

THE LION,
THE WITCH
AND THE
WARDROBE





Introduction to

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

In reality however he [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 has actually done in ours?" C. S. LEWIS, IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND

This is the premise of the very first book about Narnia—the most famous and beloved book in *The Chronicles*—the one that started it all: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. (It became known as Book Two when *The Magician's Nephew* was released, and publishers decided to renumber the series according to the chronology of the stories themselves.)

The adventure begins when Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy tumble through the door of a mysterious wardrobe into Narnia—an enchanted world of talking beasts, fauns, dwarfs, giants, and other wonderful creatures. The children discover that Narnia is in bondage—held captive for a hundred years under the spell of the evil White Witch. "She'd made it always winter and never Christmas."

Prophecies have foretold the end of the Witch's reign. One day Aslan will return to Narnia. Aslan is the great Lion, the King of Beasts, Son of the Emperor-Beyond-the-Sea.

*"Wrong will be right, when Aslan comes in sight,
At the sound of his roar, sorrows will be no more,*

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

*When he bares his teeth, winter meets its death,
And when he shakes his mane, we shall have spring again."*

Furthermore, as the saying goes, two "Sons of Adam" and two "Daughters of Eve" will one day sit on the four thrones at Cair Paravel and will rule as Kings and Queens in Narnia. Could it be that Narnia's deliverance is at hand?

Over the years, millions of readers have thrilled to discover the "story within the story" of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. It's the story of the Gospel—the story of salvation. In a general sense, all of Narnia awaits deliverance from the dominion of the White Witch. The land itself longs to be free from captivity—to return to the peace and joy and beauty of the life it once knew. "The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed . . . in hope that [it] . . . will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Romans 8:19-21).

It is also a story of personal salvation—and the personal sacrifice that makes that salvation possible. Edmund falls under the spell of the White Witch. He succumbs to his own pride, selfishness, greed, and lust. He becomes a traitor. And according to the Deep Magic (or law) on which Narnia was founded, Edmund must pay the penalty with his life. "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). "Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins" (Hebrews 9:22, ESV).

The only hope for Narnia and for Edmund is Aslan. Only Aslan—the one who created Narnia—can now deliver it from the power of the Witch. "The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work" (1 John 3:8). And it is Aslan who will lay down his own life for Edmund, taking Edmund's punishment and dying in his place. "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). Ultimately, it is in dying a torturous and agonizing death at the hands of the Witch that Aslan sets Narnia and Edmund free. For there is an even "Deeper Magic"—a greater law—at work:

"When a willing victim who had committed no treachery was killed in a traitor's stead, the Table would crack and Death itself would start working backward."

With Aslan's sacrifice on the Stone Table, the power of sin and death is broken. Aslan's resurrection marks the beginning of the Golden Age of Narnia—a time of unprecedented joy, peace, and prosperity.

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

The Bible tells us that “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law” (Galatians 3:13) and that God “has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins” (Colossians 1:13-14).

In addition to the themes of salvation, redemption, and restoration and/or reconciliation, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* also includes illustrations of the following:

- ⌘ The wickedness and deceitfulness of the enemy of our souls (John 8:44).
- ⌘ The power of sin—and its consequences (James 1:14-15).
- ⌘ Maintaining a holy fear of and reverence for God, who is both good and terrible at the same time (Deuteronomy 7:21; Psalm 99:3).

These are just a few of the spiritual treasures you will discover as you begin your own adventure with *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*!

10. THE SPELL BEGINS TO BREAK

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!" ISAIAH 52:7

Biblical Parallels and Principles

- ✚ The others find Mrs. Beaver's careful and methodical preparations exasperating. But Proverbs 14:15 tells us, "A prudent man gives thought to his steps." Proverbs 19:2 advises, "It is not good to have zeal without knowledge, nor to be hasty and miss the way."
- ✚ Father Christmas brings each of the children gifts. These gifts are "tools not toys"—tools that will help them fulfill their calling and face the challenges that lie ahead. According to the Scriptures, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to give believers spiritual gifts for the same purpose. The Spirit gives these gifts "to each one, just as he determines" (1 Corinthians 12:11; compare vv. 4-31). Some are given gifts of leadership; others are given gifts of faith, wisdom, or discernment. Some have "gifts of healing" and the ability to help others (1 Corinthians 12:28). Each believer is a part of "the body of Christ" (1 Corinthians 12:27). And each one has his or her own special gift and calling (1 Corinthians 12:18).



