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**Diploma Thesis**

C.S. Lewis: Between Theology and Literature

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## Zadání diplomové práce

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### **Cíl, metody, literatura, předpoklady:**

Práce se zaměří na zkoumání vybraných děl C.S.Lewis (Screwtape letters a The Great Divorce) z literárního a teologického hlediska. Důraz bude kladen na specifický Lewisův žánr, nesoucí prvky křesťanské apologetiky i čisté beletrie. Práce se soustředí na hlavní teologické myšlenky a pokusí se analyzovat, jak jsou literární prostředky užity k jejich zprostředkování.

CUDDON, J. A. The Penguin dictionary of literary terms and literary theory. 3rd ed. London: Penguin Books, 1992. Penguin reference. ISBN 0-14-051227-6. HOŠEK, Pavel. C.S. Lewis: mýtus, imaginace a pravda. Praha: Návrat domů, 2004. ISBN 80-7255-099-3. HOŠEK, Pavel. Kouzlo vyprávění: [proměňující moc příběhu a "křest fantazie" v pojetí C.S. Lewis]. Praha: Návrat domů, c2013. ISBN 978-80-7255-293-1. LEWIS, C. S. The great divorce: a dream. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001. ISBN 0060652950. LEWIS, C. S. The Screwtape letters: and Screwtape proposes a toast. Annotated edition. First edition. New York: HarperOne, An Imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, 2013. ISBN 9780062023179. LEWIS, C.S. The Screwtape letters. Uhrichsville, OH: Barbour Pub, 1985. ISBN 1557488118. LEWIS, C. S. Mere Christianity: a revised and amplified edition, with a new introduction, of the three books, Broadcast talks, Christian behaviour, and Beyond personality. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001. ISBN 0060652926. MOORE, Beth. Daniel: lives of integrity, words of prophecy. Member book. Nashville, Tenn: LifeWay Press, 2006. ISBN 9781415825884. PAYNEOVÁ, Leanne. Skutečný a Přítomný: [myšlenkový svět C.S. Lewis]. Praha: Návrat domů, c2006. ISBN 80-7255-139-6. The Holy Bible: New International Version. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2011. ISBN 9781444701548.

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**Oponent:** prof. PhDr. Bohuslav Mánek, CSc.

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## **Prohlášení**

Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto diplomovou práci vypracovala (pod vedením vedoucího diplomové práce) samostatně a uvedla jsem všechny použité prameny a literaturu.

V Hradci Králové dne 31.5. 2016

Bc. Olga Kabátová

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Prohlašuji, že diplomová práce je uložena v souladu s rektorským výnosem č. 4/2009 (Řád pro nakládání se školními a některými jinými autorskými díly na UHK).

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## Anotace

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Předkládaná diplomová práce s názvem *C.S. Lewis: Mezi teologií a literaturou* se zaměřuje na zkoumání dvou vybraných děl C.S. Lewise (*Screwtape letters* a *The Great Divorce*) z literárního a teologického hlediska. Důraz je kladen na specifický Lewisův žánr, nesoucí prvky křesťanské apologetiky i čisté beletrie. Práce se pokouší o literární a teologický rozbor děl. Konkrétně se soustřeďuje jak na hlavní teologické myšlenky, tak na analýzu vybraných literárních prvků, které jsou v dílech užity pro zprostředkování teologie. V první části se autorka věnuje rozboru díla *Screwtape letters* z literárního a teologického hlediska. V práci jsou zvláště zmíněny hlavní teologické myšlenky, které C.S. Lewis skrz tuto knihu sděluje. Práce se je pokouší analyzovat a doložit jejich biblický základ. Dále jsou zde uvedeny vybrané literární prostředky, které jsou užity jako forma zprostředkování daných myšlenek. V druhé části se práce věnuje titulu *The Great Divorce*, který je rovněž literárně rozebrán. Je zde zmíněna také Lewisova literární inspirace. Teologickým tématům se věnuje samostatná kapitola a dále také rozbor vystupujících postav. Autorka se zde opět pokouší o analýzu vybraných užitých literárních prvků a uvádí jejich názorné příklady. V závěrečné kapitole se práce pokusí shrnout provedenou analýzu a zároveň Lewisův styl.

