assured that there are many, many years of peace in Narnia. The only way to Aslan's country from all worlds is across a river bridged by Aslan himself.

In *The Magician's Nephew*, Digory and Polly enter by means of yellow rings that only need to be touched. They were made from dust in a box from the lost city of Atlantis which Uncle Andrew obtained from his godmother. Since the material of the rings is from another world that existed when ours was just beginning, it draws one back into the place where it came from. So Digory and Polly come up through a pool into the Wood Between the Worlds.

The green rings, on the other hand, transport them out of the Wood and into a new world. The experience of leaving is brief, but doesn't happen too quickly for Digory to note bright lights—the stars and even Jupiter's moons—moving around him. More remarkable, as he gets closer to England, he can even see through the walls of houses, and objects that were at first shadowy come sharply into focus. At the end of their adventures in this book, the children simply have to look at Aslan's face and they are back in England for good.

Narnia is reached in a different way made famous in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Digory takes a special apple from a Narnian tree and plants the core in his back yard. Although a storm ruins the tree that subsequently grows, he makes a magic wardrobe out of the salvaged wood. Then, many years later, after Digory has become old Professor Kirke, Lucy Pevensie climbs into the wardrobe, and steps behind the coats and mothballs into Lantern Waste.

Yet when the other three children try to confirm her wild tale of a secret country, all they find is hard wood at the back of the wardrobe. So, again, one can't *try* to get into Narnia. To return to England from Narnia in this book all the children have to do, even after 15 Narnian years have passed, is to walk back through the coats and into the wardrobe. This wardrobe is reminiscent of the stable in *The Last*

*Battle*, whose inside is bigger than its outside and which leads the Narnians into another world. (Incidentally, a beautiful hand-carved wardrobe that actually belonged to Professor Lewis and perhaps was inspiration for this story can be seen at the Marion E. Wade Collection at Wheaton College, Illinois).

The children are not called to Narnia again until one day, sitting dejectedly at the train station waiting to return to school, they feel themselves "pulled" and then suddenly scratched with branches. Caspian has blown Susan's magic horn, which always brings help when used. The children's return to England is more spectacular. Like the special door which appears in *The Last Battle*, Aslan sets up two wooden stakes three feet apart, with a third binding them together at the top, and thus creates a doorway "from nowhere into nowhere." Through this doorway, the Telmarines pass back into the South Seas of our world. Then the children sorrowfully pass through "layers" and see three curious things: first, a cave opening to a Pacific Island; next, a glade in Narnia; and, finally, the gray platform of the country station, just as it was when they left England.

*The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* begins in still a different way. On Eustace Scrubb's bedroom wall is a lovely picture of a sailing ship on the sea. But the more Lucy stares at it, the more real and alive the scene becomes—in fact, the waves start to roll up and down and the air smells wild and briny. Lucy, Edmund and Eustace are even slapped in the face with salt water! As the incorrigible Eustace attempts to smash the picture, he finds himself standing on the frame, then swept into the sea! At the end of their long adventure, Lucy and Edmund are told that they are too old to return to Narnia again. Then Aslan returns all three of them to Cambridge by ripping the blue sky like a curtain, and letting them through!

That same year, Eustace and his schoolmate, Jill Pole, despairing of their dreary life at a school called Experiment

House, really *try* to get to Narnia: "Aslan, Aslan, Aslan! . . . Please let us two go into—" As they rush away from the noise of their approaching schoolmates, they throw open a usually locked door in a high stone wall. But instead of seeing a heathery moor, they find the cool bright air and vibrant forest of Aslan's country. At the end of their mission to rescue Rilian, they triumphantly return to Experiment House—this time with Aslan—who simply leads them through the woods to the school.

Of course, in the final trip to Narnia, every one of the "friends of Narnia" on earth is called to Narnia by means of an actual train accident which instantly kills them all. Jill and Eustace, however, immediately find themselves with Tirian when he needs them the most. We don't know what happened right away to the others, but we do know they ended up in Aslan's country—this time, to stay!

### Time

As the timeline for Narnia indicates, there is an obvious and distinct difference between the time frames of Narnia and England: 2555 years of Narnia from beginning to end correspond to just 52 earth years. Yet two Narnian years pass between 1930 and 1933 and 698 years between 1933 and 1940! Just what was Lewis up to?

First, it is quite common in stories for two worlds to have different times; even Tirian acknowledges this fact. Professor Kirke explains to the children that if there is a separate world, "I should not be at all surprised to find that that that other world had a separate time of its own; so that however long you stayed there it would never take up any of *our* time." As a result, each time the children return from Narnia to England they find no time has passed on earth, no matter how long they have been busy in Narnia.

For example, Digory, Polly, and the whole crew of Cabby, horse, and Witch leave England and witness all the glorious events of Narnia's creation and the establish-

ment of the new kingdom; then Digory and Polly return right into the middle of the very mess the witch had created. Lucy emerges breathlessly from the Wardrobe without a second having ticked away; and when all four "Kings and Queens" return after their 15 year reign, they return "the same day and the same hour of the day on which they had all gone into the wardrobe to hide."

A second "muddle about time," which seems to take the children quite a while to get used to, is the fact that Narnian time flows differently from ours. So that once you're out of Narnia, you have no idea how Narnian time is going: "If you spent a hundred years in Narnia, you would still come back to our world at the very same hour of the very same day on which you left. And then, if you went back into Narnia after spending a week here, you might find that a thousand Narnian years had passed, or only a day, or no time at all. You never know till you get there." So, in *Prince Caspian*, the children have only been gone from Narnia one year but find it entirely grown over and so changed they can't recognize it, for it is hundreds of Narnian years later. Yet when they return, in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, after another year in England, only three Narnian years have passed since Caspian's coronation.

Walter Hooper explains that Lewis knew what he was doing here; for he believed that other worlds might have a time with "thicknesses and thinnesses," not a linear time like ours. Hooper feels this has two important effects. Not only do the strange time lapses allow more interesting adventures, but also teach the children about history itself. Since they do not know what stage of Narnian history they are playing a role in, they cannot see the meaning of the *whole* plan; only Aslan does. Only Aslan "calls all times soon."

### **The End of the World**

One thing Lewis does, perhaps better than any other

writer, is to depict a vision of what heaven is like. Quite unforgettable is the description of the End of the World in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, always associated with the Utter East. The first effect on the children is that they simply *feel* different—not sleepy, hungry, or thirsty. Like their vigor after the romp with Aslan following his resurrection, they feel life to its fullest! Two things they notice are also associated with Aslan himself: light and smell. The light becomes a whiteness radiating all around them, for the sun grows larger. Still, they get used to it, seeing “more light than they had ever seen before.” Also, a “fresh, wild, lonely smell that seemed to get into your brain” pervades the air. The clear water reveals a submarine world and is sweet like the air—like “drinkable light”—and carpeted with lilies. There is a stillness . . . and joy.

In the distance, the mountains of a green, forested country “outside the world” come into view; these are always associated with Aslan’s country in the Chronicles. From there, too, sweeps a smell and musical sound “that would break your heart.” In *The Silver Chair*, Jill and Eustace are permitted to get just a taste of this country. They find a stream and crystal air that clears their minds, as well. When they return there briefly at the end of the book, Jill notices that this is a place where you can’t want the wrong things, and people are no particular age. Aslan promises they some day may be called to this place—their real “home”—to stay forever.

### **Destruction of Narnia—Aslan’s Country**

Jill Pole remarks, “Our world is going to have an end some day. Perhaps this one won’t. Wouldn’t it be lovely if Narnia just went on and on . . . ? But “all worlds draw to an end; except Aslan’s country.” And so at the end of *The Last Battle*, we sadly watch this wonderful world come to an end. In contrast to the music by which Aslan called it into existence, Father Time blows his giant horn to reverse the

process. First, the stars fall, leaving an emptiness as Aslan calls them home. Then the Talking Beasts pass through Aslan's door, leaving only Dragons and Giant Lizards to devour Narnia—as in the “Ragnarok” or destruction of the earth in Norse mythology. Then water arises to blanket all, and the sun and moon turn red and disintegrate. At last, Peter closes and locks the door on a cold, dead world.

All worlds end—except Aslan's country. The disappointed children follow Aslan “further up and further in” through the stable. The land just inside the door reminds them of something they can't quite place: a deep blue sky, soft summer breeze, and thick trees with wonderful, indescribable fruit which makes all the fruit of our world seem dull by comparison. It seems to be a country where everything is allowed!

Then they realize where they have seen all this before. Aslan's world is just like the Narnia they had known, only “more like the real thing.” Lewis explains the difference as being like a reflection of a landscape in a mirror, where the reflection is just as real but “somehow different—deeper, more wonderful, more like places in a story.” This “new Narnia” looks “deeper”—as if every flower and blade of grass “meant more.”

Finding that they are able to run faster than ever before, and without tiring, the group moves even “further up and further in” through Aslan's country by scaling a waterfall (most likely the “real” waterfall of which the Great Waterfall and Caldron Pool in the Lantern Waste had been only a reflection!). Racing to an area just like the Western Wilds, then up a hill, they enter a garden (again, just like the Platonic Ideal) the reflection of which Digory had entered thousands of years earlier. They notice again the characteristic, delicious smell, the springy turf dotted with white flowers. Even more wonderful, everyone they have ever known is there!

As Lucy climbs up the green slopes and mountains of

forests, through the sweet orchards and past flashing waterfalls, she begins to see more and more clearly. Now, peering over the wall of the garden, she distinctly sees "Narnia" spread out below:

"I see," Lucy says thoughtfully. "I see now. This garden is like the stable. It is far bigger inside than it was outside."

"Of course, Daughter of Eve," explains Mr. Tumnus. "The further up and further in you go, the bigger everything gets. The inside is larger than the outside."

Lucy sees then, that the garden is—contains—a whole world: "I see," she says. "This is still Narnia, and more real and more beautiful than the Narnia down below, just as *it* was more real and more beautiful than the Narnia outside the Stable door. I see . . . world within world, Narnia within Narnia. . . ." "Yes," says Mr. Tumnus, "like an onion: except that as you continue to go in and in, each circle is larger than the last."

She sees not only the layout of Narnia—the desert, Tashbaan, Cair Paravel, island after island to the End of the World—but even England looking like a cloud cut off from them by a gap. This, too, is the "England within England, the real England just as this is the real Narnia." All real countries, in fact, are like spurs jutting out from the great mountains of Aslan which ring the entire world.

### **Lewis's Platonism**

The children thus find the real Narnia and real England of which the others were only a shadow or copy. In fact, Aslan calls England the "Shadow Lands"! "It's all in Plato," Professor Kirke keeps explaining. Plato believed that the real, stable, permanent part of the universe exists in a super-natural, super-sensible "heaven" as Ideas or Forms. Thus the physical world is only the realm of appear-



ances, rather than solid reality—illusory, transitory. In this way, it is a shadow or copy of the “real world.” But Lewis places his Platonic reality not in a far removed, abstract heaven, but rather at the very heart, the center of all that exists. The children go further *up* (to Aslan’s country in the mountains, to Platonic heaven) and further *in* (to the center of the onion), then on to a garden containing a Narnia that is even better, and at last to a Narnia seen from the mountains which is “as different as a real thing is from a shadow or as waking life is from a dream. . . . It’s all in Plato.”

Furthermore, Lewis totally reverses the shadowy Platonic conception of heaven. We often tend to associate God and Heaven with the “sky” and the “spiritual,” forgetting that our language is only symbolic and incapable of describing or understanding them. Consequently, says Lewis, God has become to many “like a gas diffused in space” or a “mist streaming upward”—vaporous, vague, indefinable, shadowy. We also have a “vague dream of Platonic paradises and gardens of the Hesperides” which represent the “heaven” we long for. But in *The Last Battle*, the Platonic realm is portrayed as a solid, concrete reality: every rock and flower and blade of grass seems to “mean more.” In *The Great Divorce*, Lewis likewise notes that in comparison to the ghostly earthlings stumbling on heaven’s soil, things in heaven are much “solider,” even harder in comparison—you can cut your finger on the grass! Life is weak and flimsy compared to the solid reality it reflects. Similarly, in *Perelandra*, Ransom is told, “You see only an appearance, small one. You have never seen more than an appearance of anything,” and he sadly realizes “I have lived all my life among shadows and broken images.”

The paradox implicit in the idea of a sphere with a center bigger than its circumference illustrates how difficult it is for us to believe that this vast universe came out of something smaller and emptier than itself. “It is not so,” says Lewis. “We are much nearer to the truth in the vision seen

by Julian of Norwich, when Christ appeared to her holding in His hand a little thing like a hazel nut and saying, 'This is all that is created.' And it seemed to her so small and weak that she wondered how it could hold together at all."<sup>3</sup> Instead, the real power of the center is illustrated in *The Last Battle*:

"It seems then," says Tirian, smiling himself, "that the Stable seen from within and the Stable seen from without are two different places."

"Yes," says Lord Digory. "Its inside is bigger than its outside."

Similarly, the Garden is far bigger inside than outside.

"Of course," says the Faun. "The further up and the further in you go, the bigger everything gets. The inside is larger than the outside."

"Yes," says Queen Lucy. "In our world, too, a Stable once had something inside it that was bigger than our whole world."

In contrast, Hell is smaller than one atom of the Real World; and a damned soul, writes Lewis in *The Great Divorce*, is also nearly nothing, "shrunk, shut up in itself." But we perpetually view reality the other way around, as if we were looking through the wrong end of a telescope.

Platonism involves an aspiration, a longing, a crying out of the human soul from within the unreal world we now know, for a beauty which lies "on the other side of existence." Lewis himself experienced this longing all his life. Long before he even enters Narnia, Digory longs for a world with a fruit that could cure his sick mother. Similarly, Shasta says he has been "longing to go to the north all my life." "Of course you have," Bree responds. "That's because of the blood that's in you. . . . You're true northern

stock." And not only is he returned to his home but restored to his proper name.

Raised a Telmarine, and hearing only fleeting stories about Talking Narnians, Caspian searches for such people all his life. His old nurse says that she, too, has always waited for Aslan. As Aslan leads his band of rejoicing, newly-freed followers through the towns, a school teacher, like Caspian's nurse, feels a "stab of joy" and follows him. Jill feels a similar sensation as she steps into Narnia through a hole in the wall; though frightened, she realizes she has "always been longing for something like this." Reepicheep, questing valiantly for the End of the World, says the spell of Aslan's country "has been on me all my life." And finally, Jewel the Unicorn, upon reaching the new Narnia of Aslan's country, stamps on the ground and cries, "I have come home at last! This is my real country! I belong here. This is the land I have been looking for all my life, though I never knew it till now. The reason why we loved the old Narnia is that it sometimes looked a little like this."

In an essay, "The Weight of Glory," Lewis says we all have a desire for a "far off country" like an inconsolable inner pang—"a desire for something that has never actually appeared in our experience. We cannot hide it because our experience is constantly suggesting it." In fact, he says we were made for another world. What more poignant illustration of this could there be than the magical tree from Narnia that grows in Digory's back yard but bends whenever a breeze blows in Narnia because of the Narnian sap running within it!

Perhaps we mistakenly identify what we long for as beauty, or memory; but these are only "the scent of a flower we have not found, the echo of a tune we have not heard, news from a country we have never yet visited." In Narnia, the things we long for are associated with the distant mountains of Aslan's country and the islands of the Utter East. After their unforgettable experience at the End of the

World, Edmund and Lucy cannot describe the smell and the musical sound carried on the sweet breeze from Aslan's country: " 'It would break your heart.' 'Why,' said I, 'was it so sad?' 'Sad!! No,' said Lucy."

Digory experiences the same strange "echo" during his first time in the Wood Between the Worlds: "If anyone had asked him: 'Where did you come from?' he would probably have said, 'I've always been here.' That was what it felt like—as if one had always been in that place." His and Polly's life before this seems like a dream, a "picture" in their heads. The former life of Strawberry the horse also seems muddled like a dream, and Aslan's song reminds them all of "something." After the four Pevensies are Kings and Queens in Narnia for many years, the "real" world seems like a dream to them, too.

Only Aslan is able to "wake up" the visitors from earth to the reality he alone can bring. The children only need to look into his face to feel as though they have never been alive or awake before. Similarly, in *The Horse and His Boy*, after Aslan visits with the children they feel as if awakened from sleep: "But there was a brightness in the air and on the grass, and a joy in their hearts, which assured them that he had been no dream." As the Telmarine in *Prince Caspian* feels the touch of Aslan's breath, a new look comes into his eyes, "as if he were trying to remember something."

By contrast, evil makes us forget. The White Witch cannot even remember being in the Wood Between the Worlds—that "quiet place"—no matter how often or how long she was there. Likewise, the gnome, Goleg, says that the Green Witch called them to her world by magic and made them forget about their own world: "We didn't know who we were or where we belonged. We couldn't do anything, except what she put into our heads." Puddleglum has to denounce her evil, drowsy enchantment, which lures them into forgetting the real world, by reasoning, "Suppose we *have* dreamed, or made up, all those things—trees and

grass and sun and moon and stars and Aslan himself. Suppose we have. Then all I can say is that, in that case, the made-up things seem a good deal more important than the real ones. . . . We're just babies making up a game, if you're right. But four babies playing a game can make a play-world which licks your real world hollow."

But the world we dream of, or remember, or long for is not "made-up." In Aslan's country, beyond the Stable Door, "The dream is ended: this is the morning." Lewis uses the Stable Door not only in *The Last Battle* but also in several of his other writings as a symbol for the entrance to that Platonic reality which we have always longed for because we have vague Wordsworthian recollections of a past glory. We long to be "inside of some door which we have always seen from the outside. . . . to be at last summoned inside would be both glory and honour beyond all our merits and also the healing of that old ache." Someday, says Lewis, we shall again be permitted to "get in . . . pass in through Nature, beyond her, into that splendour which she fitfully reflects."

Lewis makes this vivid in one of the most memorable passages in all of the Chronicles, when Lucy, in reading the Magician's Magic Book, comes across a "spell for the refreshment of the spirit." Like the living pictures that Orual sees while telling Psyche's story at the end of *Till We Have Faces*, Lucy finds that she is living in the story as if it were real, and all the pictures were real, too. It is about a cup, a sword, a tree, and a green hill, and is the loveliest story she has ever read. But she can neither go back and read it again, nor really remember it. Ever since that time, though, Lucy defines a good story as one that reminds her of this forgotten story. Aslan promises her that he will tell that story to her for years and years. This certainly is Lucy's glimpse, like the glimpses we have all our lives, of the Great Story which the children are just beginning to experience at the conclusion of *The Last Battle*, "which goes on for ever: in which every chapter is better than the one before."

## CHAPTER 5

# The Creator of Narnia —Aslan

*"If you continue to love Jesus,  
nothing much can go wrong with you, and  
I hope you may always do so."*

—C. S. Lewis, Unpublished letter to a little girl

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### **Who is Aslan?**

The one person who makes Narnia worth visiting is Aslan himself—"It isn't Narnia, you know," sobbed Lucy. "It's *you*." Aslan, of course, is the magnificent Son of the Emperor-Over-Sea, King of the Wood and Beasts, Maker of the Stars. He doesn't actually reside in Narnia, though: "One day you'll see him and another you won't. He doesn't like being tied down—and of course he has other countries to attend to." There are 100 years, for example, when the Witch rules in perpetual Narnian winter and Christmas never comes. Caspian and Tirian have real difficulty believing in Aslan since they have only heard legends about him.

Who can forget the image of Aslan singing Narnia into existence—to see that Singer makes the viewer forget everything else: "It was a Lion. Huge, shaggy, and bright

it stood facing the risen sun. Its mouth was wide open in song." The experience of his presence is like

"a sea of tossing gold in which they were floating, and such a sweetness and power rolled about them and over them and entered into them that they felt they had never really been happy or wise or good, or ever alive and awake, before. And the memory of that moment stayed with them always, so that as long as they both lived, if ever they were sad or afraid or angry, the thought of that golden goodness, and the feeling that it was still there, quite close, just around some corner or just behind some door, would come back and make them sure, deep down inside, that all was well."