Think About It!

Children often wrote to C.S. Lewis to ask him about Aslan's true identity—his other name in our world. Lewis always answered by giving hints, including this one: "Who in our world arrived at the same time as Father Christmas?"

(Hint: Read Luke 2:1-20.)

Scriptures on the Weapons of Spiritual Warfare

Ephesians 6:10-18 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 Hebrews 4:12

11. ASLAN IS NEARER

See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone. Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come, the cooing of doves is heard in our land. SONG OF SONGS 2:11-12

Biblical Parallels and Principles

- ⌘ Edmund's eyes are opened, and he begins to see the White Witch for who she really is. Psalm 5:9 says of the wicked, "Not a word from their mouth can be trusted; their heart is filled with destruction. Their throat is an open grave; with their tongue they speak deceit."
- ⌘ The Witch does not have a drop of kindness or compassion in her entire being. She even mistreats the reindeer that pull her sleigh. Proverbs 12:10 observes, "A righteous man cares for the needs of his animal, but the kindest acts of the wicked are cruel."
- ⌘ For the first time Edmund feels pity—or compassion—for someone besides himself. The Scriptures tell us, "Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others" (Philippians 2:4). "Let us love one another" (1 John 4:7). "Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn" (Romans 12:15).



Do You Know?

It becomes clear that the enchantment is broken—the Witch's power is crumbling. The Dwarf exclaims, "This is Aslan's doing." The Bible says that Someone came to our world to destroy the works of the devil. Do you know who?

(Hint: Read 1 John 3:8.)

Scriptures on Celebrating God's Deliverance

Psalm 98 Joel 2:21-27 Revelation 15:3-4.

12. PETER'S FIRST BATTLE

So be strong and show yourself a man. 1 KINGS 2:2

Biblical Parallels and Principles

- ☞ Compare the description of the creatures gathered around Aslan at the pavilion to these verses: “In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious” (Isaiah 11:10). “Your procession has come into view, O God. . . . In front are the singers, after them the musicians; with them are the maidens playing the tambourines” (Psalm 68:24-25). “Let every creature praise his holy name for ever and ever” (Psalm 145:21). Some readers may also be reminded of the scenes in Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Revelation that describe the fantastic beings who surround God’s heavenly throne. These include seraphim and cherubim and other supernatural creatures that appear like lions, eagles, oxen, and men. (For example, see Isaiah 6:1-3, Ezekiel 1:4-14, and Revelation 4:6-8.)
- ☞ Aslan is both “good and terrible at the same time.” Years ago the word *terrible* was used to mean “frightening” or “awe-inspiring.” The Scriptures tell us that people who had an encounter with the Living God nearly always responded in fear and reverence. (For example, see Hebrews 12:21.) In the King James Version, Deuteronomy 7:21 explains, “The LORD thy God is among you, a mighty God and terrible.” And Psalm 99:3 (KJV) says, “Let them praise thy great and terrible name; for it is holy.” (Modern Bible translations replace the word “terrible” with “awesome.”)
- ☞ Aslan calls his servants to take the weary worn-out girls and “minister” to them. After Jesus had endured temptation in the wilderness, God’s servants—angels—were called to minister to Him (Matthew 4:11, KJV, ESV).
- ☞ Peter faces his first test. Aslan ensures that Peter has the opportunity to begin developing the courage, maturity, and leadership ability that he will need as High King. God does the same for each one of us, preparing us for service in His kingdom. Psalm 18:34-38 says in part, “He trains my hands for battle; my arms can bend a bow of bronze. . . . I pursued my enemies and overtook them . . . they fell beneath my feet.”



