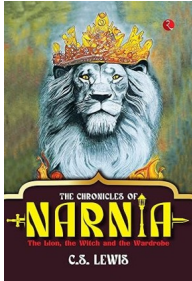




Lambda Sci-Fi

DC Area Gaylaxians



The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe
By C. S. Lewis
Discussed February 2006

Question Sources

Questions came from a number of sources:

(CC) - www.christiancinema.com

(HC) - www.harperchildrens.com

(NS) - www.narniaresources.com/pdfdownloads/pdf/bookquestions.pdf

(SP) - www.sparknotes.com

(MD) - original questions from Moderator

Discussion Questions – The Children

1. (NS) What are some individual character traits of each of the four children: Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy?
2. (SP) Why is Lucy, the youngest child, the first to enter Narnia, and Edmund, the next youngest, the second to enter? Is this a coincidence, or is Lewis making a point about the ability of younger children to be more open-minded?
3. (HC) Each of the children undergoes some changes throughout the course of the novel. Discuss how these changes impact their characters. How does sibling interaction shape both them and the plot?
4. (SP) Evaluate the character of Edmund. To what extent is he a helpless victim of the Witch's deceit (and Turkish Delight), and to what extent is he a master of his own fate?
5. (NS) Why do you think Edmund lies about having been to Narnia? How does lying affect him?
6. (NS) How does Edmund justify his choice to go to the White Witch? Why do you think people make up excuses for doing something that deep inside they know is wrong?

Discussion Questions – The Lion and the Witch

7. (NS) Compare and contrast the characters of the Lion and the Witch. For example, what kinds of power do they have? How do they exercise their power? How do they treat others? What do they want?
8. (NS) Why do you think Aslan chooses not to resist as he is bound and dragged by the White Witch's creatures, even though "one of those paws could have been the death of them all"?
9. (HC) In agreeing to sacrifice himself in Edmund's place without divulging to the White Witch that he could return, Aslan might be considered somewhat deceitful. What other variances are there on the traditional definitions of good and evil?
10. (SP) Do you feel that C. S. Lewis's representation of the White Witch is sexist? Is Lewis a misogynist? Does the wardrobe serve an allegorical function? Explain.

Discussion Questions – The Professor

11. (NS) In what ways is the Professor an unusual grown-up? What do you think about his "logic"?
12. (NS) What do you think of the Professor's advice to the children at the end of the book?

Discussion Questions – The Book

13. (MD) Did you enjoy this book? Why or why not? If you read this book as a kid, is your memory of the book (and your enjoyment of the book) back then different from your recent reading? Did you see the Christian overtones back then?
14. (HC) Symbolism is quite prevalent in this book. Discuss what Narnia and Aslan symbolize and how their portrayals shape Lewis's message. Who or what else is symbolic? How?
15. (NS) What do you think is the most courageous act shown in this book? Explain.
16. (HC) When Lucy tries to minister to her wounded brother, Aslan hurries her along to tend to others. Does the theme of the greater good vs. the individual arise elsewhere in the story? What other themes arise?
17. (SP) What is the role of the Emperor-Beyond-the-Sea in the novel? How does Lewis portray him?
18. (MD) The book was written in 1950. How does it compare to modern children's fantasy epics such as Harry Potter (J. K. Rowling) or His Dark Materials (Phillip Pullman)?

Discussion Questions – The Movie

19. (MD) For those of you who saw the recent movie, compare and contrast the movie and the source material.
20. (MD) The fox (voiced by Rupert Everett) plays a significant role in the movie, but doesn't appear or play much of a role in the book. What was the purpose of this new character in the movie?

Discussion Questions – Religion

21. (MD) Does Aslan represent Christ? Christ doesn't have the monopoly on sacrifice and rebirth after all.
22. (SP adapted) What is the effect of Lewis's depiction of Aslan as a lion? Many feel that Aslan represents Christ. If we assume that, does the depiction adequately express the nuances of Christ's character?
23. (MD) To many, the bible was a book written by men to help sell the idea of Christianity to pagans. Pagan celebrations and ideals were spin doctored into a newer, "better" religion. Do you think that so many of the creatures on the "good" side of the struggle had anything to do with this notion of using old mythology to teach new mythology?

24. (CC) When Aslan willingly lays down his life for Edmund, the Witch does not understand the deeper implications of her actions. Do you think that those who do evil in our world understand the ultimate victory of good? Do you believe that good will win over evil? Why or why not?
25. (CC) The statement made by Lucy at the end of the film was told her earlier by Mr. and Mrs. Beaver (voices by Ray Winstone and Dawn French) in the book: "Aslan is not a tame lion. But he is good." In what ways do you think God is not a "tame God" but instead reveals "good?" Is our inability to control God something that gives you hope or fear?
26. (CC adapted) The explanation by the Professor that you can seldom get into Narnia the same way again could explain why profound spiritual experiences are often random, unexpected and unrepeatable. Is Lewis giving us counsel on our encounters with "God"? Have you "entered" into a spiritual place? Has this been a repeatable experience?