His speed, says Emeth, is like that of an ostrich, his size like an elephant's, his hair like pure gold, his bright eyes like liquid gold.

Here, Lewis has succeeded in doing what, in his Preface to *Paradise Lost*, he admits is difficult for any author: portraying a totally *good* character. "To draw a character better than yourself, all you can do is to take the best moments you have had and to imagine them prolonged and more consistently embodied in action. But the real, high virtues which we do not possess at all, we cannot depict except in a purely external fashion. We do not really know what it feels like to be a man much better than ourselves."

Many readers sense that Aslan is a "divine" or "Christ-like" figure. As we have mentioned before, if you do not see Aslan in this way Lewis would not want you to, because that was not his purpose. But for the moment, we will look at some of the "hints" Lewis himself has given us, in the stories and elsewhere, concerning Aslan's "model."

As will be discussed in chapter 8, the events in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* remind us of several events in Christ's own life. And in *The Voyage of the Dawn*

*Treader*, when the children reach the End of the World, they see a Lamb who invites them to breakfast; he is so white they can barely look at him. Suddenly, he is changed and they recognize him: "As he spoke his snowy white flushed into tawny gold and his size changed and he was Aslan himself, towering above them and scattering light from his mane."

Similar "symbolism" is used in Revelation 5:5-6: "...the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals. And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain." Aslan also calls himself the great "Bridge Builder" who promises to guide them into Narnia from their world—another Biblical image, as we will see later. Finally, in *The Last Battle*, Aslan looks to them "no longer as a Lion", and we assume he has taken his human form as he begins to tell them the Great Story, forever and ever.

Elsewhere, Lewis makes it clear that Aslan is a divine figure and that anything "approaching Disney-like humor" would be blasphemy. He wrote the following explanation to a little girl from Texas:

As to Aslan's other name, well, I want you to guess. Has there never been anyone in this world who (1) Arrived the same time as Father Christmas (2) Said he was the Son of the Great Emperor (3) Gave himself up for someone else's fault to be jeered at and killed by wicked people (4) Came to life again (5) Is sometimes spoken of as a Lamb (at the end of the "Dawn Treader")? Don't you really know His name in this world?"<sup>4</sup>

Most child readers—or at least certain *types* of people—who corresponded with Lewis had no problem knowing Aslan's real identity. In several of his letters Lewis indicates



that he had received many “lovely, moving letters” from children, primarily if brought up in Christian homes, who never failed to grasp the theology of Narnia “more or less unconsciously, and much more clearly than some grown-ups.” Most grown-ups *never* see who Aslan is, he said. A perfect example is a letter written by an 11 year old girl to Lewis’s friend, Owen Barfield:

“I have read Mr. Lewis’s books. I got so envoveled [sic] in them all I did was eat, sleep, and read. I wanted to write to you and tell you I understand the books. I mean about the sy [m] bols and all. . . . I know that to me Aslan is God. And all the son’s and daughter’s of Adam and Eve are God’s children. I have my own philosophies about the books. If it is possible I would like to meet you. None of my friends (well some of them) liked the books. I tried to explain to them but they don’t understand about symbols. I never really did until I read the books.”<sup>5</sup>

In fact, some children understood Aslan so well that they began to love Aslan more than Jesus. Here is Lewis’s response to a worried mother of one little boy:

“Laurence can’t *really* love Aslan more than Jesus, even if he feels that’s what he is doing. For the things he loves Aslan for doing or saying are simply the things Jesus really did and said. So that when Laurence thinks he is loving Aslan, he is really loving Jesus: and perhaps loving Him more than he ever did before. Of course there is one thing Aslan has that Jesus has not—I mean, the body of a lion. (But remember, if there are other worlds and they need to be saved and Christ were to save them—as He would—He may really have taken all sorts of bodies in them which

we don't know about). Now if Laurence is bothered because he finds the lion-body seems nicer to him than the man-body, I don't think he need be bothered at all."<sup>6</sup>

Why would Lewis choose, as he suggests, to portray Christ as a Lion? First of all, we must remember that Lewis did not begin writing his stories with Aslan in mind. Instead, he says he had been having dreams of lions at the time, and suddenly Aslan came bounding into the story and "pulled the whole story together and soon He pulled the six other Narnian stories in after Him." In fact, Lewis admitted that writing a story about God would be a "tall order": "to imagine what God might be supposed to have done in other worlds does not seem to be wrong." Yet it must be emphasized 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, for example. Rather, 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?'"<sup>7</sup>

After all, we are forced to use symbols for spiritual experience, just as the Bible uses Scriptural imagery to describe God and heaven. But the use of symbols leads us into clearer understanding and knowledge of Christ. Similarly, Aslan says to King Frank, "You know [me] better than you think you know, and you shall live to know me better yet." And at the end of *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, Aslan, who has nine names in Narnia, says that in England he has yet another name: "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." So we must stretch and exercise our

imaginations and understanding of spiritual reality in order that we may use them in our everyday world.

Lewis associates Aslan with two symbols he said he borrowed from the Grail legend: brightness and a sweet smell. Eustace, for example, notices that although there was no moon when he encountered Aslan, moonlight shone where the Lion was. Shasta, too, sees a whiteness and golden light actually coming from Aslan himself. In many of his other works, Lewis associates God and heaven with the Biblical metaphor of light (I John 1:5, I Tim. 6:16), especially in his story "The Man Born Blind." Appropriately, as the children approach Aslan's country at the end of *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, they notice a "whiteness, shot with faintest colour of gold, spread round them on every side;" a "brightness you or I could not bear even if we had dark glasses on." Aslan's brightness contrasts with the dull red light of Jadis' Charn or the sick greenish light of the Shallow-Lands.

Similarly, Aslan's mane gives off a lovely perfume which contrasts with the foul stench of Tashbaan and its god. Sensing Aslan's warm breath, Shasta knows the "thing" walking beside him is alive. Falling at his feet, he experiences all the glory of his power, his fiery brightness and perfume:

"The High King above all kings stooped towards him. Its mane, and some strange and solemn perfume that hung about the mane, was all round him. It touched his forehead with its tongue. He lifted his face and their eyes met. Then instantly the pale brightness of the mist and the fiery brightness of the Lion rolled themselves together into a swirling glory and gathered themselves up and disappeared."

### **A Terrible Good**

Aslan manifests a variety of qualities—he is awesome,

solemn and stern, yet compassionate and joyful. This paradox of being at the same time both "terrible" and "good" is a key idea in Charles Williams's *Descent into Hell*, where "terrible" means "full of terror": Pauline "had never considered good as a thing of terror, and certainly she had not supposed a certain thing of terror in her own secret life as any possible good. . . . Salvation . . . is often a terrible thing—a frightening good." Lewis believed God and the numinous overwhelm us with a sense of dread and awe.

He explains this aspect of Aslan in *The Lion*: "People who have not been in Narnia sometimes think that a thing cannot be good and terrible at the same time. If the children had ever thought so, they were cured of it now. For when they tried to look at Aslan's face they just caught a glimpse of the golden mane and the great, royal, solemn, overwhelming eyes; and then they found they couldn't look at him and went all trembly." Digory finds Aslan simultaneously "bigger and more beautiful and more brightly golden and more terrible than he had thought," and Emeth notes that Aslan was "more terrible than the Flaming Mountain of Lagour, and in beauty he surpassed all that is in the world, even as the rose in bloom surpasses the dust of the desert." The light Shasta sees radiating from Aslan is more terrible and more beautiful than anything anyone has ever seen.

Jill senses the same paradoxical combination of terror and moral glory in her first encounter with Aslan at the beginning of *The Silver Chair*. Desperately thirsty, yet paralyzed with fright at the Lion's presence beside the stream, she pleads with him for a promise that he will not harm her. But he will make no such promise, majestically telling her that he has, in fact, "swallowed up girls and boys, women and men, kings and emperors, cities and realms." When Jill reluctantly decides to search for another stream to drink from, Aslan informs her that there is no other. "It was the

worst thing she had ever had to do, but she went forward to the stream, knelt down, and began scooping up water in her hand. . . . Before she tasted it she had been intending to make a dash away from the Lion the moment she had finished. Now, she realized that this would be . . . the most dangerous thing of all."

As all the old tales of Narnia indicate, Aslan is wild—"not a *tame* lion." " 'Ooh!' said Susan, 'I'd thought he was a man. Is he—quite safe? I shall feel rather nervous about meeting a lion.' " Mrs. Beaver replies, "if there's anyone who can appear before Aslan without their knees knocking, they're either braver than most or else just silly." After his resurrection, defying death and evil, Aslan opens his mouth to roar and "his face became so terrible that they did not dare to look at it. And they saw all the trees in front of him bend before the blast of his roaring as grass bends in the meadow before the wind."

Aslan resembles the "devouring" god of the mountain which Lewis portrays in *Till We Have Faces*. But when he hurts, it is for a purpose. First snapping at Hwin to make the horses hurry, the Lion then scratches Aravis. The scratches, he explains later, are equal to the stripes her stepmother whipped into a slave because of her: "You needed to know what it felt like."

Yet Aslan has another side; "I will not always scold," he assures the children. He can feel all the pain and sorrow of every individual. When Digory fearfully asks Aslan to cure his mother and peers up at his face, what he sees surprises him "as much as anything in his whole life. For the tawny face was bent down near his own and (wonder of wonders) great shining tears stood in the Lion's eyes. They were such big, bright tears compared with Digory's own that for a moment he felt as if the Lion must really be sorrier about his Mother than he was himself." Later, although he forgets to say "thank you," Aslan understands without a word from Digory. Likewise, during Caspian's

funeral, Aslan cries great Lion-tears, "each tear more precious than the Earth would be if it was a single solid diamond." He feels great sadness over Edmund's treachery, too.

He can also be joyously playful. Who can forget the lively romp with Aslan that Lucy and Susan experience after his "resurrection"? It is like playing both with a thunderstorm and a kitten. He gives them a wonderful ride on his back. His mane flying, he never tires, never misses his footing. At the end of Prince Caspian's adventures, Aslan leads the children, animals, new followers, and even Bacchus himself in a riotous, festive parade through town. He playfully tosses the disbelieving Trumpkin in the air, then asks to be his friend.

### A Guide in Other Forms

As a Lion, Aslan can show us the full significance of the incarnation—Christ becoming a man, like us. This is poignantly exemplified in *The Lion* when Aslan tells the other lions to join with him in battle: "Did you hear what he said? *Us lions*. That means him and me. *Us lions*. That's what I like about Aslan. No side, no stand-offishness. *Us lions*." We cannot read very many pages of a Narnia story without sensing Aslan's presence, though unseen and often in another form, and guidance of events. Like God, he is wise and foreknowing. As Puddleglum reminds the children: There *are* no accidents; "He was there when the giant king caused the letters to be cut, and he knew already all things that would come of them; including *this*." Tirian describes whatever may befall them in the future as "the adventure that Aslan would send them."

In *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, he appears as an albatross, deliciously breathing "Courage, dear heart," to Lucy, then guiding them away from the Dark Island. Throughout all of Shasta's adventures—the lions forcing him to protect Aravis and snapping at the horses; the Cat protecting him

at the tombs; the unseen giant shadow keeping to his left to protect him from the cliff; even his own coming to Calormen—it is Aslan who guides each step of the way. “You may call me a giant,” he tells Shasta; “Tell me your sorrows.” Then he reveals to him that he is the One Lion that has been with him all along. Shasta later realizes it isn’t “luck” that sent him through the pass in the mountains into Narnia “but *Him*.” Aravis, too, at first thinking it “luck” that the lion only gave her ten scratches, is told by the Hermit that in his 109 years, he “never yet met any such thing as Luck. There is something about all this that I do not understand: but if we ever need to know it, you may be sure that we shall.”

Aslan is ever present to warn the children sternly from time to time not to do wrong. He reproves not out of anger but because he always knows what is best for them. Some day, in Aslan’s country, they will never do the wrong things and then “I will not always be scolding,” he promises. When they bicker about the gold on Deathwater Island, suddenly Aslan’s growling face appears to remind them of their wrongdoing. Just as Lucy begins to say the spell in the Magician’s Book to make herself beautiful, Aslan stares gravely at her from the page. In *Prince Caspian* a stern look from Aslan is all she needs to tell her that it is truly her responsibility to follow him, despite the others: “‘It wasn’t my fault anyway, was it?’ The Lion looked straight into her eyes. ‘Oh, Aslan,’ said Lucy. ‘You don’t mean it was? How could I—I couldn’t have left the others and come up to you alone, how could I? Don’t look at me like that . . . oh well, I suppose I *could*.’”

One cannot help but tell the truth before Aslan’s holy stare. Digory is forced to confess fully to Aslan his responsibility for the Witch entering Narnia: “‘She woke up,’ said Digory wretchedly. And then, turning very white, ‘I mean, I woke her.’” Jill, too, confesses that she shoved Eustace over the cliff simply because she was showing off.

Later, Aslan has to appear to her in a dream to remind her to repeat the signs and give her a clue: UNDER ME. Finally, just as Moses is permitted to see only God's back and not his face because his glory is too great (Exodus 33:21-23), Aslan wreaks his fury upon Experiment House, but permits the hysterical teacher and students to see only his back.

The power of Aslan's wonderfully warm, sweet breath, and the air from his tossing mane, give such power and peace that it often seems reminiscent of the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit. The whole trinity is perhaps hinted at when Shasta asks the "ghostly" companion walking beside him, "Who *are* you?"

" 'Myself,' said the Voice, very deep and low so that the earth shook, (God the Father) and again 'Myself,' loud and clear and gay, (Christ) and then the third time 'Myself,' whispered so softly you could hardly hear it, and yet it seemed to come from all round you as if the leaves rustled with it" (The Holy Spirit).

Aslan's breath and kiss always empower the children. When he sends Digory to get the apple seed, Digory doesn't know *how* he will do it. But Aslan's kiss gives him such new strength and courage that he "felt quite sure now that he would be able to do it." When Lucy buries her face in his mane, it makes her a disciple, for he breathes such lion strength into her that he declares, "now you are a lioness." He breathes on Edmund so that a greatness hangs all about him, too. To wake the statues in *The Lion*, he breathes on their frozen forms, imparting renewed life to them, just as he breathes on the chosen Talking Animals when Narnia is created to separate them from the others.

Because of this Divine Plan and Presence behind events, we are not only to have faith in Aslan even when we cannot see or *know*, but we are also to be content with the present situation and not long for things to be different. The Green Lady in *Perelandra* believes that the wave sent to her from



God at each moment is the best wave of all. So too, the children are repeatedly told by Aslan, "did I not explain to you once before that no one is ever told what *would have happened*." That is not to say that Aslan dictates every event that happens or will always be present even if not asked. In fact, Lewis clearly illustrates the importance of free will and prayer in our lives. Aslan does not appear as a guide and comfort in the form of an albatross until Lucy whispers, "Aslan, Aslan, Aslan, if ever you loved us at all, send us help now." Even though the darkness seems to remain, she *feels* better because of her small faith until he comes.

Likewise, in *The Last Battle*, Tirian cries out "Aslan! Aslan! Aslan! Come and help us Now." For him, too, the darkness, cold, and quiet seem just the same, but there is a kind of change *inside him*: "Without knowing why, he began to feel a faint hope. And he felt somehow stronger." And help does come. Although no-one can successfully try to get to Narnia, in *The Silver Chair* Jill and Eustace enter not long after they plead with Aslan to let them in: "Aslan, Aslan, Aslan! . . . Please let us two go into—" We sense that Aslan, like God, wants us to call on him first. Wondering if Aslan *knows* how hungry they are without telling him, Digory and Polly have to have Fledge the horse explain it to them: "I've no doubt he would," says Fledge. "But I've a sort of idea he likes to be asked."

### Obedience

Aslan usually calls the children from our world into another to perform certain tasks. In *The Magician's Nephew*, when Aslan calls the Cabby's wife from England, Polly realizes that anyone who heard that call "would want to obey it and (what's more) would be able to obey it, however many worlds and ages lay between." Thus they learn to obey Aslan and to seek his guidance in all circumstances. In *Prince Caspian*, for example, Lucy should have forsaken all the others and come after Aslan alone. Since she didn't,

Aslan bids her once more: "You must all get up at once and follow me." Christ also told his disciples, "If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me," forsaking all else. Later, after learning his lesson, Peter assures Lucy that they cannot know when Aslan will act again, but that nevertheless "he expects us to do what we can on our own."

Digory's first task is simply to help Polly once Andrew sends her off alone. Later, he must abandon his family and follow Aslan at any cost in order to get Aslan the apple. Still, Aslan provides him with help—Fledge and Polly—and special signs to look for—a blue lake, a hill, and a garden. And in reward for obeying and patiently waiting, he is given a healing apple for his mother.

Lucy is told in *The Lion* to go save others with her magic cordial and not to stop and wait for Edmund's healing. " 'Wait a minute,' she tells Aslan crossly. 'Daughter of Eve,' said Aslan in a graver voice, 'others also are at the point of death. Must *more* people die for Edmund?' " When she returns, Ed looks better than she had ever seen him. So her patience and obedience are rewarded, too. In fact, all four children illustrate well the rewards and blessings faithful Christians receive: for whatever they, as Kings and Queens, "took in hand," they achieved.

Shasta's task is to warn King Lune. Though tired and disheartened, he must continue on alone and he thinks this is cruel. Often, we feel God is asking us to do more than our share. But Shasta learns, "if you do one good deed your reward usually is to be set to do another and harder and better one." Likewise, Caspian selfishly though understandably, wants to abandon his throne in Narnia, his ship, and his promise to Ramandu's daughter to reach Aslan's country, but he *must* return at Aslan's bidding.

In *The Silver Chair*, Jill and Eustace are "called" by Aslan out of their world to do an important task. In their case, Aslan guides them by telling Jill four important signs she is

to follow. Although the signs are quite clear to her in Aslan's country, he warns her that they will be difficult to recognize in Narnia. So she is 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." God similarly 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. And you shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes" (Deuteronomy 6:6-8, RSV).

The children, however, don't obey Aslan's commands or stick to their mission. For one thing, they are tempted by food and shelter at Harfang, and thus walk right into a giant trap! Puddleglum has to remind them constantly to have faith and to keep going: "Aslan's instructions always work: there are no exceptions." Although it seems illogical, they must obey the sign and release the seemingly mad Prince even though they are unsure of what he will do. They may even die in the process. But no matter what the consequences, they must obey: "I *was* going to say I wished we'd never come. But I don't, I don't, I don't. Even if we *are* killed. I'd rather be killed fighting for Narnia than grow old and stupid at home and perhaps go about in a bath chair and then die in the end just the same," Jill proclaims in *The Last Battle*.

### **Reactions to Aslan**

An individual's reaction to Aslan reveals what kind of person he is. A curious thing happens, for example, when all four Pevensies hear the word "Aslan" spoken for the first time. At the sound of his name, each child feels quite different. Lewis likens it to the contrast between a terrifying or wonderful reaction to one dream: "At the name of Aslan

each one of the children felt something jump inside. Edmund felt a sensation of mysterious horror." In fact, he later admits, he hated the name. "Peter felt suddenly brave and adventurous. Susan felt as if some delicious smell or some delightful stream of music had just floated by her. And Lucy got the feeling you have when you wake up in the morning and realize that it is the beginning of the holidays or the beginning of summer."

There are similar varied reactions to Aslan's song of creation. The Cabby, Digory, and Polly drink in the music, for it reminds them of something. The Witch on the other hand knows what the song is and hates it. Andrew doesn't like it because it makes him think and feel things he doesn't want to. He tells himself it is "only a lion" who hasn't really been singing—only roaring. And soon "he couldn't have heard anything else even if he had wanted to." Aslan explains that Andrew has made himself unable to hear his voice: "If I spoke to him, he would hear only growlings and roarings. Oh Adam's sons, how cleverly you defend yourself against all that might do you good!" Just the sight of Aslan creates "one single expression of terror" on the mean, cruel faces of the Experiment House children. A person's attitude also affects his view of Narnia itself—Andrew, Eustace and the Telmarines all dread the thought of going there.