Klíčová slova:

C.S. Lewis, literatura, teologie, *The Great Divorce*, *The Screwtape Letters*

## **Annotation**

Bc. Olga Kabátová, *C.S. Lewis: Between Theology and Literature*. Hradec Králové: Faculty of Education, University of Hradec Králové, 2016. 75p. Diploma Dissertation.

This thesis with the title *C.S. Lewis: Between Theology and Literature* focuses on research of two works of C.S. Lewis (*The Screwtape Letters* and *The Great Divorce*) from literal and theological point of view. The aim is to observe the specific genre of Lewis that contains elements of Christian apologetics but also elements of pure fiction. The thesis tries to bring the theological and literal analysis. The thesis concentrates on the main theological thoughts and tries to analyse the usage of literary devices as means of expressing the theology. In the first part the author describes the *Screwtape letters* from literal and theological point of view. The theological themes are mentioned separately and the biblical foundation is examined. Furthermore, some of the literary devices which were used to express the theology are introduced. The second part of the thesis is dealing with *The Great Divorce* which is also analysed from the literal point of view. In this part the Lewis' inspiration is mentioned. Another part is dedicated to theological themes which are further mentioned through the description of given characters. On demonstrative examples the author tries to analyse some of the literary devices which Lewis used. In the final conclusion the thesis is summarizing the accomplished analysis and also Lewis' writing style.

Key words: C.S. Lewis, literature, theology, *The Great Divorce*, *The Screwtape letters*



## **Poděkování**

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## Introduction

“When man immerses into Lewis’ world and then breaks the water again, he has usually experienced the unknown experience of the sharp flight through the Universe, which is not only much more extensive but which also contains the return of supernatural reality. The empire of transcendent is not hidden anymore. Shackles of unbelief break and he together with Lewis rises towards the heights of freedom.

As a philosopher same as a fiction writer, Lewis uncovers the whole reality, so we could understand its elements; he presents the Creator, so we could understand the creation. In his conception of natural and supernatural in the Universe we can see that God is bending down to the man and that the man is really connected to Him. Lewis returns the concreteness of things (also of the supernatural) that we so often call abstraction. He returns the cognition of not only Holy Spirit, but also of angels, demons and all heavenly crowds.”<sup>1</sup>

C.S. Lewis in his works uses poetical language containing many literary devices. They help the reader to live the story and transfer the fiction into real life. Doc. Pavel Hošek Th.D. in his publication *Kouzlo vyprávění*<sup>2</sup> (*The Magic of Storytelling*) explains that C.S. Lewis uses mythopoeia much rather than allegory.<sup>3</sup> The term mythopoeia, according to the *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, is an intentional creation of a myth, practically in literature it can be remodelling of some mythical material or creating own ‘private’ mythology. Hošek mentions that the allegory is used for explaining the reality, which is somehow familiar to the author and under his control. On contra, mythopoeia reveals the reality that was created by the imagination of the author, and it goes much further in the fantasy. When he wants to describe it, he needs to use the metaphor. Therefore, the way Lewis explains the fictional world can change the perception of the reader’s reality.<sup>4</sup> The reader becomes a part of the story and starts to think the ‘fiction’ is happening to him.

“According to Lewis, every story brings an interesting tension between the theme and the plot... The fact that the story is similar to human life brings the reader to relation

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<sup>1</sup> PAYNEOVÁ, Leanne. *Skutečný a Přítomný*. p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> HOŠEK, Pavel. *Kouzlo vyprávění*, p. 91.

<sup>3</sup> CUDDON, J.A. *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, p. 563.

