Allusions Within Out Of The Silent Planet Essay, Research Paper

Although various biblical allusions appear in many novels, most are not easily

interpreted. In order for a reader to be able to recognize an allusion they must first understand

what an allusion is. An allusion is a comparison to something that goes deeper than

what is just stated. In the novel Out of the Silent Planet there are many references to the Bible.

C.S. Lewis uses various biblical allusions throughout Out of the Silent Planet to portray the

characters and setting on Malacandra.

One of the first biblical allusions in Out of the Silent Planet is the parallel between Maleldil

the Young and Christ. C.S. Lewis illustrates this comparison as he elucidates Ransom?s

knowledge about Malacandra. As Ransom spends several weeks with the hrossa he learns that

everything was created by Maleldil the Young (Magill 213). C.S. Lewis clearly used Maleldil to

represent Christ, knowing that Christ is the creator of all things. Another analogy among Maleldil

the Young and Christ is their intentions with their creations. According to Magill, Ransom

discovered that Maleldil the Young did not create the worlds and races to last forever (215).

Christ?s ultimate plan when he created the universe was to one day have it destroyed. It is to be

understood that Maleldil had the same plans when he was creating the universe. The last

reference between Maleldil and Christ is the meaning of their names. The word Maleldil derived

from Anglo- Saxon means ?Lord of Judgment? (Christopher 93). This obviously means that he

was the supreme judge over Malacandra. As Christ being the supreme judge, one can

see the comparison.

The next allusion that appears in Out of the Silent Planet, is the comparison between the

Old One and God. The Old One was one of the higher spirits that lived with Maleldil. The Old

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One was described as having no body or parts (Magill 213). The fact that C.S. Lewis described

him like that is evidently because he is comparing the Old One to God. God is a spirit that has

neither a body or functional parts; God just exsists. The other reference that suggests that God

and the Old One can be compared is where they live. The Old One and Maleldil the Young live

together and rule from Melidorn (Magill 212). This is similar to how Christ and God live and rule

together from heaven.

Furthermore, C.S. Lewis uses allusions for the description and residence of the eldila to

angels. The eldila were lesser spirits that acted as messengers (Magill 212). After Ransom had

on Malacandra for a while, a eldila appeared bringing him a message from Oyarasa. In addition

to, angels sometimes appear on earth bringing messenges from God. The succeeding reason why

eldila are like angles is because of where they live. Magill describes Melidorn as being an island

of great beauty inhabited by many eldila (214). Most of the time the eldila were on Malacandra

delivering messages, but when they finished they returned back to Melidorn. This is the same

with angels; after their work is done, they return to heaven.

The last of allusions concerning the characters is between the Bent One and Satan. The

first way these two figures resemble each other is how they became corrupt. Bleiler describes the

relationship by stating, ?Long ago, after having lost his battle in Heaven against God, Satan – or

the ?Bent One? as he is called in the trilogy – took over the planet Thulcandra…..? (246). This

means that both fought against a superior spirit and lost. Then they were ultimately forced to live

and rule another celestial body. When the Bent One first became bent, he was exiled from

Malacandra and bound to Thulcandra. The same thing happened when Satan became evil. God

banished him from heaven, and sent him to live in hell.

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In addition to C.S. Lewis alluding to the characters in Out of the Silent Planet to the

Bible, he uses the setting as another factor. He first uses the setting by means of describing

Melidorn to be compared with heaven. He makes Melidorn the dwelling place of Maleldil the

Young and the Old One. Since these characters symbolize God and Jesus, it can easily be

understood that Melidorn is the equivalent to heaven. Now Melidorn just isn?t the home of those

two spirits. It is additionally the residence of the eldila. As mentioned before, the island of

Melidorn was inhabited by many eldila (Magill 214). This obviously alludes the fact that many

angels reside in heaven.

Finally, C.S. Lewis compares the planet Thulcandra to hell. The way to distinguish this is

by looking at the population of Thulcandra. All the inhabitants are those that once lived on

Malacandra, but became bent or evil and were sent there to live. Hell is similar to this in the fact

that the residents are those whose hearts were evil and were condemned to spend eternity there.

The final reason the two are comparable is because of the lack of communication the two worlds

have. The residents of Malacandra named Thulcandra the Silent Plant because no communication

came from it (Magill 213). This is almost exactly the same as hell?s inhabitants inability to

communicate. The Bible says that once a person is sent to hell, it is impossible for them to

converse with anything outside of hell.

In conclusion, in C.S. Lewis? novel, Out of the Silent Planet, the characters and

setting reflect back to Bible symbolizing the people and places in it. Every character in the novel

somehow relates to a Biblical figure, and every place in the book relates to a place in the Bible.

His use of allusions gives the reader insight into the deeper meanings of the novel.