Thus "what you see and hear depends a good deal on where you are standing: it also depends on what sort of person you are." The Dwarfs refuse to believe in Aslan even when presented with the truth from Tirian. Like Andrew, they sit huddled up in the Stable and see only darkness instead of the sky and flowers which the children find in the same place. To the Dwarfs the flowers smell like stable litter. They can't even distinguish Aslan's voice. And his glorious feast—pies, tongues, pigeons, trifles, ices, and wine—tastes only like old turnips, raw cabbage leaves, and dirty trough water. Andrew and these Dwarfs

are much like Orual in *Till We Have Faces*, who believes the wine and bread Psyche gives her are just water and berries. Aslan explains that a person can close his own eyes to the truth: "They will not let us help them. They have chosen cunning instead of belief. Their prison is only in their own minds, yet they are in that prison; and so afraid of being taken in that they cannot be taken out."

One reason for the tendency to lose faith in Aslan is that he is not always in Narnia, but comes and goes. Caspian, for example, who has never seen Aslan or Talking Beasts begins to wonder if they are only stories after all. Nikabrik actually calls on the power of the Witch rather than Aslan because he has heard so little about him. After Aslan's resurrection, "He just fades out of the story," Nikabrik argues. "How do you explain that, if he really came to life? Isn't it much more likely that he didn't, and that the stories say nothing more about him because there was nothing more to say?" How similar this is to many of the arguments we hear about Christ! Even Peter argues that if Narnia or anything else is real, then they are here all the time. "Are they?" asks Professor Kirke, hinting at the necessity for faith instead of sight.

In *Prince Caspian*, the children's faith determines when and how they see Aslan during their journey to Aslan's How. Lucy, who loves Aslan perhaps more than anyone, sees him first. The voice she likes best in the world commands, "Follow me." Although the others don't believe and grumble loudly, they follow her nevertheless. Certainly they won't see him at first, Aslan predicts. "Later on, it depends." Edmund, who after all his misfortunes in an earlier adventure has learned his lesson, sees the Shadow next; then Peter, and finally, Susan and Trumpkin. Susan admits that her own attitude kept her from seeing him: "I really believed it was him tonight when you woke us up. I mean, deep down inside. Or I could have, if I'd let myself." How much she is like Edmund, who deep down inside had also known that the White Witch was bad!

One's response to Aslan is actually indicative of both his relationship to the Lion, and his faith. Spiritual growth permits an even clearer vision of him. "Aslan," says Lucy, "you're bigger." "Every year you grow, you will find me bigger," Aslan explains. When she thumbs through the Magician's Book, then gazes up from the picture, she sees Aslan. "I have been here all the time," said he, "but you have just made me visible." One's response to Aslan also reflects his unique relationship to God. Aslan tells Shasta and Aravis on separate occasions that "No one is told any story but their own."

Faith in Aslan must also come from the heart. Emeth is accepted into Aslan's country because his motives are true: "Son, thou art welcome. . . . All the service thou hast done to Tash, I account as service done to me." In contrast, Susan apparently never really believes in her heart, for she is not granted final admission to Aslan's country. Bree, like Thomas in the Bible, refuses to believe Aslan is a real lion and must receive proof before he will believe. Just as Christ urged Thomas to put his fingers in the nail prints in his hands and feet, Aslan bids Bree: "You poor, proud, frightened Horse, draw near. Nearer still, my son. Do not dare not to dare. Touch me. Smell me. Here are my paws, here is my tail, these are my whiskers. I am a true Beast." "'Aslan,' said Bree in a shaken voice, 'I'm afraid I must be rather a fool.' 'Happy the Horse who knows that while still young. Or the Human either.'" When disbelieving and stubborn Trumpkin doesn't believe Aslan is a real Lion either, Aslan proves his reality merely by tossing him gently into the air.

Time and time again, the children are called to simply have faith in Aslan. When the leopards are afraid to go near the Witch for fear she will turn them into stone, Peter tells Lucy to simply trust Aslan: "It'll be all right. . . . He wouldn't send them if it weren't." As Ramandu's daughter tells Caspian's group, "You can't know. . . . You can only

believe—or not.” Who best illustrates this but Puddleglum, who tells the Green Witch that even if the world of trees, grass, sun, moon, stars—Aslan himself—is made up, “the made-up things seem a good deal more important than the real ones. . . . I’m going to stand by the play world.” How wonderful that not only is his faith grounded in a solid reality but in a more perfect reality than he has ever dreamed of!

In *The Lion*, the children fail to believe in Lucy’s story about Narnia. The professor uses the following logic: “There are only three possibilities. Either your sister is telling lies, or she is mad, or she is telling the truth. You know she doesn’t tell lies and it is obvious that she is not mad. For the moment then and unless any further evidence turns up, we must assume that she is telling the truth.” Lewis uses the same sort of argument in *Mere Christianity* concerning belief in the claims Christ made about himself: either he was a lunatic, or a devil of hell—or the Son of God himself.

All these varied reactions to Aslan—hate, belief, belief only with proof—parallel one’s reaction to the Witch, so that a person’s attitude toward her similarly reflects his spiritual “guard.” Polly immediately dislikes her, just as Aunt Letty, totally unimpressed, calls her a “shameless hussy!” In contrast, both Digory and Andrew are awed by her beauty.

No matter which “side” one is on, once one has been in the presence of either Aslan or the Witch, his perspective is never the same. After seeing the Witch, the children find Andrew much less fearsome; after being in the Magic Wood, the tunnel above their house seems drab and homely. The Apple of Life makes everything in London pale in comparison: “All those other things seemed to have scarcely any colour at all. Every one of them, even the sunlight, looked faded and dingy. . . . Nothing else was worth looking at: indeed you couldn’t look at anything else.”

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Certainly, after meeting Aslan the Lion and being in his secret Country—no matter what your reaction—you are never the same!





## CHAPTER 6

# Characters of Narnia

*"It is a serious thing to live in a society  
of possible gods and goddesses. . . . There are no  
ordinary people. You have never talked  
to a mere mortal."*

—C. S. Lewis, "The Weight of Glory"

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### **Sons and Daughters of Adam**

Although man is not created in Narnia, he nevertheless plays an important role there. The children are "called" into Narnia when there is trouble. And it is significant that only a human can serve as King or Queen. Mr. Beaver knows that:

When Adam's flesh and Adam's bone  
Sits at Cair Paravel in throne,  
The evil time will be over and done.

Lewis seems to be clearly affirming that if we are Christians we will one day become kings and queens. All of us have this potential. In "The Weight of Glory" he writes: "It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest and most uninter-

esting person you talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare. . . . There are no *ordinary* people." Narnian life illustrates the difference in values. Where else but in Narnia could a mouse be respected as the most valiant of all the beasts?

Every individual who enters Narnia is changed and develops qualities he never knew he had! Frank, a simple cabby, feels he is not fit to be a King: "I ain't no sort of chap for a job like that. I never 'ad much eddycation, you see." Yet his voice grows steadily richer, and by the time of his coronation he has a brand new expression of courage and kindness on his face, without an ounce of quarrelsomeness, sharpness, or cunning. Digory too feels himself unfit for his task, but with the helpmates provided for him he achieves his goal and learns to obey. Every single time the children return to Narnia, all their old skills and royal strength are quickly revived. "Once a king or queen in Narnia, always a king or queen."

Each person in Narnia has a special task to perform—usually something he doesn't want to do. Digory knows he must put on a magic ring and bravely rescue Polly, and, of course, he *must* get the apple. Lucy must help the Dufflepuds; Peter must kill Fenris Ulf, and so on. But they are always provided with some kind of help in their tasks. In *The Lion*, Father Christmas presents three of the children with special gifts that prove invaluable, even in later adventures. The gifts are appropriate to their personalities and generally reflect the roles each will play in the salvation of Narnia: Peter receives a silver shield with the Lion insignia, and a gold sword. Lucy receives a small dagger to defend herself if necessary, and a diamond vial containing fluid that will immediately restore someone who is sick or injured. Susan is given a bow, quiver of arrows and an ivory horn which, if blown, will summon help immediately.

In every case, if one keeps his eyes on Aslan and not himself, he will find himself made of sturdier stuff than he ever thought possible. J. R. R. Tolkien describes well what we find in the Narnia tales: "Man as a whole, Man pitted against the universe, have we seen him at all 'til we see that he is like a hero in a fairy tale?"

### *Digory Kirke (1888-1949)*

In *The Magician's Nephew*, twelve year old Digory and his ailing mother are staying with his Aunt and Uncle Ketterley in London while his father is in India. With Polly, Digory witnesses the founding of Narnia, finally bringing back to his mother the curative apple from Narnia. He buries both the magic rings used to transport the children into other worlds and the apple core in his back yard which produces a great tree.

At the end of his adventure, his parents take him to live in a house in the country with Uncle Andrew. By 1940, when the Pevensie children come to stay with him, he is a famous professor and traveler still living in the grand old country house. He has shaggy white hair on his face as well as his head, and is so odd looking the children have to stifle laughs. His house is a tourist attraction ten miles from the nearest train station and two miles from a post office. He owns the Ketterley House too. He has no wife, only a housekeeper and three servants. When the special Narnian tree he had planted blew down in a storm, he made a wardrobe from the wood, which he now keeps in his country home. By 1942, however, he has become so poor that he has to live in a small cottage and tutor students like Peter to make a living. Then seven years later, as a result of a "re-union" he holds for friends of Narnia, he and the others end up in a fatal train accident.

### *The Pevensies and their Cousin*

Peter is the oldest Pevensie, followed by Susan, Edmund,

and Lucy. Because of the air-raids during the war they are sent from London to stay with Professor Kirke. Peter is 13 years old, Susan 12, Edmund 10, and Lucy 8 on their first adventure. In 1941, they are called back to Narnia to aid Prince Caspian, after which Peter and Susan are told they are too old to return to Narnia. One year later when Lucy and Edmund are sent to Cambridge to stay with their Aunt and Uncle, they join Eustace Scrubb, their cousin, and sail on the *Dawn Treader*. Peter at this time is being tutored for an exam by Professor Kirke. Their parents, on the other hand, are in the U. S. for 16 weeks while Mr. Pevensie lectures, and Susan tags along since she is "poor at school-work" anyway.

In 1949, Digory and Polly, now 61 and 62 years old, feel they all are "needed" in Narnia, and send Peter and Edmund after the magic rings Digory had buried in London. As the others—Jill, Eustace, Digory, Polly, Lucy, and, by chance, Mr. and Mrs. Pevensie—come to meet them on the train, a train crash kills all of them instantly.

Peter (1927-1949), the oldest Pevensie, becomes High King of Narnia—"Peter the Magnificent." He is described as deep-chested and a great warrior. Thus his sword is an appropriate gift, for his use of it during battle with Fenris Ulf displays great bravery: "Peter did not feel very brave; indeed, he felt he was going to be sick. But that made no difference to what he had to do. He rushed straight up to the monster and aimed a slash of his sword at its side. . . . he had just time to duck down and plunge his sword, as hard as he could, between the brute's forelegs into its heart. Then came a horrible, confused moment like something in a nightmare. . . . everything was blood and heat and hair. A moment later he found that the monster lay dead."

Peter is thus a perfect example of the true chivalric ideal, tempering his courage with courtesy and fair-mindedness. He apologizes, for example, for disbelieving Lucy, says it is his fault that Edmund went bad, and refuses to kill Miraz

when he has the advantage. Later, Aslan gives him the keys to lock the door upon Narnia after it has been destroyed. It is possible that Lewis appropriately named him after Peter, the "rock" upon whom Christ builds his church, and who is given the keys to the kingdom.

Lucy (1932-1949) becomes Lucy "The Valiant" as a Queen in Narnia, described as "gay and golden haired." Lucy is one of the most clearly depicted characters in all the Narnia books. It is she who first enters Narnia through the Wardrobe. She and Susan are privileged to accompany Aslan to his sacrifice, and for their faithfulness they experience a joyous ride on his back. In fact, Lucy seems to be spiritually closer to Aslan than anyone else, and they seem to share a special relationship of love!

During the children's long trek with Prince Caspian, Aslan appears to Lucy before any of the others. His voice, which she has been longing for, is the one she loves best in the world: "She rushed to him. She felt her heart would burst if she lost a moment. And the next thing she knew was that she was kissing him and putting her arms as far round his neck as she could and burying her face in the beautiful rich silkiness of his mane. 'Aslan, Aslan. Dear Aslan,' sobbed Lucy. 'At last.' " We can understand why, at the end of *The Last Battle*, during all the final indescribable events in Aslan's Country, Lucy silently "drinks in" everything more deeply than the others.

Since Lucy seems to be the most sensitive of all the children, her gift of healing cordial is appropriate. For example, she compassionately visits the miserable Eustace while he is seasick, offering him her own food and water. She is also the first one to sense his hurt and help him after he has become a dragon. Given the frightening task of looking into the Magician's Book to undo the spell on the Dufflepuds, she tactfully tries to convince them they aren't ugly. She also feels guilty for having left her friends so long.

In contrast, Susan (1928-1949) becomes Susan the Gentle

as Queen of Narnia and is known for her beauty: "Susan grew into a tall and gracious woman with black hair that fell almost to her feet and the Kings of the countries beyond the sea began to send ambassadors asking for her hand in marriage." In fact, Prince Rabadash's vicious attack on Archenland in *The Horse and His Boy* is triggered by his irrational passion to marry and avenge her. Tender-hearted and skilled at archery and swimming, her gift of arrows is appropriate.

But one of the most perplexing and disappointing details of all the stories is that in the end Susan is denied admittance to Aslan's Country. She is "no longer a friend of Narnia." We can assume that she never really believed in Aslan in her heart. In *Prince Caspian*, for instance, she is the last of the children to see Aslan because, she says, she didn't *let* herself believe. Eustace says that during the final days, "whenever you've tried to get her to come and talk about Narnia or do anything about Narnia, she says, 'What wonderful memories you have! Fancy your still thinking about all those funny games we used to play when we were children.'" Jill says, "she's interested in nothing nowadays except nylons and lipstick and invitations. She always was a jolly sight too keen on being grown-up." "Grown-up, indeed," replies Polly. "I wish she *would* grow up. She wasted all her school time wanting to be the age she is now, and she'll waste all the rest of her life trying to stay that age. Her whole idea is to race on to the silliest time of one's life as quick as she can and then stop there as long as she can." Susan is perhaps symbolic of the superficial Christian whose commitment is too shallow to be real.

Edmund (1930-1949) commits treachery by succumbing to the Witch's temptation and desiring to be King. Returning from his solo visit to Narnia, he grows increasingly nasty and spiteful and even lies about having been there. But though he is perhaps a seemingly unworthy person, Aslan, who sees the worth of every individual, sacrifices

himself in Edmund's place. Edmund's transformation after he realizes the evil nature of the Witch—whom he really believed was bad all along—is remarkable. He and Aslan stroll together alone, and although no one hears what Aslan says, "it was a conversation which Edmund never forgot." Edmund had "got past thinking about himself after all he'd been through and after the talk he'd had that morning. He just went on looking at Aslan." It is thus fitting that during the later adventure of the Dawn Treader, Eustace describes his "undragoning" to Edmund. Ed admits, "You haven't been as bad as I was on my first trip to Narnia. You were only an ass, but I was a traitor." However, Edmund may never have fully realized what Aslan did for him—"it would be too awful. . . . Think how you'd feel if you were he." As King, Edmund appropriately becomes a "grave and quieter man than Peter, and great in council and judgement. He was called King Edmund the Just."

Eustace Clarence Scrubb (1933-1949), the Pevensies' cousin, "half-deserved the name," says Lewis, which means both "a person of little account, insignificant," and "to scratch at one's body." Both, of course, adequately describe an individual whose experience vividly illustrates the most drastic kind of change that Aslan can produce in a person!

His "up-to-date" and "advanced" family is clearly portrayed. Eustace calls his parents, Harold and Alberta, by their first names. They are vegetarians, non-smokers, teetotallers, wear special underclothes, have little furniture, and sleep with the windows open. After Eustace changes for the better, his mother insists that he has become "tiresome and commonplace."

At the beginning of *The Dawn Treader*, Eustace is a puny, bossy bully, with no ability to imagine or make things up, who tries to impress others with his infinite superiority. We can just hear him bawling about "art" and "Plump-tree's Vitaminised Nerve Food" and "lodging a disposi-



tion" against his companions with the British Consul. His diary of the voyage presents an excellent insight into his personality—his self-centeredness and stupidity: "I have had a ghastly time. . . . It all proves. . . . the madness of setting out in a rotten little tub like this. It would be bad enough even if one was with decent people instead of fiends in human form. Caspian and Edmund are simply brutal to me. . . . I tried to explain that perspiration really cools people down, so the men would need less water if they were working." He believes that everyone is against him, despises the food and "primitive" accommodations, has a run-in with Reepicheep—"that little brute"—and all the while deceives himself into thinking *he* is being considerate. How like Eustace to think Calormen the "least phoney" of all the countries!

But no matter how despicable Eustace is, he can't help but be changed by Narnia. Physically, "his new life, little as he suspected it, had already done him some good." His *inner* change comes on Dragon Island when he sets off alone, trying to escape work. But he doesn't enjoy himself for long: "He began, almost for the first time in his life, to feel lonely." His greediness and inner nastiness is, of course, made tangible and visible by his transformation into a dragon. Yet the experience vastly improves him. Realizing the nuisance he has been, he begins to examine his thoughts about himself and the others. Then Aslan gets hold of him and "from that time forth," Eustace really begins to be a different boy. The change doesn't occur overnight. "He had relapses. There were still many days when he could be very tiresome. But. . . the cure had begun."

Eustace and his friend Jill Pole provide good examples of what Lewis perceives as dangerous trends in American and British educational systems. They attend Experiment House, a "coeducational" or "mixed" school for both boys and girls. "Some said it was not nearly so mixed as the minds of the people who ran it. These people had the idea

that boys and girls should be allowed to do what they like." Elsewhere, Lewis attacks so-called "democratic" education which, so no one will feel inferior, levels courses so that there is less distinction between "intelligent" and "stupid" students.

At his school, Eustace reads only books of information with "pictures of grain elevators or of fat foreign children doing exercises in model schools." They discuss "exports and imports and governments and drains" in great detail but say little about dragons. So, since Eustace has read none of the right books, he has no idea what a dragon is and consequently has to turn into one before he learns! These children also have no Bibles, so they don't even know about Adam and Eve, nor do they have any idea how to tell a story straight (so Eustace has difficulty in describing what happened). Eustace cares only about grades, not about learning a subject for its own sake, and he likes dead beetles pinned to cards.

At the beginning of *The Silver Chair*, Jill and Eustace are so miserable at Experiment House, at the mercy of bullying classmates and subjected to other "horrid things," that they are desperate to escape into Narnia. Not only do they escape, of course, but Aslan comes back with them to wreak vengeance on the school. The Head of Experiment House becomes hysterical and is "made an Inspector to interfere with other Heads. And when they found she wasn't much good even at that, they got her into Parliament where she lived happily ever after." Once she and others have been expelled, Experiment House becomes quite a good school after all.

Even in Narnia, though, education can go bad. "The sort of 'History' that was taught in Narnia under Miraz's rule was duller than the truest history you ever read." Aslan rescues a poor schoolgirl, Gwendolen, stuck inside a typical girls' school: "The walls became a mass of shimmering green, and leafy branches arched overhead where the

ceiling had been. Miss Prizzle found she was standing on grass in a forest glade. . . . Then she saw the lion, screamed and fled, and with her fled her class, who were mostly dumpy, prim little girls with fat legs." Even Cor fears that once he is restored to princedom again, "education and all sorts of horrible things are going to happen to me." One of the acts of the four Kings and Queens is thus to "liberate young dwarfs and satyrs from being sent to school." For the children from England, going to Narnia greatly compensates for the faults of their schools. "Why don't they teach logic?" asks Professor Kirke. "What *do* they teach them at these schools?"