<sup>4</sup> HOŠEK, Pavel. *Kouzlo vyprávění*. Parphrased. p. 91.

to the story. That causes the transformation of man. It is one of the reasons why Lewis was persuaded that the imaginary experience brings the effect of transformation.”<sup>5</sup>

C.S.Lewis with his specific style, brilliant use of imagination connected with perfect theological understanding, invites the reader to go and search the truth about life, readers’ beliefs and the truth about reality. As Hošek<sup>6</sup> proves, nothing earthly can fulfil this passion that Lewis evokes in his readers.

## 1 C.S. Lewis - Biographical Note

C. S. Lewis, born in 1898 in Ireland, is one of the most significant writers, university professors and theologians of the twentieth century. His genial thoughts were influenced by many factors. Lewis considered himself for many years to be an atheist, and his conversion to Christianity is dated around the year 1929. This change in his life is better explained in his title *Surprised by Joy*.

Lewis, student of Oxford university, shared a big passion for poetry and literature since his very young age. This fact led him into his unique and poetically rich language. He became an Oxford University teacher of English Literature and Philosophy. During the time at Magdalene College, he became friends with other authors such as J.R.R. Tolkien.

Lewis was single most of his time until in 1952 when he met Joy Davidman Gresham. Their touching story inspired a film adaptation titled *Shadowlands* (1993). The death of his wife meant a big loss for him, and the grief is described and expressed in *A Grief Observed*.

Lewis is known for his specific style of apologetic literature that is based on logic and experience. He wrote many non-fictional works including *Mere Christianity*, *The Problem of Pain* or *Miracles...* There are also many fictional works such as *The Chronicles of Narnia* and science fiction such as *Out of the Silent Planet*. In all these works, the theological influence is visible. There are also many other works and essays that are connected to his academic position such as *A Preface to Paradise Lost*.

This thesis is trying to analyse two allegorical titles: *The Screwtape letters* and *The Great Divorce*. Both books reached high popularity among their readers. “*The Screwtape Letters* was published in February of 1942. Jack (C.S. Lewis) had resolved his guilt over

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<sup>5</sup> HOŠEK, Pavel. *Kouzlo vyprávění*. Parphrased. p. 101-102.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

making money from religious writing. The money from any of his religious works from then on went to charity. He dedicated *The Screwtape Letters* to Tolkien.”<sup>7</sup> *The Great Divorce* was first published in 1946 and was also met with success. The profit made from it was given to charity.

Lewis dedicated his life to the writing of meaningful literature that overlaps reality. During his life, he was honoured by literary prizes and also became an elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and the British Academy.

## 2 *The Screwtape Letters*

C.S. Lewis wrote this epistolary novel in the form of 31 letters of senior devil Screwtape, addressed to a junior devil demon, Wormwood. Under the supervision and advice of the experienced Screwtape, Wormwood is obliged to tempt the so called ‘the patient.’ Through these temptations, Lewis informs and warns the reader where and how the temptation may occur.

“The plot or story-line of a novel reveals the rising action, climax, falling action and resolution of the events in the novel. The plot in this novel is revealed as Bildungsroman.”<sup>8</sup> Bildungsroman is a literary genre that displays the development of the protagonist, usually since his childhood until adulthood. The progress is mainly seen in the psychological development. The development of the *Screwtape letters*’ protagonist, the patient, is focused on his spiritual life. The story begins in the moment of becoming the Christian and maps his Christian life with its ups and downs. The fictional plot is not a crucial theme in Lewis’ book. There are several notes in the beginning of almost every letter that display this literary device. They give plot comprehension to the reader happening in the background.

The reader by reading *The Screwtape letters* experiences the fictional story he can relate but also meditates on shared Christian message that was written with highly esthetical language. Following paragraphs will analyse the main theological thoughts and the literary devices used for their expression.