Do You Know?

Some literary scholars have compared the Stone Table to ancient altars at sites of pagan worship, such as Stonehenge. But in a letter to a girl named Patricia, C.S. Lewis wrote that it was meant to remind readers of the stone table (or tablet) that God gave to Moses. Do you remember what that table (tablet) had written on it?

(Hint: Read Exodus 24:12; Deuteronomy 10:4 and/or Exodus 20:1-17.)

Scriptures on Courage in Battle

Joshua 1:9 Psalm 27:1-3 Isaiah 12:2



13. DEEP MAGIC FROM THE DAWN OF TIME

Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge. PSALM 51:4

Biblical Parallels and Principles

- 33 Aslan says there is no need to speak of Edmund's earlier behavior. He has been forgiven. Isaiah 43:18 tells us, "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past." In verse 25 God explains, "I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions . . . and remembers your sins no more."
- 33 During the encounter with the White Witch, Edmund keeps his eyes on Aslan. Psalm 105:4 says, "Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always." Psalm 34:5 explains, "Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame."
- 33 As a traitor, Edmund stands condemned. "All who sin under the law will be judged by the law" (Romans 2:12). "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Hebrews 9:22 explains, "Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins" (ESV). "It is the blood that makes atonement" (Leviticus 17:11).
- 33 Notice Aslan's response to Susan's suggestion that he work against the Emperor's Magic. In Matthew 5:17-18 Jesus said, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished."
- 33 The punishment for Edmund's sin cannot be ignored, forgotten, or suspended somehow. The penalty must be paid—and Aslan takes that responsibility upon himself. Isaiah 53:4 says of Jesus, "Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows." First Peter 2:24 says, "He himself bore our sins."
- 33 As "the Emperor's hangman," the Witch cruelly delights in carrying out judgment against those who have sinned. Whether she recognizes it or not, it is still the *Emperor's* judgment she carries out; ultimately it is his purpose she is serving. The Scripture tells us that Satan's authority comes from God, and that his power is limited by God (see Isaiah 54:16-17; Job 1—2; Luke 22:31-

32; 1 John 4:4). Though the devil would love nothing more than to destroy God and His people, he cannot. He is merely a tool that ultimately serves God's purposes.



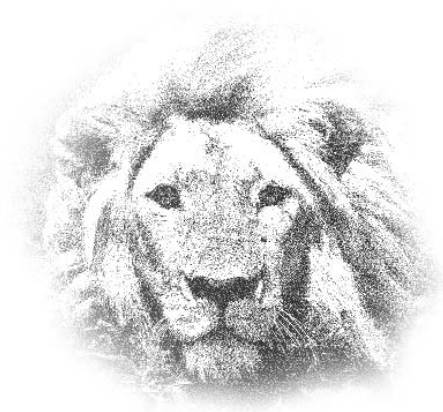
Think About It!

Though the White Witch calls herself “Queen,” she has no right to the title. Soon, Aslan says, all names will be restored to “their proper owners.” John 14:30 refers to Satan as “the prince of this world.” The devil represents himself as its ruler (Luke 4:5-6). But who is really the Prince?

(Hint: Read Acts 5:30-31 and Isaiah 9:6-7.)