### Animals

Lewis believed that the presence of beings other than humans, who behave humanly—"giants and dwarfs and Talking Beasts"—is a central element in all fairy tales. There are two reasons for this. First, the writer can give these animal characters a child's carefree life with no domestic or other responsibilities, yet they are like adults because they can do what and go where they wish. Second, they can portray personality types most succinctly. For example, where do we see courage more clearly than in the swashbuckling Reepicheep, a two foot mouse, proudly and fearlessly defending and jabbing with his small sword? Lewis writes about the importance of animals in stories in his poem "Impenitence":

All the world's wiseacres in arms against them  
 Shan't detach my heart for a single moment  
 From the man-like beasts of the earthy stories—  
 Badger or Moly . . . .

Not that I'm so craz'd as to think the creatures  
 Do behave that way, nor at all deluded  
 By some half-false sweetness of early childhood  
 Sharply remembered. . . .

Look again. Look well at the beasts, the true ones. . . .

Why! they all cry out to be used as symbols,  
Masks for Man, cartoons, parodies by Nature  
Formed to reveal us

Each to each, not fiercely but in her gentlest  
Vein of household laughter.

Lewis certainly has a convincing way of combining their humanness with their innate animal characteristics—the “cawing, cooing, crowing, braying, neighing, baying, barking, lowing, bleating, and trumpeting;” the “wagging tails, and barking, and loose slobbery mouths and noses of dogs thrust into your hand.” Mrs. Beaver is a particularly memorable stereotype of the practical housewife who takes time to pack clean hankies, ham, tea, and sugar—“I suppose the sewing machine’s too heavy to bring?” Bree snobbishly worries about his looks, considers humans “funny little creatures,” speaks to the mare, Hwin, instead of her mistress, Aravis; patronizes Shasta, and, worst of all, doubts that Aslan is a real lion. But how “horsey” he is, too, doing that which he likes best and is afraid of losing in Narnia: “rubbing his back on the turf and waving all four legs in the air.”

Lewis’s most engaging and memorable creations though are Reepicheep and Puddleglum:

### *Reepicheep*

Although mice were not originally Talking Beasts, Aslan gave them this honor because they nibbled away at the cords which held him to the stone table after his sacrificial death. Chief Mouse is Reepicheep, most valiant of all the Talking Beasts of Narnia, who won undying glory in the second Battle of Beruna: “It was a Mouse on its hind legs and stood about two feet high. A thin band of gold passed

round its head under one ear and over the other and in this was stuck a long crimson feather. (As the Mouse's fur was very dark, almost black, the effect was bold and striking.) Its left paw rested on the hilt of a sword very nearly as long as its tail. Its balance . . . was perfect, and its manners courtly." It twirls its whiskers like a long moustache.

The mouse's small size deceptively hides his abundant, often impulsive courage. In *Prince Caspian*, for example, he graciously offers his men's services in Caspian's army: "There are twelve of us, Sire," he said with a dashing and graceful bow, "and I place all the resources of my people unreservedly at your Majesty's disposal." Caspian tried hard (and successfully) not to laugh." Naturally, it is he who first offers to step through Aslan's door to the island of the Telmarines.

In *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, we get an even better look at Reepicheep who voluntarily serves as sentry over the water and indignantly jabs for his honor at Eustace, who mockingly swirls him through the air by the tail. Of course, he is first to volunteer to fight single-handedly against dragons. He even plays chess daringly by sending his knight into the combined danger of queen and castle, "For his mind was full of forlorn hopes, death or glory charges, and last stands." Only Reepicheep wants to press on to the Dark Island for, he argues, "here is as great an adventure as ever I heard of, and here, if we turn back, no little impeachment of all our honours." For the same reason, he refuses to leave Aslan's Table: "This is a very great adventure, and no danger seems to me so great as that of knowing when I get back to Narnia that I left a mystery behind me through fear." Then, he is the first to believe in the safety of the food and the truthfulness of Ramandu's daughter: "I will drink to the lady," he cries, as he valiantly raises his cup in the air.

His quest to reach the World's End has an Arthurian flavor: "The spell of it has been on me all my life," he says.

Quivering with excitement at the adventure's end, he is determined to go on: "While I can, I sail east in *The Dawn Treader*. When she fails me, I paddle east in my coracle. When she sinks, I shall swim east with my four paws." As he throws his sword into the sea, it stands up with its hilt above the surface like Arthur's Excalibur, a sign of valor. Indeed, he does reach Aslan's Country, for who else but Reepicheep later welcomes the children at the golden gates of Aslan's garden!

Reepicheep's courage and dignity are so extraordinary, however, that Aslan expresses concern that he may be overcome by vanity. In *Prince Caspian*, the mouse loses his tail and thus his balance in battle; so he requests a new tail, because "a tail is the honour and glory of a Mouse."

"I have sometimes wondered, friend," says Aslan, "whether you do not think too much about your honour."

Reepicheep replies, "Permit me to remind you that a very small size has been bestowed on us Mice, and if we did not guard our dignity, some (who weigh worth by inches) would allow themselves very unsuitable pleasantries at our expense."

Aslan grants him his wish, not because of his dignity, but because of the love and kindness of his people.

Reepicheep seems not only immune from fear and loss of dignity, but also from greed and envy. Surprisingly, he comforts Eustace when he is a dragon, telling him stories of greater people who have fallen, and "Eustace never forgot it." He also keeps out of the quarrel over the gold on Deathwater Island.

### *Puddleglum*

Puddleglum the Marshwiggle is perhaps Lewis's most unique creation, described as follows: He has

"a long thin face with rather sunken cheeks, a tightly shut mouth, a sharp nose, and no beard. It was wear-

ing a high, pointed hat like a steeple, with an enormously rude flat brim. The hair, if it could be called hair, which hung over its large ears was greeny-grey, and each lock was flat rather than round, so that they were like tiny reeds. Its expression was solemn, and its complexion muddy, and you could see at once that it took a very serious view of life."

He has very long legs and arms, and webbed hands and feet, like a frog. Like all Marshwiggles, who enjoy their privacy, he lives in a wigwam in the reedy marshes.

Lewis, according to Hooper and Green, based the character of Puddleglum on his gardener Fred Paxford, who was similarly unusual and given to "gloomy prognostications": "an inwardly optimistic, outwardly pessimistic, dear, frustrating, shrewd country man of immense integrity." Indeed, poor Puddleglum always expects the worst of every possible situation: "Very likely, what with enemies, and mountains, and rivers to cross, and losing our way, and next to nothing to eat, and sore feet, we'll hardly notice the weather."

Yet isn't he the perfect guide for Eustace and Jill on their mission to save Rilian? His cold-blooded clear-sightedness and reliability are invaluable in the frozen lands of the North. His pessimism keeps him from too readily succumbing to giants or witches, and he remembers Aslan's rules when the children fail. During the Witch's enchantment, for example, he stout-heartedly stamps out the fire with his webbed foot and solidly denounces her world: "I'm on Aslan's side even if there isn't any Aslan to lead it. I'm going to live as like a Narnian as I can even if there isn't any Narnia."

### **Rogues**

Various other characters provide good satires of common personality types and sometimes receive humorous and

ridiculous "rewards" for their actions. Uncle Andrew, the proud and foolish dabbler in magic, is always out for his own skin. Apparently he has mismanaged all of his sister's money, and if his vanity isn't bad enough, he greedily plots the commercialization of Narnia by burying coins or valuables and letting them spring up into trees. What a fitting punishment when the animals plant *him*—fortunately, right-side up—and then the elephant appropriately hoses him. Each animal kindly feeds him with nuts, worms, and globs of honey (plus bees). Aslan calls him simply an "old sinner" who cannot hear his voice, and puts him to sleep.

In *The Horse and His Boy*, Rabadash receives a similar judgment. He impetuously attacks Archenland for his own private purpose of getting back at Susan and fulfilling his premature desire for the throne. His reward is to be suspended from the castle wall in battle, hooked by his own chain-shirt to a peg in the wall. Still, he indignantly threatens vengeance on Lune's forces for this undignified insult. Although Aslan warns him to cast aside his pride and anger, he bombards them with curses until his nemesis: his ears become pointed and covered with gray hair; his face grows long and thick; then he stands up on all fours until he is "simply and unmistakably, a donkey." Yet Aslan's justice is tempered with mercy, for as long as Rabadash does not stray from Tash's temple, he will remain a human.

In *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, Gumpas is the bilious governor of the Lone Islands and the stereotype of the "progressive" politician. How fitting that "gump" means dolt or numbskull! He sticks mechanically to his appointment schedule, forms, rules and regulations, ledgers, records, minutes, dossiers, and documents. He measures progress by economic development through slavery, as proven by statistics and graphs. Fittingly, he is ousted by clever trickery and a single word from Caspian. Lewis believed that no one is fit to own or dominate another person.



Although the Dufflepuds are probably based on a fabulous medieval creature (see "Monopod" entry on page 151 of Index), they too are some of Lewis's most unforgettable creations. A "duffer" means an incapable, foolish, stupid, inept, unproductive person. Once dwarfs and servants of Coriakin the Magician, they disobeyed his reasonable request that they obtain water from a nearby stream instead of trudging half a mile away to a spring. Coriakin, who because of their illogic, must rule by rough magic and not by wisdom, is being punished for something he did and is in charge of them. He puts an "uglifying spell" on them. To avoid seeing each other's ugliness, they put a spell on each other making themselves invisible. And, of course, Lucy makes them visible again, at their request.

As Lewis's own drawing showed, they are like mushrooms with three foot stalks and an "umbrella" attached to each: "Each body had a single thick leg right under it . . . and at the end of it, a single enormous foot—a broad-toed foot with the toes curling up a little so that it looked rather like a small canoe." The foot keeps off sun and rain, can be used as a boat, and bounces them up and down like a spring. But they are very conceited and illogical: washing dishes before dinner and planting boiled potatoes to save time! They constantly repeat every trivial and obvious pronouncement from their Chief.

One can't help seeing in the Dufflepuds a little of his own relationship to God. Although the Magician wants the best for them, they persist in going their own foolish ways or changing what they are for something worse. Instead of allowing Coriakin to rule them by wisdom, they view him in all the wrong ways: "One minute they talk as if I ran everything and overheard everything and was extremely dangerous. The next moment they think they can take me in by tricks that a baby would see through—bless them!"

## CHAPTER 7

# Creations of Evil

*"When we seek our own pleasure as the ultimate good we place ourselves as the center of the universe . . . but nothing created is the center."*

—Madeleine L'Engle, *A Wind in the Door*

*"Where Maleldil is, there is the centre. . . . There is no way out of the centre save into the Bent Will which casts itself into the Nowhere."*

—Perelandra

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Some people argue that fairy tales frighten children, especially if they vividly portray battles and wicked characters. Narnia certainly contains a diversity of evil—"ogres with monstrous teeth, and wolves and bull-headed men; spirits of evil trees and poisonous plants;" cruels, hags, incubuses, wraiths, horrors, efreetts, sprites, orknies, wooses, ettins, ghouls, boggles, minotaurs, spectres, people of the toadstools, "and other creatures whom I won't describe because if I did the grown-ups would probably not let you read this book."

Lewis is opposed to the idea that we must protect a child from the knowledge that he is "born into a world of death, violence, wounds, adventure, heroism and cowardice,

good and evil." Such protection may breed in him a shallow escapism. Since he will undoubtedly meet cruel and horrifying enemies, he should also hear of and admire brave knights, heroic courage, comforters and protectors. So let there be "wicked kings and beheadings, battles and dungeons, giants and dragons, and let villains be soundly killed at the end of the book."

### **Charn**

The essence of evil worlds is always a perversion of the good. Entering the cloud of vague, whirling shapes through one of the pools in the Wood Between the Worlds, Digory and Polly find themselves in Charn. Once a great city, "city of the King of kings," "wonder of all worlds," it is now a dying world. Once bustling with slaves, chariots, and ritual drums and sacrifices in the temple, it is now a cold, dead, empty silence devoid of any life. Only temples, towers, palaces, pyramids, and bridges remain. Courtyard after courtyard stand in ruin. The sun is older than ours, giving off a dull, steady, red light in a dark sky. And a stale wind blows. Where once a river flowed which was turned to blood there is only a ditch. Then, at the very end of *The Magician's Nephew*, the little pool which once led to Charn becomes a dry hollow, signalling the end of its existence and giving a subtle warning to the race of Adam and Eve. Just how did this world fall to such ruin?

### **The Witches**

Jadis, the White Witch, is one-half giant and one-half Jinn. The Jinn are descended from Lilith who, according to Jewish mythology, was Adam's first wife but refused to obey him and became Satan's dam. Although she is "bad all through," Jadis is exceedingly beautiful, with a look of such fierce, wild pride that she seems "ten times more alive than most people in London." Often compared to Hans Christian Andersen's Snow Queen, she is seven feet tall and

dressed all in white fur, with a gold wand and crown: "Her face was white—not merely pale, but white like snow or paper or icing sugar, except for her very red mouth. It was a beautiful face in other respects, but proud and cold and stern." She is also physically powerful and can even hear men's thoughts.

Jadis' history begins as she battles against her sister who refuses to yield her the throne of Charn. In revenge, Jadis speaks the "Deplorable Word" which destroys all living things when spoken. She had learned this word in a "secret place" and paid a "terrible price for it." With the word she casts all of Charn and its inhabitants into a frozen enchantment. Under one of her spells, the Witch promises to sleep among them like a statue until someone strikes a bell to awaken her.

Digory and Polly, of course, discover her asleep in the courtroom. On a four foot high square pillar is a golden arch from which hangs a golden bell and beside it lies a golden hammer inscribed on its side with the following words:

Make your choice, adventurous Stranger;  
Strike the bell and bide the danger,  
Or wonder, till it drives you mad,  
What would have followed if you had.

Wild with curiosity—"I wonder... I wonder... I wonder"—Digory finally strikes the bell. At first it gives off a sweet sound, which, instead of dying away, grows unbearably loud until it awakens the Witch. Later, Digory admits to Aslan that he simply wanted to *know* what would happen if he struck the bell—he wasn't *really* enchanted by the letters. The children escape to the Wood between the Worlds by touching their yellow rings, but Jadis, first grabbing Polly's hair and then Digory's ears, stays with them until they are back in London.

Later, the Witch enters Narnia by Digory grabbing hold of her ankle. Rebelling against this, another new world, she hurls the iron bar from the lamp-post in England at Aslan's forehead. But it comes to life where it falls, growing up as a young lamp-post. Afterwards, this lamp shines day and night in the Narnian forest, and the area where it stands is called Lantern Waste.

The Witch flees north and the Tree of Protection keeps her from Narnia for 897 years. Then Jadis returns to rule Narnia as Queen for 100 years. As we see in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, her reign is accompanied by continuous winter and Christmas never comes. But in this story, she meets her end. Although she can turn other people to stone with a flick of her wand, she is weaker than Aslan: "Turn *him* into stone? If she can stand on her two feet and look him in the face it'll be the most she can do." When she challenges his promise to die for Edmund, one mighty roar from Aslan sends her running. She believes she is victorious in killing Aslan on the Stone Table, but she is ignorant of the Deeper Magic which invalidates all her claims to the victim and reverses Death itself. "With a roar that shook all Narnia from the Western lamp-post to the shores of the Eastern sea," Aslan flings himself into battle against Jadis. "Lucy saw her face lifted towards him for one second with an expression of terror and amazement," before she is killed.

Jadis is not to be confused with the Green Witch in *The Silver Chair*, ruler of the Shallow-Lands, though they are of the same lineage. Like Jadis, she is deceptively beautiful: she wears "a long fluttering dress of dazzling green" and laughs in the "richest, most musical laugh you can imagine." But her true nature is revealed when she changes into a serpent, traditionally the symbol of Satan and evil.

### **Temptation**

Lewis deals with temptation in many of his novels, espe-

cially *Perelandra*, and it occurs in various guises in the Narnia books as well. He makes it plain that evil must be fought within two levels—as spiritual warfare as well as physical. The Narnia tales are filled with conflict against evil forces which attempt to dominate individuals' wills and lives.

Temptation is frequently experienced in the desire to *know*. Digory, for instance, is directly responsible for awakening Jadis because of his uncontrollable curiosity to know what will happen if he hits the bell. Later, Aslan sends him on a special mission. He is told to go to a green hill at the end of a lake. There he finds golden gates, facing east, that say:

Come in by the gold gates or not at all,  
Take of my fruit for others or forbear.  
For those who steal or those who climb my wall  
Shall find their heart's desire and find despair.

Central within the garden is a tree of life. Aslan has commissioned Digory to bring back one of its silver-gold apples, with seeds to plant in the newly-created Narnia. Such hunger and thirst overcome Digory that he longs just to taste the fruit. He sees the Witch eating an apple, but notices that it makes a horrid red stain on her mouth. If he doesn't listen to her, she warns, he will miss some "knowledge that would have made you happy all your life:" "It is the apple of youth, the apple of life. I know, for I have tasted it; and I feel already such changes in myself that I know I shall never grow old or die. Eat it, Boy, eat it; and you and I will both live forever and be king and queen of this whole world."

Although this appeal certainly is tempting, an even greater temptation for Digory is Jadis' suggestion that he take an apple to save his mother first, before completing his task for Aslan: " 'All will be well again. Your home will

be happy again. You will be like other boys.' 'Oh!' gasped Digory as if he had been hurt, and put his hand to his head." Digory now realizes the "terrible choice" that lies before him. The Witch urges him to follow her suggestion by reasoning that the Lion hasn't done anything that would make Digory his slave and can't help him in this world anyway. Besides, what would his mother think? Such a wild animal must have made him cruel to make such silly promises. Polly, in fact, could stay here, so no one would need to know. This last suggestion is so patently mean that Digory realizes the falsehood and hollowness of the Witch's "logic."

As a result of her eating of the fruit, all apples become a horror to her. Aslan explains that this will happen to all those who pluck and eat fruits at the wrong time and in the wrong way—who disobey him and satisfy their own prideful lust for power: "The fruit is good, but they loathe it ever after." True, Jadis is granted her desire for strength and endless days—but she receives eternal misery, as well. Thus Uncle Andrew's "prophecy" that "No great wisdom can be reached without sacrifice" comes true.

Greed—for wisdom, for power—is seen in Andrew himself. Not only does he dabble in magic in order to discover new, unseen worlds, and then trick the children into doing his dirty work for him, but he also tries to capitalize on Narnia's ability to grow gold and silver trees from coins! In *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, greed is vividly portrayed when the witch tempts Edmund with Turkish Delight. This is a candy that makes you want it more than anything else, so that you would eat it till you kill yourself. Edmund's greed also appears in his desire to be King, as the Witch promises, and to have all his brothers and sisters under him. Of course, the Witch tosses in a few other ploys as well: she enlarges upon his handsomeness and tricks him into not telling the others about her.

Food becomes the main bait in *The Silver Chair* when the

children's obsession for the giant's food, as promised by the Green Witch, distracts them from looking for Aslan's signs. Gold and riches are also common objects of temptation, and on Deathwater Island lust for gold makes the children so greedily quarrelsome that only a stern glare from Aslan reminds them that they have sinned. And what better image of greed can we discover than Eustace snoozing on the dragon's treasure, his pockets bursting with jewels. Filled with dragonish thoughts, Eustace turns into a dragon quite like the one Lewis describes in a poem:

Lord that made the dragon, grant me thy peace,  
But say not that I should give up the gold,  
Nor move, nor die. Others would have the gold.  
Kill rather, Lord, the Men and other dragons.

—*The Dragon Speaks*

Lucy undergoes two different temptations as she reads the Magician's Magic Book. First she discovers a spell to make her beautiful beyond the lot of mortals. She sees herself throned and lovely, with all the Kings fighting for her so that even her sister Susan is jealous. But Lucy has the feeling she mustn't succumb to this temptation, and a growl from Aslan confirms her intuition. But she does give in to the temptation to have the forbidden knowledge of knowing what her friends think about her, perhaps spoiling the potential for lifelong friendships.

