

King Jesus and Lion Aslan
(Rev. Dr. John Bartol)

“On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross, the emblem of suffering and shame; And I love that old cross where the dearest and best, for a world of lost sinners was slain.”
George Bennard.

On March 30, many of the 2.1 billion Christians around the world will turn their thoughts to what took place on that cross 2000 years ago. But, do we truly understand and appreciate what Christ did there on our behalf?

In The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, by CS Lewis, I discovered a very meaningful picture of Christ and the salvation he offers.

The land of Narnia was created by Aslan, the mighty Lion and Christ figure. When four children arrive there the entire country had succumbed to the control of the wicked White Witch. Her spell causes it to be always winter but never Christmas.

One of the children, Edmund, turns traitor and, with the offer of Turkish Delight, joins forces with the witch. Then she claims the right to kill Edmund because of the law written on the great stone table that says, “Every traitor belongs to the witch, and for every treachery, she has the right to kill.”

Edmund’s siblings: Peter, Susan and Lucy feel powerless to rescue him from the cruel clutches of the Witch. The only hope of saving his life lies in the coming of King Aslan, the loving and powerful Lion. Aslan not only returns to Narnia but willingly offers himself as a sacrifice to fulfill the laws demands.

From their hiding place Susan and Lucy watch in horror as the white witch and her monsters slay Aslan on the great stone table. The great Lion of Narnia is dead! He has given his own life to save Edmund.

At first all seemed lost with evil as the victor. But then, soon after, Susan and Lucy find the stone table broken and Aslan stands, alive and strong.

“But, what does it all mean?” asked Susan. “It means, that though the Witch knew the deep magic, her knowledge was incomplete. If she could have looked into the darkness before time dawned, she would have known 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 backwards.”

This illustrates the message of Christianity. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ has released a life-giving power that enables us to break free from the vicious cycle of sin and death.

We discover that Aslan is very much like the Lord Jesus Christ. Through faith in Christ we

can receive the very gifts that Aslan offered the Narnians- genuine concern, deep joy and unconditional love. He protected them, played with them, taught them discipline and accountability, even died for them. Even so, on our behalf, Christ died on that first Good Friday – that is History. Christ died for me – that is salvation!