Scriptures on the Law

Psalm 19:7-10 Isaiah 42:21 Matthew 22:35-40



14. THE TRIUMPH OF THE WITCH

Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. JOHN 15:13

Biblical Parallels and Principles

- ☞ Compare Aslan's sorrow and desire for companionship to Matthew 26:36-38. Jesus took three of His closest disciples with Him as He went to Gethsemane to pray. "He began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, 'My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.'"
- ☞ Aslan offers no resistance when attacked by the evil creatures. He says nothing in answer to their taunts. Speaking prophetically of Jesus, Isaiah 53:7 says, "He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth." (See also Matthew 26:62-63a; 27:13-14; Luke 23:8-9.)
- ☞ The creatures cruelly abuse Aslan, just as wicked men abused Jesus. "They spit in his face and struck him with their fists. Others slapped him and said, 'Prophesy to us, Christ. Who hit you?'" (Matthew 26:67). They plucked out His beard (Isaiah 50:6-7). The Roman soldiers stripped Him and flogged Him. They made Him wear a scarlet robe and "twisted a crown of thorns and set it on his head" (Matthew 27:29). Then they knelt in front of Him, saying "Hail, king of the Jews!" They spit on Him; they "struck him on the head again and again" (Matthew 27:29-30). Then they led Him away to be crucified.
- ☞ It seems that evil has triumphed and all hope is lost. Certainly Jesus' disciples thought so when He died on the cross. But Jesus, predicting His crucifixion, saw it differently: "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. . . . Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour" (John 12:23, 27-28).



Sound Familiar?

Susan and Lucy were the only ones to witness Aslan's suffering and sacrifice. When Jesus was crucified, most of His disciples were in hiding, afraid that they might be next. But a faithful group of women kept watch at the foot of the cross. Do you remember who?

(Hint: Read Matthew 27:55-56; Mark 15:40; and John 19:25.)

Scriptures on Christ's Suffering and Sacrifice

Isaiah 53 1 John 4:10 1 Peter 2:21-25



15. DEEPER MAGIC FROM BEFORE THE DAWN OF TIME

There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. MATTHEW 28:2

Biblical Parallels and Principles

- ☞ The girls tenderly care for Aslan's bruised and broken body. Mice nibble away at the ropes that bound him. Similarly, Jesus' friends showed tender concern for His earthly body. Joseph of Arimathea took His body down from the cross (John 19:38-42). The women went to the tomb at sunrise to anoint His body with spices (Mark 16:1-2).
- ☞ Hearing a noise behind them, Susan and Lucy think that someone has disturbed Aslan's body. The Bible tells us that when Mary Magdalene found His tomb empty, she thought someone must have removed Jesus' body. "They have taken my Lord away," she wept. Then a voice behind her spoke. She turned around, and there stood Jesus Himself (John 20:10-16)!
- ☞ Susan fears that they are seeing a ghost. Jesus' disciples felt the same way when He first appeared to them after His resurrection (Luke 24:37-39). Jesus reassured them that it really was Him—in a glorified body that still bore the marks of His crucifixion. "Jesus said, 'Peace be with you!' . . . And with that he breathed on them" (John 20:21-22).
- ☞ Aslan talks about the Deep Magic and the Emperor's Deeper Magic. Explaining the meaning behind Jesus' death on the cross, the apostle Paul said, "We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (2 Corinthians 2:6-8).
- ☞ The Deeper Magic stated that "when a willing victim who had committed no treachery was killed in a traitor's stead, the Table would crack and Death itself would start working backward." Romans 5:7-8 observes, "Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love

for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” He Himself had committed no sin; instead, He bore *our* sins (1 Peter 2:22-24). Galatians 3:13 says, “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law.” According to Isaiah 53:5, He was wounded for our transgressions—He took the punishment for our sin, “and by his wounds we are healed.” First Corinthians 15:54 declares, “Death has been swallowed up in victory!”

As Aslan said, “Death itself would start working backward” (compare Acts 2:24). After his resurrection Aslan heads straight for the Witch’s castle, where he will set free those she has held captive and turned to stone. The Bible tells us that as Jesus completed His atoning work on the cross, “The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life” (Matthew 27:52). Also, during the time between His death and resurrection, Jesus descended into Hades and preached to the righteous who were imprisoned there (awaiting His atonement). He set the captives free and led them into Heaven (1 Peter 3:19; Ephesians 4:8-10).



Sound Familiar?

When Aslan willingly laid down his life for Edmund, the Stone Table broke in two. When Jesus willingly laid down His life for us, the spiritual barrier between God and man was destroyed—and a physical symbol of that barrier was torn in two. Do you remember what that symbol was?