Probably the most vivid example of the wiles of the witches is the enchantment of Jill, Eustace, and Puddleglum in *The Silver Chair*. The Green Witch flings a green powder into the air and strums a mandolin, both of which confuse their minds, making thinking difficult. Through her enchantment she begins to convince them that their world is but a dream and her lamp the real sun: "You can put nothing into your make-believe without copying it from the real world, this world of mine, which is the only



world." Appropriately, she turns into the symbolic serpent of evil at the end of her temptation.

### **Pride**

Pride is the root problem of most who are sucked in by temptation or are evil themselves. Jadis boasts of her power as ruler of Charn and her possession of the Deplorable Word: "Ours is a high and lonely destiny." As Queen of Charn, Jadis believes her people exist only to do her will. Digory notes that she never seems interested in objects or people unless she can use them, concentrating her attention on those she needs at the moment. In *The Last Battle*, Shift, who defines "true freedom" as "doing what I tell you!", echoes this attitude.

Uncle Andrew, though certainly a feeble parallel to Jadis, is much like her. He is vain enough to think that *he* called Jadis to England and even deludes himself that she is beginning to love him! Once he gets into Narnia himself, he worries about his own fate: "What about *me*? They don't seem to think of that. No one thinks of *me*." In fact, Andrew speaks Jadis' very words: "Men like me who possess hidden wisdom are freed from common rules just as we are cut off from common pleasures. Ours, my boy, is a high and lonely destiny." Digory perceptively realizes that all Andrew *really* means is that "he can do anything he likes to get anything he wants." The Witch, Andrew, and their like have no rules. How unlike Aslan who obeys even his own rules!

Caspian, though not as self-centered as these two, slips into selfishness when he longs to abandon his ship and country and sail on to the End of the World. Reepicheep sternly warns, "You shall not please yourself with adventures as if you were a private person." This is a hard lesson, learned over and over again by the children and other Narnians. They must obey first and help others, not themselves. Digory, for instance, must get the apple seed before

Aslan will help his mother; and surprisingly, when he does succeed in his task, he feels no conceit at all. After his long bout with the Witch, Edmund, too, finally stops thinking about himself—"He just went on looking at Aslan." Even vain old Bree, who perpetually worries about his looks and social respectability, has to learn that he won't be anyone special in Narnia, and through Aslan he loses his self-conceit. As Aslan teaches, if you feel yourself self-sufficient, it is proof that you are not!

Other effects of evil can readily be seen. An obvious example is the comparison of the worlds of Aslan and the mock worlds conceived by evil—Charn and the Shallow-Lands. These are nothing but dead worlds. The Witch turns even Narnia into an icy white enchantment where the frozen animal "statues" seem to reflect nature's retreat as a consequence of evil. In *The Last Battle*, deception results in the cutting down of trees, the silencing and harnessing of talking horses; and the same kind of slavery, sadness, fear and gloom that can be found in the Shallow-Lands.

Evil also sets out to corrupt the truths about reality. The Green Witch claims that her lamp is real and the sun a fake, and Telmarines like Miraz call all stories about Narnia and Aslan false—"old wives' fables." These examples illustrate 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.

Evil tries to set up false gods. Shift, of course, creates a parody of Aslan and tries to make the creatures believe that Aslan is not the one they have longed for and believed in. These Narnians actually begin to doubt their belief altogether, thinking the changes in Narnia are punishment for a terrible wrong. Next, Shift's group tries to confuse Aslan and Tash by merging them into Tashlan. The god Tash, whose name appropriately means "blemish," is the

Calormene god who requires human sacrifices: "It had the head of a bird; some bird of prey with a cruel, curved beak. It had four arms which it held high above its head, stretching them out Northward as if it wanted to snatch all Narnia in its grip; and its fingers—all twenty of them—were curved like its beak and had long, pointed, bird-like claws instead of nails." Its deathly smell is vastly different from the fragrant breath of Aslan!

As Shift and the others begin to equate Tash and Aslan, the Narnians wonder how a god who feeds on blood could be the same as the good Lion by whose blood all Narnia was saved. Even worse, perhaps, is the "enlightened" philosophy of Ginger the Cat, who is cockily convinced that neither god exists. Sadly for him, he discovers that Tash exists, all right. Lewis vividly shows the reality of demons: " 'It seems, then,' said the Unicorn, 'That there is a real Tash, after all.' 'Yes,' said the Dwarf. 'And this fool of an Ape, who didn't believe in Tash, will get more than he bargained for! He called for Tash: Tash has come.' " Because Rabadash similarly calls on Tash, Aslan allows him to be a man in Tash's temple, but a donkey if he leaves!

Edmund is a prime case study in the gradual effects of sin. After he returns home from Narnia, he first lies about having been there, then his behavior becomes nastier and nastier as the sin eats away at him. Feeling snubbed, he increasingly resents his brother and wants to get even with him. The Beavers note the evil look in his eyes, the "horrible ideas" in his head. Worst of all, he mocks Aslan, painting an impertinent moustache on a lion statue.

Finally, evil makes us forget the glimpses and glimmers of the numinous that appear to us all through our lives. The Witch has no recollection of ever having been in the quiet place of the magic Wood Between the Worlds. And under the enchantment of the Green Witch, Rilian says he cannot even remember his true self. But evil never conquers totally. Rilian is allowed to be himself one hour a day!

### Problems in Discerning Evil

No matter how obvious its effects, evil itself is not always easily detected. The problem of perceiving and understanding what is evil is defined well by Edmund: "Which is the right side? How do we know the fauns are in the right and the Queen . . . is in the wrong. We don't really know anything about either." "How do we know?" he queries. Certainly part of the White Witch's magic, says Lewis, is that she can make things appear to be what they aren't. She certainly doesn't look like our usual conception of the Devil! The Green Witch, too, is disguised as a beautiful woman in a green garment. With her lovely voice, she not only deceives Rilian into believing she is all good, but the children also fail to recognize her as the green serpent.

In *The Last Battle*, Shift uses both false appearances with the lion's skin and also a deceptive logic and a cunning twisting of the facts. Note how he misinterprets every one of the signs for Puzzle, then tricks poor Puzzle into doing what he wants. In *Prince Caspian*, Lucy hypothesizes about the deceptiveness of evil which may come to our world: "Wouldn't it be dreadful if some day in our own world, at home, men started going wild inside, like the animals here, and still looked like men, so that you'd never know which were which?"

So, *how do we* perceive evil? Quite often in the tales, the children are told they can recognize friends who have been in Narnia, or evil people, simply "by their eyes." At Aslan's Table, when Edmund is skeptical about whether or not Ramandu's daughter can be trusted and the food is safe to eat, she says, "You can't know . . . You can only believe or not." But more often, we may really find the answer deep within us. Down deep inside, for example, Edmund says he knew that the Witch was really bad and cruel. As we have seen, one's response to a witch or to Aslan reflects the kind of person he really is.



## CHAPTER 8

# Christian Concepts in the Narnia Tales —A Summary

*"A man may well discover truth in what he wrote;  
for he was dealing all the time with  
things that came from thoughts beyond his own."*

—George MacDonald,  
"The Fantastic Imagination"

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Many readers cannot help but notice how Aslan "reminds" them of Christ, or how the stories "teach" them certain religious values. In fact, a monk named Brother Stanislas wrote to the New York C. S. Lewis Society that he had read the Narnia tales three times in three years. "They have been for me about the most spiritual books I have read in my 16 years as a monk," he commented. But did Lewis intentionally include these theological elements in the stories? In *Of Other Worlds* Lewis wrote: "Some people seem to think that I began by asking myself how I could say something about Christianity to children; then fixed on the fairy tale as an instrument; then collected information about child psychology and decided what age group I'd write for; then drew up list of basic Christian truths and hammered out 'allegories' to embody them. This is all pure moonshine." The Christian elements welled up more or less unconsciously into the narrative as Lewis wrote it.

What Lewis did see is how stories like the Narnia tales could “steal past” the inhibitions and traditional religious concepts we are often raised with in childhood: “Why did one find it so hard to feel as one was told one ought to feel about God or about the sufferings of Christ? I thought the chief reason was that one was told one ought to. And obligation to feel can freeze feelings. And reverence itself did harm. The whole subject was associated with lowered voices; almost as if it were something medical. But supposing that by casting all these things into an imaginary world, stripping them of their stained-glass and Sunday school associations, one could make them for the first time appear in their real potency? Could one not thus steal past those watchful dragons?”<sup>8</sup>

If a reader does not discover any religious parallel whatsoever, “Don’t put one in,” warns Lewis. The moral inherent in them should arise unconsciously from “whatever spiritual roots you have succeeded in striking during the whole course of your life.”

Although biblical principles are very much present in the Narnia series, they are certainly not allegory—characters and events in Narnia do not “represent” anything. If one tries to find such correspondences—for example, a comparison of Aslan’s sacrifice with Christ’s crucifixion—he will be disappointed. Instead, Lewis believed that a writer, as “creator” in a sense, “rearranges” elements God has already provided in his world and which already contain *his* meanings. George MacDonald, a writer who greatly influenced Lewis, explains this process in his essay on “The Fantastic Imagination”:

One difference between God’s work and man’s is, that, while God’s work cannot mean more than he meant, man’s must mean more than he meant. For in everything that God has made, there is layer upon layer of ascending significance; also he expresses the

same thought in higher and higher kinds of that thought: it is God's things, his embodied thoughts, which alone a man has to use, modified and adapted to his own purposes, for the expression of his thoughts; therefore he cannot help his words and figures falling into such combinations in the mind of another as he had himself not foreseen, so many are the thoughts allied to every other thought, so many are the relations involved in every figure, so many the facts in every symbol.<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, Lewis believed that the world of the supernatural and spiritual was both an important element of good stories and a way to create believable and significant "other worlds." To him, the plot, which is really only a series of events in the story, is important merely as a "net" to catch something else. That something else is the "numinous," the sense of the spiritual, of *God*.

Since spiritual truths are often profound and beyond our experience, our attempts to describe them must be constantly changed in order to avoid the narrowness of any one description. Lewis's books help us see these truths from totally new perspectives. Several terms might be used to describe his techniques. One, of course, is *supposition*: what if God were to appear in a different form in a different world? Seeing the aspects of a Lion—gentleness, majesty, awesomeness, terribleness—may help us learn to understand, know, and love Christ in a new way. Another way to describe this method is "*transposition*," the restatement of ideas in new terms, just as piano music can be transposed and scored for other instruments.

Lewis also uses vivid *illustrations* that serve to make deep spiritual concepts concrete. A perfect example is Eustace's undragoning by the process of peeling away layer after layer of skin—a marvellous picture of salvation and spiritual regeneration. The gift of *description*, particularly of



Aslan's country and the World's End, is an aspect unique to Lewis. What other author can so unfailingly depict for us what heaven and true joy and purity may be like? His *imagery*—the garden, tree, and stream, for example—is biblically rooted, yet used in a unique way to give us a totally new perception. All of these methods will be discussed later in this chapter.

As we discuss the various biblical concepts that Lewis's books echo, our effort will be to show how they may *remind* us of these ideas or help us understand, perhaps through a simple illustration, what the Bible means. In no way are the Narnia events exact biblical parallels. But perhaps through seeing Aslan, evil, and many Christian virtues in another world, we may relate them better to our own.

### **Creation**

In Genesis, God created the world by his *Word*: first, the heaven and earth—once a shapeless, chaotic void—then light, sky and water, dry land; grass, plants and trees; sun and moon; sea creatures and birds; wild animals and reptiles; and at last, man. Aslan also creates Narnia from an empty world—"Nothing." It is dark and cold, but there is cool, flat earthy substance underfoot. Then Aslan sings the world into creation: first the stars, planets and sun; then rivers, valleys, hills, rocks and water; grass and vegetation; trees; and finally, animals and insects. God's "Let there be's" are echoed by Aslan's "Be walking trees. Be talking beasts. Be divine waters." Fledge also echoes the Genesis chapters when Aslan asks him about his flying: "It is good. . . . It is very good."

Instead of creating man as the ruler of all living things, Aslan chooses two of each animal and touches their noses with his. This, of course, reminds us of Noah in Genesis 6:19 choosing two of each animal, who are to multiply and inhabit the world after the Flood. With Aslan's breath comes a flash like fire upon the chosen animals. This image

seems to be used throughout the Narnia tales as a signal of the Holy Spirit, or of Aslan's empowering of his followers. His warning to them is like that which God makes to man: "Creatures, I give you yourselves. . . . I give to you forever this land of Narnia. I give you the woods, the fruits, the rivers. I give you the stars and I give you myself. The Dumb Beasts whom I have not chosen are yours also. Treat them gently and cherish them but do not go back to their ways lest you cease to be Talking Beasts. For out of them you were taken and into them you can return." Adam and Eve are told that all the earth is to be subdued under them. But in Genesis 3:19 after their Fall, God tells them that as they were made from the ground, to the ground they will return.

Although man himself is not created in Narnia, he plays an important role there. Just as he was on earth, man is directly responsible for the entrance of evil into the new world: " 'You come of the Lord Adam and the Lady Eve,' said Aslan. 'And that is both honour enough to erect the head of the poorest beggar, and shame enough to bow the shoulders of the greatest emperor in earth.' " When Digory succumbs to the temptation to *know*, he awakens the Witch. Appropriately, she enters Narnia before it is even five hours old by Digory's grabbing onto her heel. She kicks him with her heel and cuts him in the mouth. This is reminiscent of God's punishment of Satan and Eve: "He shall strike you on your head, while you will strike at his heel" (Gen. 3:15, TLB). Just as Adam and Eve are told that they must struggle to extract a living from the soil, Aslan asks King Frank if he can "use a spade and plough and raise food out of the earth."

But man is also able to bring about the help Narnia needs: "Evil will come of that evil, but it is still a long way off, and I will see to it that the worst falls upon myself. . . . As Adam's race has done the harm, Adam's race shall help heal it." Is this not like Christ's cure for sin through be-

coming a man himself? "Death came into the world because of what man (Adam) did, and it is because of what this other man (Christ) has done that now there is the resurrection from the dead" (I Cor. 15:21, TLB). Only members of Adam's race can be Kings or Queens of Narnia; but they are entreated to rule the creatures kindly and fairly since all Narnians are free subjects.

### **The Tree and the Garden**

God planted the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Garden of Eden. But because man disobeyed and ate of the second tree, God punished him, separating him from both trees (Gen. 2:17, 3:24). Some day, however, believers will be restored to partake of the Tree of Life (Rev. 22:2), because of Christ's sacrifice on a tree on a hill.

Lewis uses these same ideas in Narnia. Digory goes to the Western Wilds where he finds a steep green hill. On top is a garden with a tree at its center. The apples of this tree cast a light of their own, and roosting in its branches is a bird, larger than an eagle, with saffron breast, head crested with scarlet, and purple tail. Like Aslan himself, this garden is permeated with a warm, sweet, golden smell that brings tears to Digory's eyes. The hill itself is surrounded by a high wall of green turf and trees of blue and silver. Facing east—toward Aslan's country—are the golden gates.

Unlike Adam and Eve, Digory does not succumb to the temptation to eat the fruit. Instead, he takes the apple straight to Aslan. Since Digory has "hungered and thirsted and wept" for this fruit, he is permitted to sow the seed in Narnia himself by simply tossing it into soft soil.

This tree protects Narnia from the Witch for many years. It grows quickly, casting a light from its apples of silver and sending forth a breath-taking smell. Like the Tree in Eden, the fruit of this tree can bring joy, healing, and protection

when used in the right way, but death and horror and despair when taken in selfish disobedience. For example, it is called the "Apple of Life" for Digory's mother because it is eaten in the right way and time, but gives an endless life of misery to the Witch because she plucked the apple in her own way, for herself.

These same symbols reappear in the last moments of Narnia's story, as we shall see later.

### **Sacrifice and Resurrection**

The events of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* remind us in many ways of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection but in no way exactly parallel the account in the Bible. They do, however, give us a new understanding of atonement and rebirth in Christ.

With Aslan, Christmas comes for the first time in 100 years. The time between his first arrival in Narnia and the coming of spring is appropriately about 3 months—when Easter occurs. According to Narnian history, the Emperor-Over-Sea sent a Deep Magic into the world from the "Dawn of Time." This Magic permits the Witch to kill every traitor, and unless she has blood, Narnia will perish in water and fire. This Law is written on (1) the Stone Table, (2) the Trunk of the World Ash Tree, and (3) the Emperor's sceptre and is similar to God's Old Testament Law which is written on the stone tablets, requiring death and the shedding of blood as the penalty for sin.

But further back in time is a Deeper Magic about which the Witch knows nothing. This Law states that when a willing victim who has committed no treachery is killed in the traitor's stead, the Stone Table will crack and Death will start working backwards. What a marvelously succinct expression of the New Testament message! According to New Testament "Law," the Law of Love, when Christ is sacrificed as the perfect substitute for man, the Old Testament Law is "cracked"—God's demand is met, paid for,

and Death no longer has a hold on us: "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. . . . Yes, all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious ideal; yet now God declares us 'not guilty' of offending him, if we trust in Jesus Christ, who in his kindness freely takes away our sins. For God sent Christ Jesus to take the punishment for our sins and to end all God's anger against us. He used Christ's blood and our faith as a means of saving us from his wrath" (Romans 6:23; 3:23-26, TLB).

Aslan is sacrificed only for Edmund, though; and this is different from the biblical idea of one individual's atonement for all mankind. Yet this brings down to earth the very *personal* sacrifice involved. Christ died, and would have died, even for one individual.

Just as Christ's disciples expected him to help them as their savior who would deliver them from earthly oppression then and there, so too the children talk happily of the future battle and of Aslan's leading them in deliverance from the Witch's forces. "You will be there yourself, Aslan," says Peter. But Aslan promises nothing. He is, in fact, strangely sad and deep in thought, for he knows he must pay the price for the Judas-like traitor, Edmund.

Like Jesus' evening in the Garden of Gethsemane, Aslan's last night is expectant and troubled. Lucy and Susan, like Christ's faithful disciples, follow Aslan into the woods, but "his tail and head hung low and he walked slowly as if he were very, very tired." For perhaps the first time in our lives, we can visualize what it was like for Christ to know he would have to die: "Oh, children, children, children, why are you following me?" Aslan asks. He tells them to promise to stop when he bids them to, so he can go on alone. Until then, they "walk with him" and comfort him (and themselves) by burying their hands in his mane.

Then they watch him go on quietly and alone to confront

the Witch and her band of horrible creatures. Just as Christ was, Aslan is mocked, kicked, hit, spit on, and jeered: "Puss, Puss! Poor Pussy." "How many mice have you caught to-day, Cat?" But even when muzzled Aslan looks beautiful and patient. Just as Christ could have called the angels to rescue him, so too Aslan could have broken out of his bonds if he had wanted to, Lucy observes.

Aslan is not sacrificed on a cross but on a Stone Table located on the middle of an open hilltop in the Great Woods. It is a slab of grey stone supported by other stones, with strange lines and figures inscribed on it. Stabbing him with a strange and evilly shaped stone knife, the Witch jeers, "You have given me Narnia forever, you have lost your own life and you have not saved his." In Lewis's book *Till We Have Faces* he uses the stone as a symbol of an ancient, pagan religion. So he may be using the stone slab, with its strange writing, and the stone knife as symbols for God's law, which requires death as a penalty for sin. When the sacrifice is over, the Table is divided in two as was the veil in the Tabernacle after Christ's crucifixion.

Lucy and Susan, who have looked away during the "hopeless and horrid" murder, later return sadly to the scene of dead calm. They remind us of the women who returned dejectedly on Easter morning to Christ's tomb. But very gradually, changes begin to happen. The sky slowly lightens; the mice nibble away at the cords which hold Aslan to the table. Then they see Aslan himself—resurrected—more full of life than ever: " 'It's more magic.' They looked round. There, shining in the sunrise, larger than they had seen him before, shaking his mane... stood Aslan himself." Is he a ghost? The warm breath and rich, perfumy smell assure them he is not!

### Salvation

While Aslan's sacrifice may not exactly parallel the events of Christ's crucifixion, it does illustrate his personal sacri-

face for Edmund's sin. After privately walking and talking with Aslan, Edmund is his real self for the first time in his life. Eustace's undragoning, though, is one of the most striking episodes in the Chronicles and a wonderful image of salvation and consequent penetration to the true self. Eustace Clarence Scrubb, the typical stuffed shirt snob, is turned appropriately into a dragon, in whose likeness, through loneliness, he learns about friendship.

But the real change—his undragoning—can only come from Aslan himself. First he feels Aslan commanding, "Follow me." Then Aslan takes him (from the description we assume he is taken to the mountains of his Country) to a garden with a well at the center. Next, the Lion tells him to undress: "So I started scratching myself and my scales began coming off all over the place. And then I scratched a little deeper and, instead of just scales coming off here and there, my whole skin started peeling off beautifully, like it does after an illness, or as if I was a banana."

But as he starts going into the well to bathe, he looks down and sees "that it was all hard and rough and wrinkled and scaly just as it had been before. . . . So I scratched and tore again and this underskin peeled off beautifully and out I stepped and left it lying beside the other one." But the exact same thing happens, and he scratches off yet another layer. "You will have to let me undress you," says Aslan. When Aslan tears off the skin with his claws, it "hurt worse than anything I've ever felt;" but it feels good to have the ugly, dark, knobby stuff gone. Aslan then tosses him into the stingingly cold, clear water, and the pain in his arm disappears. He also finds himself somehow dressed in new clothes. "The cure had begun." Everyone notices the change in Eustace's behavior after his undragoning.

This episode is a perfect illustration of what happens when Christ gets hold of a sinner and makes him a new creature. We ourselves are unable to peel away our layers of sin and selfishness; in fact, we find that such ugliness has

penetrated to the very roots, the center of our lives. 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. Our behavior cannot help but be changed: "When someone becomes a Christian he becomes a brand new person inside. He is not the same any more. A new life has begun!" (2 Corinthians 5:17, TLB).

In another vivid example, Lewis uses the same biblical symbol of water to show the regenerating power of salvation. In John 4:13-14 (RSV), Jesus tells a woman, "Every one who drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." Throughout the Bible, living water and the river of living water flowing from the throne of God are used to symbolically describe new life and the blessings flowing from the heart of the believer, which find their source in God (Revelation 22:1-2; John 7:37-39). In *The Silver Chair*, Jill is thirsty but afraid to approach a stream because a great Lion is standing on the other side: "I daren't come and drink," said Jill. "Then you will die of thirst," said the Lion. "Oh dear! said Jill, coming up another step nearer. "I suppose I must go and look for another stream then." "There is no other stream," said the Lion. So Jill kneels and drinks the coldest and most refreshing water she has ever had and it quenches her thirst at once.

Similarly, after Shasta meets and communes with Aslan on the mountain-side, he notices the deep, large footprint left in the grass. "But there was something more remarkable than the size about it. As he looked at it, water had already filled the bottom of it. Soon it was full to the brim, and then overflowing, and a little stream was running downhill, past him, over the grass." This little stream provides Shasta with the refreshment he needs. In *The Last Battle*, Tirian and his band of followers, while hiding near



the Stable by a white rock, discover a trickle of water flowing down the rock face into a little pool. Just when they need it most in the heat of battle, they are provided with "the most delicious drink they had ever had in their lives, and while they were drinking they were perfectly happy and could not think of anything else."

Appropriately, the way to Aslan's Country is across a river from all countries, and Aslan calls himself the great Bridge Builder. To arrive there, the children scale a Waterfall that leads them to the Golden Gates. In "The Weight of Glory," Lewis writes, "What would it be to taste at the fountain-head that stream of which even these lower reaches prove so intoxicating? Yet that, I believe, is what lies before us. The whole man is to drink from the fountain of joy."

The idea of spiritual refreshment also seems to be depicted by Aslan's Table which the children discover during their adventures on the *Dawn Treader*. Perhaps an image of the communion table, Aslan's Table is set by Aslan's bidding for those who come that far to the World's End. This sumptuous banquet is more magnificent than the children have ever seen. Like the manna God provided for the Israelites, the food is "eaten, and renewed, every day," for large white birds carry away all uneaten morsels. Ramandu is brought a small fruit, like a live coal, which is set on his tongue—a fireberry which takes his age away little by little. This episode is very reminiscent of Isaiah 6:6, in which a seraphim takes a coal from the altar and lays it in Isaiah's mouth, thus purging him of sin.

### **End Times and Final Judgment**

In Matthew 24, Jesus warns what events will signal his return and the end of the world: "Jesus told them, 'Don't let anyone fool you. For many will come claiming to be the Messiah, and will lead many astray. When you hear of wars beginning, this does not signal my return; these must

come, but the end is not yet. The nations and kingdoms of the earth will rise against each other . . . you will be tortured and killed and hated all over the world because you are mine, and many of you shall fall back into sin and betray and hate each other. And many false prophets will appear and lead many astray" (Matthew 24:4-11, TLB).

How similar this account is to the changes Narnia undergoes in its final days. Shift's mock-Aslan is an almost ridiculous anti-Christ figure. There are false rumors about Aslan; talking animals are sold into slavery and hard labor; there are wars and betrayals. The centaur says that the stars do not prophecy the coming of Aslan but rather the coming evil.

Then in Matthew 24:29-31 (TLB), 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. . . . 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."

The end of Narnia is much like this. Father Time blows his horn, producing each change in the landscape, just as Aslan's song had created it. First comes a downpouring of stars, leaving the sky empty. Aslan's acceptance into his Country of those animals truly faithful to him is like a final judgment scene: those who love him pass by him, to his right, into the Door. Those who hate and fear him cease to be Talking Animals, passing to his left and into his enormous and terrible Shadow. Giant Dragons and Lizards consume the vegetation, and a wall of water rises to cover the earth. The red and dying sun and moon burn to nothing, creating a steam that rises from the blood-red waters. Similarly, in Acts 2:19-20 (RSV), Jesus prophesies, "I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth beneath, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall

be turned into darkness and the moon into blood." At last, Time has ended; Eternity has begun.

### **Resurrection Life**

In *The Silver Chair*, we join the children in a wonderful glimpse of the afterlife in Aslan's Country, and the means by which one can truly experience it. During Caspian's funeral in Narnia, the children are taken to Aslan's Mountain to walk by that significant stream. Then, in a striking image of the saving power of Christ's blood and the thorns 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: "His white beard turned to grey, and from grey to yellow, and got shorter and vanished altogether; and his sunken cheeks grew round and fresh, and the wrinkles were smoothed, and his eyes opened, and his eyes and lips both laughed, and suddenly he leaped up and stood before them." Knowing he has died, they think he is a ghost, just as Lucy and Susan had thought Aslan a ghost when he appeared before him after his sacrifice. But "one can't be a ghost in one's own country." Caspian now has the freedom of no longer wanting or doing the wrong things, and of never being afraid. This is his real home now, and the children have been promised that they too will come here to stay one day.

Indeed, they do come home, leaving our world forever through a train accident. Alive in Aslan's Country, their end on earth is the beginning of an even greater and never ending Story. Everyone they have ever heard of or loved and thought dead is there—except Susan, of course. What will our resurrected bodies be like? Lewis suggests that we will look the same, only better, just as the lands the children see in Aslan's Country are the reality of which Narnia and England were incomplete reflections. The children and

animals can run faster without getting hot or tired, and can even scale a waterfall! But they are not yet as happy as Aslan means for them to be!

### **The Stable, Door and Garden**

In his image of heaven, Lewis brings together several rich biblical symbols which tie all the books together. The children first enter Aslan's Country through a Stable Door: "In our world, too, a Stable once had something inside it that was bigger than our whole world." In John 10:9, Jesus said, "I am the door; if any one enters by me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture." The Stable seen from within and without are two different places. Through the door they see only darkness, the bonfire, and the disbelieving Dwarfs squatting just inside it. *Inside* is Aslan's Country.

It is interesting that Shift had first used this Stable for his false Aslan and later that Tash hides within it. Lewis may here be illustrating his belief that many Pagan and false religions in a sense "prefigure" Christianity, containing elements of truth, even pointing the way to the real God.

A hill and garden appear not only just inside the Stable Door, but later, "further up and further in" in Aslan's country. This garden with golden gates and a delicious smell is also "far larger than it had seemed from outside." Here is the perfect garden, the image of which Digory had entered to obtain the apple, the garden (in the story about a cup, a sword, and a green hill) which Lucy had longed for in the Magician's Book. Whereas Digory had seen a bird sitting in the tree, larger than an eagle, with saffron breast, head crested with scarlet, and a purple tail, here we learn that it is a Phoenix. The Phoenix is a mythological bird said to be larger than an eagle with brilliant gold and reddish purple feathers. At the end of its 500 year life cycle, it is said to burn itself on a funeral pyre. Another Phoenix then rises from the ashes with renewed youth and beauty. This

traditional symbol of rebirth and immortality is fitting for the conclusion—or shall we say, the real beginning—of the children's adventures.

Lewis uses the Door, not only here, but in several of his other writings, as a symbol for the reality we have always longed for and for which Lewis, as we have seen, longed all his life. We long to be "inside of some door which we have always seen from the outside . . . to be at last summoned inside would be both glory and honour beyond all our merits and also the healing of that old ache." Some day, we shall join the children, Digory, Polly, Reepicheep, Puddleglum, and all the others and be permitted to "get *in* . . . pass in through Nature, beyond her, into that splendour which she fitfully reflects. And in there, in beyond Nature, we shall eat of the tree of life."

# Index of Names and Places

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## KEY TO CONCORDANCE:

( ) after name cites book in which name predominantly appears

LWW—*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

VDT—*The Voyage of The Dawn Treader*

SC—*The Silver Chair*

MN—*The Magician's Nephew*

PC—*Prince Caspian*

LB—*The Last Battle*

HHB—*The Horse and His Boy*

sources: (OED) = Oxford English Dictionary

(BDPF) = Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable

(EDEL) = An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language

**ADELA PENNYFATHER** (SC) one of the children at Experiment House.

**AHOSHTA** (HHB) a Tarkaan and new Grand Vizier; 60 years old, with a hump on his back, a face like an ape, and of base birth! Aravis' step-mother has arranged that she marry him.

**ALAMBIL** (PC) star whose name means "Lady of Peace;" its conjunction with the star Tarva means good fortune for Narnia.

**ALBERTA SCRUBB** (VDT) Eustace's mother; "Up-to-date and advanced," she and her husband are vegetarians, non-smokers, tee-totallers, and wear special underclothes; they think Eustace becomes tiresome under the influence of the Pevensies.

**ALIMASH** (HHB) Aravis' cousin, Captain of the Chariots.

**ANDREW KETTERLEY** (MN) Digory's uncle, a dabbler in magic, who gets Digory and Polly Plummer into Narnia by means of magic rings. He is tall and thin, has a sharp nose and mop of grey hair and mismanages money.

**ANNE FEATHERSTONE** (VDT) Lucy's friend whom she hears talking to Marjorie Preston under a spell in the Magician's Book; Lucy desires to hear what they think about her.

**ANRADIN** (HHB) a Tarkaan, Bree's master, who treated him badly and tries to buy Shasta. "Anrad" means having a single aim or purpose (OED).

**ANVARD** (HHB) capital of Archenland, site of King Lune's castle.

**ARAVIR** (PC) morning star of Narnia.

**ARAVIS** (HHB) Tarkheena, the only daughter of Kidrash Tarkaan and descended from the god Tash; runs away from home because her step-mother has arranged for her marriage to Ahoshta. Marries Cor and becomes Queen of Archenland.

**ARCHENLAND** (MN, HHB) country just south of Narnia below the Southern Mountains.

**ARDEEB** (HHB) Tisroc descended from Tash—one of Aravis' father's ancestors.

**ARGOZ** (VDT) (see Seven Lords).

**ARLIAN** (PC) one of Caspian IX's lords, executed by usurper Miraz for treason.

**ARSHEESH** (HHB) Calormen fisherman who raises Shasta.

**ASLAN** (every book) Son of the Emperor-Over-Sea (or Emperor-Beyond-the-Sea), King and Creator of Narnia, the Great Lion. "Arslan" is the word for lion in Turkish (according to Walter Hooper). Aslan has nine names, we are told.

**ASLAN'S HOW** (PC) huge mound in the Great Woods with hollowed galleries and caves; the Stone where Aslan was sacrificed is in the central cave.

**AVRA** (VDT) Lone Island #3; few people live there; the location of Lord Bern's estates.

**AXARTHA** (HHB) Grand Vizier of Calormen.

**AZIM BALDA** (HHB) Calormen city where many roads meet and the Imperial Posts are located.

**AZROOH** (HHB) one of Rabadash's Tarkhaan lords from the eastern provinces, killed by Lune.

**BACCHUS** (PC) the irrepressible and riotous god of wine from Greco-Roman mythology. Known also by the names Bromios, Basareus, and Ram. Lewis portrays him as a youth in fawn-skin, with vine leaves in his curly hair; in myth, he was a youth with black eyes and flowing locks.

**BAR** (HHB) King Lune's chancellor, a traitor, who kidnapped Cor when he heard he would save Archenland; later killed in battle.

**BASSAREUS** (PC) wild boy (see BACCHUS).

**BEAVERS** (LWW) Mr. and Mrs. Beaver help the children escape from the White Witch; Mrs. Beaver is very practical—packs food for them to eat and even wants to take along her sewing machine!

**BEAVERSDAM** (PC) the two brothers of Beaversdam were shut up as madmen under the usurper, King Miraz.

**BELISAR** (PC) one of Caspian IX's lords who, under usurper Miraz, was shot intentionally with arrows on a hunting party. Belisarius was the greatest of the Emperor Justinian's generals, accused of conspiring, imprisoned, then restored to favor 6 months later, but his eyes were eventually put out (BDFM).



**BERN** (VDT) (see SEVEN LORDS) “Berne, Beorn” means “warrior or hero” (OED).

**BERNSTEAD** (VDT) Bern’s estates on Avra.

**BERUNA** (SC) town at fords in Narnia; means “snug, red-roofed” (OED).

**BERUNA, FORDS OF** (LWW, SC) fords with a bridge; “Berun” means to run or flow over the surface (OED). Aslan’s forces camp here the night of Aslan’s sacrifice. The bridge is destroyed under Aslan’s command in order to free the river god.

**BIG BANNISTER** (SC) one of the children at Experiment House.

**BISM** (SC) enchanted subterranean land beneath the Witch’s Shallow-Lands. Associated with gnomes and salamanders, heat and fire, an intoxicating smell, and live gems. Because the gnomes plunge headlong into it, Lewis may be associating it with the heart of reality. “Bism” probably comes from Bisme, meaning abyss or deep pit (OED). Based on medieval belief that gnomes live in subterranean fire.

**BLACK WOODS** (PC) located near the sea and the site of Cair Paravel. The Telmarine rumor is that the woods are full of ghosts because the Telmarines fear the sea and let the woods grow as protection from it.

**BRAMANDIN** (MN) dead world like Charn.

**BREE** (HHB) Narnian, dappled war-horse who is stolen and becomes Tarkaan Anradin’s horse in Calormen. Runs away with Shasta. He is a skeptic who needs proof that Aslan is a real lion. “Bree” is short for Breehy-hinny-brinny-hoohy-hah, which sounds like the bray of a horse, but can also mean disagreement (OED).

**BRENN, ISLE of** (VDT) one of the Seven Isles, where Redhaven is located.

**BRICKLETHUMB** (HHB) a Red Dwarf, one of Duffle’s two brothers, who feeds Shasta when he first enters Narnia. “Brickle” means fragile, delicate (OED).

**BROMIOUS** (PC) (see BACCHUS)

**BULGY BEARS** (PC) Three of the Old Narnians; sleepy bears who offer Caspian honey. One is Marshal of the Lists during Peter's fight with Miraz. "Bulgy" means swollen or clumsy (OED).

**BURNT ISLAND** (VDT) island where children find a few animals and ruins of stone huts blackened by fires; find tiny boat there for Reepicheep.

**CABBY** (MN) Cab-driver in London who enters Narnia with the children and Witch by mistake, later becomes King Frank (first King of Narnia); illustrates how a lowly person can become King.

**CAIR PARAVEL** castle and capital of Narnia. A "Court Paravail" is an inferior or lower court; a "Paravail" is one in a position below another but who holds another beneath like a tenant. Lewis is thus implying that while the Kings and Queens rule over Narnia, they, in turn, are in submission to Aslan and the Emperor-Over-Sea.

**CALAVAR** (HHB) province ruled by Kidrash Tarkaan, Aravis' father.

**CALDRON POOL** (LB) big pool under the cliffs at the West end of Narnia; given that name because the water dances and bubbles in a churning motion.

**CALORMEN** (HHB) country far south of Narnia and four times its size.

**CALORMENE** (HHB, LB) native of Calormen; Calormenes are known for their dark faces, long beards. Wear flowing robes, orange turbans, are wise, courteous, cruel. Worship the god Tash and have rigid hierarchy. "Calor" means heat or warmth (OED)—appropriate because they come from a southern climate; may also refer to "color" because of their dark skin.

**CAMILLO** (PC) hare whom Caspian meets.

**CASPIAN** (VDT, SC, PC) Caspian I of Telmar conquered Narnia and silenced the Beasts; Caspian IX is murdered by his brother Miraz. Caspian X defeats Miraz, then searches for his father's seven lost lords in VDT. He marries Ramandu's daughter, dies at the end of SC, but is seen resurrected in Aslan's country. The name Caspian was first used by Lewis in his poem version of *Till We Have Faces* (Hooper and Green).

**CARTER (SC)** student at Experiment House.

**CHARN (MN)** dead world ruled by Jadis the Witch; once the city of the King of Kings. Is a form of "churn," which means to agitate (OED).

**CHERVY THE STAG (HHB)** meets Corin with the news of Calormen attack on Anvard.

**CHIEF VOICE (VDT)** Chief of the Dufflepuds who tells Lucy their story; all the Dufflepuds mimic what he says.

**CHIPPINGFORD (LB)** town, site of marketplace in Narnia during the latter days.

**CHLAMASH (HHB)** one of Rabadash's Tarkaan lords who surrenders.  
**CHOLMONDELY MAJOR (SC)** one of children at Experiment House.

**CITY RUINOUS (SC)** ruins of a city near Harfang, beneath which is the Green Witch's kingdom. Witch tells them that a king once ruled there who had inscribed on the stones: "Though under Earth and throneless now I be,/Yet, while I lived, all Earth was under me."

**CLIPSIE (VDT)** Chief of the Dufflepud's little daughter who spoke the spell to make the Dufflepuds invisible. "Clipsi" means "dark" (OED). Possibly related to "eclipse."

**CLODSLEY SHOVEL (PC)** one of Old Narnian moles whom Caspian meets. Sr. Ignatius Miller (*Bulletin of N.Y.C.S. Lewis Society*, No. 99) speculates that Lewis read Charlotte Yonge's autobiography in which she describes her ancestor's embalming of Sir Cloudsley Shovel, a famous admiral.

**CLODBIRTH (SC)** centaur and famous healer; he heals Puddleglum's burnt foot.

**COALBLACK (SC)** Prince Rilian's horse.

**COLE (HHB)** along with his brother COLIN, fights for King Lune against the Calormenes (also see DAR).

**COLIN (see COLE)**

**COR (HHB) (SHASTA)** Corin's twin brother and son of King Lune, who escapes from Calormen with Bree, Hwin, and Aravis and becomes King of Archenland.