(Hint: Read Matthew 27:51.)

Scriptures on the Atoning Work of Christ

John 3:16-17 Romans 3:23-26 Hebrews 9:14

16. WHAT HAPPENED ABOUT THE STATUES

The lion has roared. AMOS 3:8

Biblical Parallels and Principles

- ☞ Death now starts working backward—Aslan’s breath brings the statues to life. When the first human being was created, “The LORD . . . breathed into his nostrils the breath of life” (Genesis 2:7). In Ezekiel 37:5 God speaks to the slain in the Valley of Bones: “I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life.” John 20:22 tells us that after His resurrection, Jesus breathed on His disciples. (For more on the new life that resulted from the Resurrection, see Matthew 27:52 and the notes on Chapter Fifteen of this book.)
- ☞ Alive again, Aslan begins to go about setting “wrongs to right” (see Chapter Eight). When Jesus began His earthly ministry, He quoted Isaiah 61:1-2 (a prophecy concerning Himself and His calling): “The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor and the day of vengeance of our God.”
- ☞ With a mighty roar, Aslan leads the Narnian creatures on to war against the Witch. Isaiah 31:4 says, “As a lion growls, a great lion over his prey . . . so the LORD Almighty will come down to do battle.” “Like a warrior he will stir up his zeal; with a shout he will raise the battle cry and will triumph over his enemies” (Isaiah 42:13).
- ☞ The Lion has triumphed (Revelation 5:5). The White Witch is defeated. “You said, ‘I will continue forever—the eternal queen!’ But you did not consider these things or reflect on what might happen” (Isaiah 47:7). “Rejoice over her, O heaven! Rejoice, saints and apostles and prophets! God has judged her for the way she treated you” (Revelation 18:20).



Do You Know?

The Narnian creatures must fight a vast, supernaturally evil army. The Bible tells us that as believers, we are all engaged in an ongoing battle. Who or what is the enemy?

(Hint: Read Ephesians 6:11-12.)

Scriptures on Joy

Psalm 16:11 Psalm 66:1-4 Psalm 126:1-3



17. THE HUNTING OF THE WHITE STAG

Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him. JAMES 1:12

Biblical Parallels and Principles

- ✞ Unlike Judas in the Bible, Edmund has repented of his sin. He is forgiven and restored to a right relationship with Aslan and his own brothers and sisters. In fact, as Lucy observes, he has become a changed person. In Ezekiel 36:26 God says, “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.”
- ✞ Lucy’s trust in and obedience to Aslan is tested when he asks her to leave Edmund’s side and care for others. Sometimes God asks us to do things we don’t want to do. In John 14:15 Jesus said, “If you love me, you will obey what I command.” He promises that those who trust in Him will never be put to shame (Romans 10:11).
- ✞ On a grassy hillside, Aslan miraculously provides food for the entire company. The Bible tells us that Jesus miraculously fed more than five thousand people on a grassy hillside with five loaves of bread and two small fish. (See Matthew 14:15-21, Mark 6:35-44, Luke 9:12-17, or John 6:1-14.)
- ✞ Aslan comes and goes—suddenly and mysteriously—just as Jesus did after His resurrection (for various instances, see Matthew 28:9; Mark 16:9-14; Luke 24:15, 36; John 20:14, 19, 26; 21:1, 4). Mr. Beaver explains that Aslan has “other countries to attend to.” Jesus compared Himself to a shepherd and told His disciples, “I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd” (John 10:16).



Do You Know?

Though Edmund was a traitor, Aslan suffered and died to save him from the power of the White Witch. Lucy asks Susan, “Does he know what Aslan did for him?” Do *you* know what Jesus did for *you*?

(Hint: Read Romans 5:8; 1 John 2:2; and Isaiah 53:4-5.)

Scriptures on the Glory That Awaits Us

1 Peter 2:9 2 Corinthians 3:18 Revelation 22:1-5