**CORIAKIN (VDT)** magician and retired star who governs the Dufflepuds as a punishment.

**CORIN (HHB)** Cor's twin brother and son of King Lune, called Thunder-fist because he was a great boxer.

**CORNELIUS (PC, VDT)** half-dwarf; Caspian's tutor who teaches him the true history of Narnia. Short and fat, with a long beard and wrinkled face.

**CORRADIN OF CASTLE TORMUNT (HHB)** one of Rabadash's Tarkaan lords from the eastern provinces, killed by Edmund.

**DAR (HHB)** brother of Darrin, both of whom fight against the Calormenes for King Lune. Obscure variation of "dare" (OED). Several sets of brothers fight for Lune who, in turn, has twin sons; e. g. Col/Colin, Dar/Darrin, Cor/Corin.

**DARRIN (HHB)** (see DAR)

**DANCING LAWN (PC)** location of Great Council of Caspian and his Narnian friends.

**DARK ISLAND (VDT)** island, appearing as dark spot in the ocean, where dreams come true.

**DAWN TREADER (VDT)** galley type ship children use to travel to the End of the World (thus appropriateness of name). Shaped like a dragon, with green sides and a purple sail. Lewis loved drawing detailed pictures of ships like this as a child.

**DEATHWATER (VDT)** Reepicheep's name for the island where the children discover a pool that turns all to gold.

**DEEP MAGIC (LWW, MN)** law of the Emperor-Over-Sea which says that unless the Witch is given blood for every treachery committed, all Narnia will be overturned and perish in fire and water (Old Testament Law?).

**DEEPER MAGIC** (LWW, MN) Deeper than the Deep Magic, this Law of the Emperor says that if a willing victim is killed in a traitor's stead, the Stone Table will crack and Death will start working backwards (New Testament Grace?).

**DEPLORABLE WORD** (MN) secret word known only to the great kings; if spoken, it will destroy all living things except the one who speaks it. Jadis pays the price to learn it and speaks the word during a battle with her sister, thus putting herself and all of Charn into a frozen enchantment.

**DESTRIER** (PC) Caspian's horse; means "war-horse" or "charger" (OED).

**DIGGLE** (LB) one of the 11 dwarfs who don't believe in "anything but themselves" during the Last Battle. He is the one Tirian picks up in the Stable.

**DIGORY (KIRKE)** (MN, LB, LWW) as a boy, he visits his Uncle Andrew and is sent by magic into Narnia, where he is responsible for helping bring evil into it. Takes back an apple seed from which a tree grows and the magic wardrobe is eventually made. As an old professor, has famous mansion visited by sightseers. The four Pevensies visit him at his home and enter Narnia through his wardrobe. Later, he becomes poor and has to sell his home and tutor students. Lewis probably named him after his old tutor "Kirke" or Kirkpatrick. But he is also probably modeled after Lewis himself. Kirke is described as the sort of person who wants to know everything.

**DOORN** (VDT) Lone Island #2 where most of the people live.

**DRINIAN** (SC, VDT) Caspian's captain on the Dawn Treader.

**DUFFERS** (VDT) (see MONOPODS) means "an incapable or foolish, stupid, inept, unproductive person" (OED).

**DUFFLE** (HHB) a "practical" Red Dwarf who feeds and cares for Shasta when he first enters Narnia. "Duffle" is thick woolen cloth (OED).

**DUFFLEPUDS** (VDT) (see MONOPODS)

**DUMNUS** (PC) a faun.

**EARTHMEN** (SC) creatures living in the Marches of Underland—probably gnomes. They all look different: some with tails, beards, round faces, long pointed noses, soft trunk-like noses, blobby noses, or horns on their foreheads—all look sad. Their real home is BISM.

**EASTERN OCEAN** great ocean bordering all the countries on the east.

**EDITH JACKLE** (SC) one of the children at Experiment House—a mean, spiteful tale-bearer. Name reminiscent of “jackal.”

**EDITH WINTERBLOTT** (SC) one of the children at Experiment House.

**EDMUND** (LWW, VDT, HHB, PC, LB) second youngest Pevensie child; “traitor” in LWW who is “converted” by Aslan and for whom Aslan is sacrificed.

**ELEANOR BLAKISTON** (SC) child at Experiment House.

**EMETH** (LB) Calormene permitted into Aslan’s country because all his worship of Tash is counted as Aslan’s. Here Lewis may be illustrating his belief in many possible roads to God since Emeth is sincere in seeking truth. Clyde Kilby says Lewis himself defined the word as meaning “truth, intrinsic validity, rock bottom reality, something rooted in God’s own Nature.” In Jewish religion and in Hebrew, “Emeth” means true and valid.

**EMPEROR-OVER-SEA** (LWW) Aslan’s father; God.

**ERIMON** (PC) one of Caspian IX’s lords executed by usurper Miraz on a false charge of treason.

**ERLIAN** (LB) King of Narnia (Rilian’s father) who died from fight with giant.

**ETTINSMOOR** (SC) city north of the Shribble River, a desolate moorland near where the giants live. Years earlier, Caspian X fought the giants and made them pay tribute. The Green Witch says they are foolish, fierce, savage. Variant form of the word “Eten” meaning giant (OED).

**EUSTACE CLARENCE SCRUBB** (VDT, SC) selfish and egotistical son of Alberta and Harold Scrubb, student at Experiment House who read

“the wrong kind of books.” Turns into a dragon and is undragoned by Aslan.

**EXPERIMENT HOUSE** (SC) Eustace’s and Jill’s school. “Co-educational,” where girls and boys are allowed to do what they like. Lewis seems to be attacking the theory of “democratic education” which demands equal education for all but results in inferior education for the intelligent.

**FARSIGHT** (LB) eagle who reports downfall of Narnia to Tirian.

**FATHER CHRISTMAS** (LWW) Santa Claus, who at last comes to Narnia when Christmas comes and gives gifts to the children (which they use later in their adventures) and to the animals.

**FATHER TIME** (SC, LB) a giant who was once a King in Overland but has sunk into the Deep Realm where he dreams of the Upper World. He awakes at the end of the world and helps end Narnia by blowing his horn. Is given a “new name” (Eternity?) when he is awakened. Traditionally, an old, white-bearded man carrying a scythe and hour-glass.

**FELIMATH** (VDT) the first Lone Island, where sheep are kept. Lonely place with lots of grass and clover.

**FELINDA** (MN) dead world like Charn.

**FENRIS ULF** (LWW) a wolf who is Captain of Jadis’ Secret Police. This character is based on Fenrir (or Fenris), wolf of Loki in Scandinavian mythology. At Ragnarok (Twilight of the Gods), he swallowed Odin but was avenged by Vidar who stabbed him with a sword—just as Peter kills him with a sword.

**FLEDGE** (MN) Cabby’s horse Strawberry who enters Narnia by accident, along with the Witch and the Cabby, from London. Becomes the first flying horse in Narnia. “Fledge” means to acquire feathers large enough to fly or to be able to fly (OED).

**FORDS OF BERUNA** (see BERUNA)

**FRANK** (MN) (see CABBY)

**GALE** (LB) Ninth Narnian king in descent from King Frank. Sailed into

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the Eastern Seas and delivered the Lone Islanders from a dragon and thus was given the Lone Islands as part of Narnia.

**GALMA** (VDT) Caspian's first stop on his trip, where great tournament is held.

**GARRETT TWINS** (SC) two of the children at Experiment House, described as "loathesome."

**GENTLE GIANTS** (SC) giants living at Harfang who plan on eating the children. Witch calls them "mild, civil, prudent, courteous."

**GINGER THE CAT** (LB) one of Shift's counsellors in LB, who tells false stories about Aslan. Seems to illustrate "enlightenment" attitude which believes in no god at all. At the Kilns where Lewis lived were two cats, one a ginger named Tom.

**GIRBIUS** (PC) a faun.

**GLASSWATER CREEK** (PC) creek that leads to the Hill of the Stone Table.

**GLENSTORM** (PC) centaur who lives in a mountain glen; a noble creature with glossy chestnut flanks and a golden red beard. Prophet and Stargazer.

**GLIMFEATHER** (SC) owl who is big as a dwarf. Works for aged Caspian X and looks after Jill and Eustace, carrying them to Parliament of Owls, then Northern Mountains. "Glim" means to shine, gleam (OED).

**GLOZELLE** (PC) one of Miraz's lords who plans Miraz's defeat in PC by tricking him into accepting Peter's challenge to duel. To "gloze" means to expound upon or interpret (OED), appropriate since Glozelle talks Miraz into accepting. He is the one who actually stabs Miraz.

**GNOMES** (SC) inhabitants of Underworld and Bism. Short, fat, whitish, pig-like faces, with long tails, a hard comb on the tops of their heads, pink eyes, large mouths and chins.

**GOLDWATER** (VDT) Caspian's first name for Deathwater Island because of the pool there that turns things and people to gold.

**GOLG** (SC) gnome from Bism.



**GRAND VIZIER** (HHB) Calormen leader. In Persia and Turkey, this title usually signifies a high state official like the governor of a province (OED).

**GREAT RIVER** (PC) river leading to Aslan's How, which children search for in PC. Extends all the way from Lantern Waste in the west, across Narnia, to Eastern Ocean.

**GRIFFLE** (LB) chief of the dwarfs in LB who decide to fight for and believe only in themselves.

**GUMPAS** (VDT) bilious, incompetent governor of the Lone Islands, who is dethroned by Caspian and replaced by Lord Bern. Parody of the politician who insists upon following schedules and appointments and who sticks to his statistics and graphs. A "gump" is a dolt, numbskull, foolish person (OED).

**GWENDOLEN** (PC) school girl in New Narnia who joins with Aslan's band of party-ers.

**HAG** (PC) accomplice of Nikabrik, with a nose and chin that stick out like nutcrackers, and dirty grey hair. Based on the evil spirit or demon, usually female and usually associated with the Furies and Harpies.

**HARDBITERS** (PC) badgers whom Caspian meets in his search for Old Narnians.

**HARFANG** (SC) stronghold of the Gentle Giants, where Jill, Eustace, and Puddleglum are fed, bathed—and almost eaten.

**HAROLD** (VDT) Eustace Scrubb's father (see ALBERTA).

**HARPA** (LB) Emeth is one of his seven sons; a Tarkaan.

**HELEN** (LB) (**NELLY**) wife of Frank the Cabby, first Queen of Narnia. A plain housewife who is yanked into Narnia with soapsuds still on her arms.

**HERMIT OF SOUTHERN MARCH** (HHB) keeps the horses and the wounded Aravis while Shasta goes on his mission to warn King Lune. 109 years old, tall, with beard to his knees and a robe; has a magic pool (almost like a crystal ball).

**HOGGLESTOCK** (PC) hedgehog whom Caspian meets. "Hoggle" is a laborer of the lower class (OED).

**HWIN** (HHB) Narnian talking horse taken as a slave in Calormen; escapes with Aravis.

**HYALINE (SPLENDOUR)** (HHB) ship of King Edmund and Queen Lucy. "Hyaline" means transparent like glass (OED).

**ILGAMUTH** (HHB) one of Rabadash's Tarkaan lords; killed by Darrin.

**ILKEEN** (HHB) location of the beautiful palace of Ahoshta Tarkeen.

**ISLAND OF THE STAR** (VDT) Ramandu's Island (he's a retired star), where Aslan's Table is.

**ISLAND OF THE VOICES** (VDT) island where Dufflepuds live.

**JADIS** (LWW, MN) a White Witch who in LWW is Queen of Narnia. She spoke the Deplorable Word which destroyed her rival sister, and she rules a dead Charn in MN. Enters London by accident. Slays most of the inhabitants of Narnia, turns them to stone, and turns its season to perpetual winter. Tall and beautiful but proud, with snowwhite face and red mouth. Descended from Lilith and one of the Jinn on one side, a giant on the other. Lilith was Adam's first wife who became the devil's dam. Jinn were demons who were created before Adam and assumed many shapes. A "jade" is a contemptuous name for a woman; "jadish" means worn or wearied (OED). Jardis was also the name for Psyche's twin brother in Lewis's poem version of *Till We Have Faces* (Green and Hooper).

**JEWEL** (LB) a Unicorn; Tirian's dearest friend. They loved each other and saved each other's lives in war. Has a blue horn.

**JILL POLE** (SC, LB) child from Experiment House who goes with Eustace on two adventures to Narnia. Aslan tells her the four signs.

**KETTERLEY** (see ANDREW)

**KIDRASH** (HHB) Aravis' father; son of Rishti Tarkaan, son of Kidrash Tarkaan, son of Ilsombreh Tisroc, son of Ardeeb Tisroc, descended from Tash.

**KIRKE** (LWW, MN) (see DIGORY)

**LADY OF THE GREEN KIRTLE** (SC) tall witch dressed in a thin green garment and really the Green Witch. Has enchanted Rilian in her Shallow Lands. First appears to children as a lovely lady with her knight and tricks them into going to Harfang. Turns into a serpent (thus symbolic color green) and is perhaps a serpent or Satan symbol. A "kirtle" is a gown or coat (OED).

**LANTERN WASTE** (MN) area west of Beaversdam where the children first enter Narnia and where the lamppost grows; where Jadis' kingdom is.

**LASARALEEN** (HHB) an old friend of Aravis, who helps her escape Tashbaan; a silly and vain Tarkheena, now married and great. Interested only in clothes, parties, and gossip. "Lasar" means leisure (OED).

**LEFAY, MRS.** (MN) in Lewis's original version of the story, Digory's godmother who has magic powers. In MN, she is Andrew's godmother and has fairy blood in her. Gives him a box of dust from Atlantis. Probably named after Morgan Le Fay, famous witch in the Arthurian legend with magical powers.

**LETTY KETTERLEY** (MN) Uncle Andrew's sister, whom Jadis hurls across the room, but who seems unimpressed by the Witch.

**LILYGLOVES** (PC) chief mole who helps plant orchard at Cair Paravel.

**LONE ISLANDS** (VDT) islands of FELIMATH, DOORN, AVRA, which the Dawn Treader visits. King Gale of Narnia delivered their people from a dragon and was given the islands as part of Narnia. Although Lewis hints he may tell us this story in a future book, he never does.

**LUCY** (LWW, VDT, HHB, PC, LB) youngest of the 4 Pevensie children who is the first to visit through the wardrobe. Has task of saying spell to make Dufflepuds visible. Seems to love, trust, and see Aslan more than anyone else. Undoubtedly named after Lucy Barfield, to whom LWW is dedicated (see letter at beginning of LWW).

**LUNE** (HHB) King of Archenland, Cor and Corin's father; fat and jolly.

**MABLE KIRKE** (MN) Digory's mother; sick, but cured by apple from Narnia.

**MACREADY** (LWW) Digory Kirke's housekeeper in his old country mansion.

**MARCHES OF UNDERLAND, WARDEN of** (SC) Mullgutherum, chief of the Earthmen in the Underworld realm where the Green Witch rules.

**MARJORIE PRESTON** (VDT) Lucy's friend whom she overhears talking to Anne Featherstone under a spell from the Magician's book. Aslan says she is afraid of the older girl and really loves Lucy.

**MARSHWIGGLE** (SC) one of Lewis's most famous character creations. Long and frog-like creatures who do most of the watery and fishy work in Narnia; live in Wigwams in the marshes just north of Cair Paravel (see PUDDLEGLUM).

**MASTER BOWMAN** (VDT) sailor on the Dawn Treader responsible for shooting at the Sea Serpent.

**MAVRAMORN** (VDT) (see SEVEN LORDS)

**MENTIUS** (PC) a faun.

**MIRAZ** (PC) Caspian IX's brother, who usurps the throne and casts out many of his lords. Caspian X overthrows him in battle. Murdered by his own lord, Glazelle.

**MONOPOD** (VDT)—also **DUFFERS, DUFFLEPUDS**. Creatures with one huge leg and foot like a mushroom, with curled toes. Once plain dwarfs, they were ruled by Magician Coriakin, who "uglified" them when they disobeyed him. Then, by a spell from his book, they made themselves invisible. They convinced Lucy to find a spell to make them visible again. They mimic everything their chief says and are very foolish and impractical. Lewis seems to have based them on the "Skiapod," written about in Medieval literature. A Medieval book, *The Bestiary*, which dates from the 13th century, outlines all the fanciful characteristics of various creatures. It describes a "skiapod," which possesses an enormous foot which it uses as a sunshade when lying on its back. Sir John Mandeville (*Travels*) describes the inhabitants of Ethiopia who have one foot: "And the foot is so large, that it shadoweth all the body against the sun; when they will lie and rest them."

**MOONWOOD** (LB) hare who has such ears he can sit by the Caldron Pool under the waterfall and hear what is whispered at Cair Paravel.

**MOUNT PIRE** (HHB) mountain created when Fair Olvin fought the two-headed giant, Pire, and turned him to stone. Blue mountain with 2 peaks located northwest of the Tombs of the Ancient Kings. Shasta uses this as a landmark to find Archenland.

**MUIL** (VDT) westernmost of the Seven Isles. Variation of the word "moil" which is a type of hornless cattle (OED). These were probably raised on the island.

**MULLUGUTHERUM** (SC) Warden of Marches of Underland (see MARCHES OF UNDERLAND).

**NAIN** (PC) King of Archenland. "Nain" can mean highlander or "one's own" (OED).

**NARNIA** Aslan's country, created in MN and destroyed in LB, existing for almost 50 earth years, 2555 Narnian years. Land of talking beasts. According to Marjorie Wright, Narnia is the name of an Italian town mentioned by Livy.

**NARROWHAVEN** (VDT) town on Isle of Doorn where Gumpas rules.

**NAUSUS** (PC) a faun.

**NELLY** (MN) Queen Helen of Narnia (see HELEN).

**NIKABRIK** (PC) Black Dwarf, with black beard and hair. A sour Dwarf who goes against Caspian and tries to call on the Witch for help. Killed in a scuffle.

**NIMIENUS** (PC) a faun.

**OBENTINUS** (PC) a faun.

**OCTESIAN** (VDT) (see SEVEN LORDS)

**ORRUNS** (SC) a faun.

**PARAVEL** (see CAIR PARAVEL)

**PARLIAMENT OF OWLS** (SC) a meeting of owls to which the children are carried on Glimfeather's back. Lewis is obviously having fun here, echoing a famous work by Chaucer called *The Parliament of Fowls*.

**PASSARIDS** (PC) house of lords under Caspian IX. Under usurper Miraz, sent to fight giants and destroyed. "Passaree" is a nautical term (OED).

**PATTERTWIG** (PC) magnificent red squirrel, size of a terrier, who can talk; one of the Old Narnian's whom Caspian meets and who offers him a nut from his store. Like most animals, his name is descriptive of the sound he makes. According to Walter Hooper, Pattertwig appears in the "LeFay fragment," a very early version of the *Magician's Nephew*.

**PEEPICEEK** (PC) one of Reepicheep's mouse followers.

**PERIDAN** (HHB) one of Queen Susan's and King Edmund's lords and advisors in Tashbaan who leads charge in battle with Rabadash's army.

**PETER** (LWW, PC, LB) oldest Pevensie child, first High King of Narnia that we meet after King Frank. Noted for his chivalry in battle. Too old to return to Narnia after PC. Probably named after the biblical Peter, the rock on whom the church is built, and given keys to the kingdom in Matt. 16:19. Peter locks the door on dead Narnia.

**PEVENSIE** (LWW) family name of Peter, Susan, Lucy, Edmund. Priscilla Drake (*Bulletin of N.Y.C.S. Lewis Society*, No. 79) notes that in Rudyard Kipling's story *Puck of Pook's Hill*, a brother and sister live on an estate near a ruined castle by the sea called "Pevensey." In addition, Puck calls them "Son of Adam" and "Daughter of Eve."

**PITTENCREAM** (VDT) sailor of Dawn Treader left behind at Ramandu's Island. Went to live in Calormen and made up stories about the World's End.

**PHOENIX** (MN, LB) bird sitting in tree in center of Aslan's garden. Larger than an eagle, with gold and red-purple feathers. Symbol of rebirth and immortality because it is said to die and be resurrected from the ashes.

**PLATO** (LWW, LB) Plato believed that the real, stable, permanent part of the universe is the super-sensible world of Ideas or Forms. The

physical world is a realm of appearances rather than reality, and is thus illusory and transitory. It is a shadow or copy of the Real World.

**POGGIN (LB)** one of the first and only dwarfs in the LB who turns to Tirian's side against Shift and resists the temptation to believe him.

**POLLY PLUMMER (MN)** Digory's neighbor who enters Narnia with him in MN.

**POMONA (PC)** greatest of all wood people who puts a spell on the orchard at Cair Paravel. "Pomona" means goddess of fruits and fruit trees (OED).

**PRIZZLE, MISS (PC)** teacher in New Narnia.

**PRUNAPRISMIA (PC)** Miraz's wife; has red hair.

**PUDDLEGLUM (SC)** a marshwiggler, with long thin face, sharp nose and greeny-grey hair like reeds, long legs and arms, webbed feet and hands, wearing a high hat. Has a serious and pessimistic view of life, yet is "brave as a lion," level-headedly guiding the children in SC against the Green Witch. "Puddle" fits his marshy home; "glum" fits his mood. Lewis says the character is based on his gardener, Paxford.

**PUG (VDT)** one of Gumpas' slavers; a pirate. "Pug" can mean a number of things, including courtesan, upper servant, punk (OED).

**PUGRAHAN (LB)** Calormen salt mines.

**PUZZLE (LB)** simple donkey who puts on false lion costume under Shift's orders but soon comes over to Tirian's side. His name fits not only the fact that he "puzzles" the Narnians by masquerading as Aslan, but is himself slow and confused about whom to believe.

**QUEEN OF THE DEEP REALM (SC)** Lady of the Green Kirtle, or the Green Witch, who has enchanted Rilian and rules the Shallow-Lands.

**RABADASH (HHB)** son of Tisroc of Tashbaan who wants to marry Queen Susan. Attacks Archenland and is transformed by Aslan into a donkey.

**RAM (PC)** wild boy (see BACCHUS).

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**RAM THE GREAT (HHB)** Cor and Aravis' son who becomes King of Archenland.

**RAMANDU (VDT)** a retired star, dressed all in silver, who resides near Aslan's Table. When he is rejuvenated by the berry provided by the birds, he will once again tread the Great Dance. Babylonian and Black-foot Indian legends say that every star was once a human.

**RAMANDU'S DAUGHTER (VDT, SC)** marries Caspian X. Falls asleep one day and is murdered by the Green Witch (a serpent).

**RAVEN OF RAVENSCAUR (PC)** one of the many creatures who meet with Caspian at the Council at Dancing Lawn.

**REALLY DEEP LAND (SC)** (see BISM)

**REDHAVEN (VDT)** city on Brenn, one of the Seven Isles.

**REEPICHEEP (VDT, PC, LB)** gallant and brave mouse, most valiant of all the Talking Beasts and Chief Mouse. (The mice ate Aslan's cords in LWW and became Talking Beasts.) About 2 feet high, he wears a long crimson feather on his head and a long sword. Wounded in PC and healed by Lucy, tail restored by Aslan. Sails on *Dawn Treader* and is left in Aslan's country at World's End.

**RESTIMAR (VDT)** (see SEVEN LORDS)

**REVILIAN (VDT)** (see SEVEN LORDS)

**RHINCE (VDT)** mate on the Dawn Treader who helps sail the ship with Drinian.

**RHINDON (PC)** Peter's sword, a gift from Father Christmas, with which he kills the wolf in LWW.

**RHOOP (VDT)** (see SEVEN LORDS)

**RILIAN (SC)** son of Caspian X and Ramandu's daughter who seeks to avenge his mother's death by green serpent. Enchanted by the Green Witch and rescued by children in SC.



**RISHDA** (LB) Calormene captain who helps Shift and Ginger the Cat plot against Aslan and Tirian; carried away by Tash.

**ROGIN** (HHB) Red Dwarf, one of Duffle's brothers.

**ROONWIT** (LB) a centaur, great and golden bearded. Reads the stars and warns Tirian of danger over Narnia. His forces were supposed to join Tirian; he is killed by Calormen arrow but is seen in Aslan's country.

**RUMBLEBUFFIN** (LWW) giant who helps Aslan fight witch in LWW and borrows Lucy's tiny handkerchief. "Rumble" means to make a lot of noise; "Buffian" means buffoon (OED).

**RUSH RIVER** (PC) river that joins Great River at Beruna's Bridge.

**RYNELF** (VDT) sailor on the Dawn Treader.

**SALAMANDERS** (SC) live in Bism in the fire-river. Small dragons, witty and eloquent. According to legend, salamanders, gnomes, sylphs, and nymphs inhabited fire, one of the four elements.

**SALLOWPAD** (HHB) old and wise raven who is an advisor to Queen Susan and Edmund; always quotes pithy sayings. "Sallow" is yellow/brown.

**SARAH** (MN) Andrew's and Letty's housemaid.

**SCRUBB** (VDT) (see EUSTACE, ALBERTA, HAROLD). The name means "a person of little account and poor appearance, insignificant;" can also mean to scratch one's body (OED)—appropriate considering Eustace's original personality and the fact that he scratches at his dragonish scales. Lewis says he "half deserved" his name.

**SEA GIRL** (VDT) fish-herdress Lucy sees near World's End. They become friends just by looking at each other. May illustrate kinship one can find in any world.

**SEA PEOPLE** (VDT) people riding sea horses, whom Lucy sees near World's End. They wear no clothes, have ivory bodies, purple hair; wear coronets, pearls, gold on their foreheads and emerald and orange streamers on their shoulders. They are hunting for fish.

**SEA SERPENT** (VDT) serpent which attacks Dawn Treader. Green and

vermillion, with purple blotches, head like a horse, enormous eyes, fish teeth, and gigantic tail.

**SEVEN BROTHERS OF THE SHUDDERING WOODS** (PC) Red Dwarfs who live in underground smithy and give armor to Caspian.

**SEVEN ISLES** (PC) islands, including Bren and Muil, visited by the *Dawn Treader*.

**SEVEN LORDS** (VDT) seven Telmarine lords of Caspian IX, sent by usurper Miraz to sail away searching for new lands beyond the Eastern Ocean. Caspian searches for them in VDT. Their names are as follows:

**ARGOZ** found sleeping at Ramandu's Island. "Argos" means swift, a ship sailing on an adventurous voyage (like the Argonauts) (BDFM)

**REVILIAN** found sleeping at Ramandu's Island.

**BERN** found living on a Lone Island under Gumpas; Caspian makes him Duke. From "Berne/Beorn" meaning warrior, hero (OED).

**MAVRAMORN** found sleeping at Ramandu's Island.

**OCTESIAN** either killed by dragon or was the dead dragon Eustace encountered.

**RESTIMAR** turned to gold on Deathwater Island.

**RHOOP** found on Dark Island (where dreams come true). Allowed to recover in a restful sleep at Aslan's Table.

**SHADOW LANDS** (LB) Aslan's designation for England because it is only a copy of the Real England in his country.

**SHALLOW LANDS** (SC) gnomes' name for the Witch's Underland beneath Narnia.

**SHAR** (HHB) fights for King Lune against the Calormenes. Obsolete word for "share" (OED).

**SHASTA** (HHB) (see COR) "Shasta" is Cor's Calormene name and is

similar to other Calormene words (*sh* sound). Probably based on Hindu word; "Shastri" is one who is learned, teaches (OED).

**SHIFT** (LB) West Narnian ape who persuades Puzzle to wear lion skin and masquerade as Aslan. Example of person who wishes to set up socialistic state and/or false religion. Possible connection with word "shifty."

**SHRIBBLE RIVER** (SC, LB) East-West river near southern border of Ettinsmoor.

**SILENUS** (PC) old man on donkey who accompanies Bacchus. In mythology, he was a drunken and jovial attendant of Bacchus who rode an ass (BDFM).

**SILVER SEA** (VDT) Lily Lake near the End of the World.

**SLINKEY** (LB) fox who fights on Calormen side in LB; appropriate name.

**SNOWFLAKE** (SC) Green Witch's lovely white horse.

**SOPESIAN** (PC) traitor lord of usurper Miraz who helps plan Miraz's defeat by tricking him into accepting challenge to duel. Peter kills him.

**SORLOIS** (MN) dead world like Charn.

**SPEAR-HEAD** (VDT) North-star of Narnia, brighter than pole star.

**SPIVVINS** (SC) Lewis is not clear who or what this is. Eustace keeps a secret about Spivvins under torture at Experiment House.

**SPLENDOUR HYALINE** (HHB) galleon ship (see HYALINE).

**"SPOTTY" SORNER** (SC) one of the children at Experiment House. A "sorner" is one who sponges off people (OED).

**STABLE HILL** (LB) location of the Stable where first Tash, then Aslan, are found. Its inside is bigger than its outside.

**STARS** (VDT, LB) portrayed as real people, glimmering with silver clothes and hair. North American Indians believed that stars were people.

**STONEFOOT (LB)** giant who is to be part of Tirian's troop in final battle but is never summoned.

**STONE KNIFE (LWW, VDT)** knife of cruel and ancient shape used by Witch to kill Aslan. Kept by Ramandu at Aslan's Table. In VDT, the three lords touch it while arguing and fall into an enchanted sleep. Stone could be associated with Old Testament Law.

**STONE TABLE (LWW, VDT)** table where Aslan is sacrificed. A slab of grey stone supported by four upright stones; old and covered with engraved lines and figures. Splits in two after the sacrifice. Later placed in central cave hollowed out within a mound built over it (**ASLAN'S HOW**). Stones are also important in ancient religions and *Till We Have Faces*. Lewis is most likely basing this on a rich pagan tradition. The fact that the table breaks in two is reminiscent of the veil being rent in two in the Temple during Christ's sacrifice.

**STRAWBERRY (MN)** (see **FLEDGE**)

**SUNLESS SEA (SC)** sea which must be crossed in order to reach all outlets from Shallow Lands.

**SUSAN (LWW, HHB, PC)** one of the four Pevensie children. Known for her beauty. Not allowed into Aslan's Country because she is "no longer a friend of Narnia," latterly interested only in superficial things.

**SWANWHITE (LB)** queen who lived in Narnia before the days of the White Witch and the Great Winter. Was so beautiful that when she looked into any forest pool, the reflection of her face shone out of the water for a year and a day afterwards like a star by night.

**TACKS (VDT)** one of Gumpas' slave merchants.

**TARKAAN/TARKHAAN (HHB)** a great lord in Calormen; known by gold ring on arm.

**TARKHEENA (HHB)** a great lady in Calormen.

**TARVA (PB)** star; name means "Lord of Victory." Its conjunction with Alambil means good fortune for Narnia.

**TASH (LB, HHB)** Calormen god; its head is like an eagle or vulture, and it has four arms. "Tash" means blemish (OED). In *Till We Have Faces*, the

priest of Ungit also wears a mask that makes him look like a bird. Tash requires human sacrifices (like Ungit in TWHF) and really exists, as evidenced in LB. Lewis is showing the reality of demons.

**TASHBAAN** (HHB) Calormene city located on an island—one of the wonders of the world.

**TASH-GOD** (see TASH)

**TASHLAN** (LB) Shift's name for the false Aslan, an attempt to equate Aslan with Tash. An anti-Christ figure?

**TEHISHBAAN** (LB) Emeth's city, west beyond the desert.

**TELMAR/TELMARINES** (PC) land beyond the western mountains. Discovered through a magic cave on an Island in the Southern Seas. After a famine, Caspian I King of Telmar led the people to the Western Mountains of Narnia and conquered it, silencing the beasts, trees, fountains, and driving away or killing the dwarfs and fauns. Because the Telmarines fear the Sea, they fabricate lies about ghosts residing in the Black Woods. They permit these lies to grow as a protection from the Sea. "Tel" has several meanings (endure, bear) but "Mar" and "Marine" obviously refer to the sea. (Full history discussed in Chapter 4.)

**TEREBINTHIA** (VDT, SC) island visited by *Dawn Treader* after Galma where there is a terrible sickness. Caspian seeks Aslan there in SC. Means turpentine-like, or an area which grows trees from which turpentine is made (OED).

**THORNBUT** (HHB) dwarf under King Edmund who orders Corin not to fight in the battle against the Calormenes.

**TIRIAN** (LB) last ruler of Narnia, seventh in descent from Rilian; fights the final battle of Narnia. Name probably from "tire," meaning to fail, cease, diminish, give out (OED)—appropriate, since during his reign Narnia is destroyed.

**TISROC** (HHB) ruler of Tashbaan.

**TOMBS OF THE ANCIENT KINGS** (HHB) tombs north of Tashbaan that look like gigantic beehives; there are rumors of ghouls there. There Shasta spends the night and meets Aravis, Hwin, and Bree before their journey back to Narnia.

**TRAN** (HHB) fights for King Lune against the Calormenes.

**TREE PEOPLE** (PC) trees in Narnia look like people when their residing spirits become visible. They retreat in New Narnia but are awakened again by Aslan in PC. Eat various kinds of soil and wade in the dirt. Birches, beeches, and larches are girls; oaks are shaggy, wizened, hearty men with frizzled beards; elms are lean and melancholy. These are based on the dryads of mythology.

**TRUFFLEHUNTER** (PC, VDT) badger who first helps Caspian in his war against Miraz and later serves under him when Caspian becomes king. A "truffle" is a round, underground edible fungus or root (OED).

**TRUMPKIN** (SC, PC, VDT) nicknamed D.L.F. (Dear Little Friend). Red Dwarf who is Lord Regent under Caspian X. Tells children story of Caspian X and leads them to him at Aslan's How.

**TUMNUS** (LWW, HHB, LB) faun who lives in a cave and befriends Lucy on her first solo trip to Narnia. Is turned into stone by the Witch for treachery. Appears again in HHB to plan way for Narnians to escape Tashbaan by feigning a party for Rabadash. Name reminiscent of "Tumulus" which is a mound of earth—appropriate since he lives in the ground (OED). Idea for LWW began with a picture in Lewis's mind of a faun carrying an umbrella.

**ULVILAS** (PC) one of Caspian IX's lords who, under usurper Miraz, was intentionally shot with arrows at a hunting party.

**URNUS** (SC) a faun.

**VOLTINUS** (PC) a faun.

**VOLUNS** (PC) a faun.

**WATER RAT** (LB) rat on a river raft carrying logs from Narnia to sell to the Calormenes under Shift's orders. One of the first signs to alert Tirian that something is amiss in Narnia.

**WER-WOLF** (PC) one of Nikabrik's cohorts, brought to attack Aslan's group. Half man, half wolf.

**WESTERN WILD** (LB, MN) area at far west of Narnia where Digory and Polly travel on the day Narnia is created. Wild land of mountains, dark

forests, snow, and glaciers. Location of hill with garden and apple tree where final events in LB take place.

**WHITE STAG** (LWW) stag which would grant wishes if one caught him. The four children (Kings and Queens) hunt him at end of LWW and re-discover the lamp-post where they first entered Narnia.

**WHITE WITCH** (LWW, MN) (see JADIS)

**WIMBLEWEATHER** (PC) giant of Deadman's Hill and part of Caspian's troops. Spoils Caspian's surprise attack on Miraz's army. "Wimble" means active, nimble (EDEL).

**WINDING ARROW RIVER** (HHB) east-west river between Archenland and Calormen.

**WOOD BETWEEN THE WORLDS** (MN) beautifully quiet, rich and alive woodland where Digory and Polly end up with their magic rings. Contains dozens of pools which lead to other worlds.

**WORLD'S END ISLAND** (VDT) island of Ramandu and Aslan's Table, so named because for those who sail from it, it is the beginning of the end.

**WRAGGLE** (LB) satyr who fights on Calormene side in LB. The word means to struggle or resist (OED).

**ZARDEENAH** (HHB) Lady of the Night, Calormen goddess. Damsels do service to her before they are married; they bid farewell to her and sacrifice to prepare for marriage.

## A Note on the Names and Creatures

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**ANIMALS** like moles, badgers, and squirrels have very descriptive names: Pattertwig (squirrel), Trufflehunter and Hardbiter (badgers). The names Hwin and Bree are based on horse sounds. Dogs speak in "doggy" language: "We'll help, we'll help, help, help. Show us how to help, show us how, how. How-how-how?"

**CENTAURS** are based on Greek mythology and are a race of creatures having the head, arms, and trunk of a man and the body and legs of a horse. In Narnia, they have both a man-stomach and horse-stomach, as well. They are portrayed as majestic and solemn, not easily made merry or angry but when aroused, their anger is terrible. They are supposed to be prophets, stargazers, and healers and have names like Cloudbirth, Glenstorm, and Roonwit.

**FAUNS** are from Roman mythology, where they were deities having a man's body from the waist up and the horns, legs, and tail of a goat. In Narnia, they have reddish skin, too. They have appropriately Latin names: Dumnus, Girbius, Mentius, Nausus, Nimienus, Obentinus, Orruns, Oscuns, Tumnus, Urnus, Voltinus, Voluns.



**DWARFS** of at least 2 kinds live in Narnia: black and red. In Norse mythology, there were black and white dwarfs, and the black were usually evil and associated with the earth and metal craftsmanship. Red dwarfs in Narnia have names like Duffle, Rogin, Trumppkin, and Brickletthumb; Nikabrik, an evil dwarf, is a Black Dwarf.

**OTHER CREATURES** mentioned in the books are based on tradition or classical mythology:

**GHOULS:** evil spirits that rob graves

**WRAITHS:** ghosts of dead people

**SPRITES:** elves or pixies

**BOGGLES:** hobgoblins

**OGRES:** man-eating giant monsters

**MINOTAURS:** half man, half bull

**DRYADS:** wood nymphs who live in trees and preside over woods

**NAIADS:** nymphs who preside over brooks, springs, fountains

**SATYRS:** wood gods or demons with the pointed ears, legs, and short horns of a goat, or tail of goat or horse; associated with Bacchus

**HAGS:** evil spirits, usually female, associated with Furies and Harpies

**UNICORN:** usually white and resembling a horse with one horn in center of forehead, symbol for purity

**NARNIAN NAMES** (of royalty) seem to have -ian, endings (perhaps deriving from the name *Aslan*): Caspian, Rilian, Tirian, Drinian, Erlian.

**ARCHENLAND NAMES** are predominantly monosyllabic, and brothers have similar names: Nain, Lune (Kings): Dar/Darrin, Col/Colin, Cor/Corin (brothers).

**CALORMENE NAMES** have a Persian or Turkish ring to them: Tash, Tashbaan, Ahoshta, Tarkaan, Lasaraleen, Shasta, Rabadash, Ahoshta, Arsheesh, Ardeeb, Alimash (many "s" and "sh" sounds).

**EXPERIMENT HOUSE** children have derogatory names: Eustace Clarence Scrubb (Scrubb means "an insignificant person," and Lewis says he half deserved the name); Jackle (Jackal?), Sorner (meaning "sponger"), Winterblott.

## Notes

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1. *Bulletin of the N.Y. C.S. Lewis Society*, No. 97 (Nov. 1977), p. 14.
  2. Walter Hooper, "Narnia: The Author, the Critics, and the Tale," *The Longing for a Form*, ed. Peter Schakel (Kent State Univ. Press, 1977), pp. 105-6.
  3. "Miracles," *God in the Dock*, ed. Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1970), p. 37.
  4. Kathryn Lindskoog, *The Lion of Judah in Never-Never Land* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1973), p. 16.
  5. Hooper, *op. cit.*, p. 109.
  6. Unpublished letter to Mrs. Krieg, 6/5/55.
  7. *Letters of C. S. Lewis*, ed. W. H. Lewis (N.Y. and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1966), pp. 261, 283.
  8. "Fairy Stories," *Of Other Worlds* (N.Y. and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1966), p. 37.
  9. "The Fantastic Imagination," *The Gifts of the Child Christ* (Vol. 1), ed. Glenn Sadler (1893; rpt. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1973), p. 27.