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<sup>7</sup> WELLMAN, Sam. *C.S. Lewis: Greatest Christian Apologist of the 20th century*, Location: 1816.

<sup>8</sup> British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences [online], p. 269.

## 2.1 The Summary of the Plot

The letters are about a tempted young person who is called ‘the patient’. It is a man, who recently became a Christian. Screwtape also calls him as ‘your man’. He is young in his faith and struggles with going to church. There are various ways Screwtape advises Wormwood to tempt him. He misuses the relationship to his older mother and gives the character thoughts about war or his sexuality. In Letter 9, there can be observed something like a fall of the enthusiasm of the ‘patient.’ It continues to the Letter 10 when he meets, according to Screwtape, very suitable people. This married couple in their middle ages are “rich, smart, superficially intellectual, and brightly sceptical about everything in the world.”<sup>9</sup> Screwtape gathers they are vaguely pacifists but only from an ingrained habit to go belittle the masses of fellows and communism. They are patient in their conversations and talk about anything but faith. In the Letter 11 the patient meets all friends of this couple. The demons rejoice about that. After the six weeks since his confession, he still attends the church and The Lord Supper, which is, an unpleasant fact for Screwtape, seen in Letter 12. The anger of Screwtape graduates in Letter 13 when Wormwood’s patient regrets his sins and through repentance, grace resumes. Screwtape calls it ‘the second confession.’ He also talks about a special ‘weapon’ of the Enemy (God), which is God’s presence. He calls it ‘the asphyxiating cloud’<sup>10</sup> that prevents the demons from attacking their patients. “It is the Enemy’s most barbarous weapon, and generally appears when He is directly present to the patient under certain modes not yet fully classified. Some humans are permanently surrounded by it and therefore inaccessible to us.”<sup>11</sup> It happened when the patient was enjoying pleasures as reading and while thinking and being close to God. The turn in the patient’s mind, continues through Letter 14 when he does not make any resolutions about himself, but believes in the power of grace for his entire life. In Letter 15, the patient enters the period of World War II. In following chapters, the patient continues to visit the same church and is not satisfied with it. In the Letter 19 there is a change in the way Screwtape writes, while he is obviously afraid of words he said about the Enemy (Jesus). He takes back the statements he said and appeals to Wormwood to lock the letters up. The confirmation of the resolution for God is seen in the patient’s new relationship with a Christian girl described in the Letter

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<sup>9</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 41.

<sup>10</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 52.

<sup>11</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 52.

22. Screwtape is furious about the job Wormwood is doing and about the situation of the patient. He calls the love the patient feels for her as a worst possible option, because she does not even appear in demonic reports. Screwtape describes her as “not only a Christian but such a Christian—a vile, watery, insignificant, virginal, bread-and-butter miss.”<sup>12</sup> He is disgusted by her and driven mad the way the world has worsened. The patient not only meets this girl, but also her very deeply believing family. Family, according to Screwtape, he should of never entered. He describes their home as a place having the ‘deadly odour’ and mentions that even a gardener working there for couple of years started to acquire it. This odour also influences the guests visiting them and makes them leave ‘smelly.’ Even the living animals that live there are tainted with it. This place of God’s presence is a mystery for Screwtape. The patient, through the family of his girlfriend, meets more and more Christians, also very intelligent ones. His faith grows and becomes stronger. Letter 28 informs the reader about heavy air raids on the town of the patient. Screwtape, who does not care much about the war until it connects to the soul of the patient, is now very interested in it. He wants Wormwood to protect him, because a death would be their defeat. The patient is now living a full Christian life, he has escaped his worldly friends, he is dating a very Christian woman who even brings him closer to God, he is immune to temptations. Screwtape is now afraid that if the Enemy would call him to Heaven, the demons would lose him forever. Then the letter reveals this big fear the patient and his friends had because of the war and his possible involvement. In the final Letter 31 there is described the pure anger and contempt of Screwtape for Wormwood who lost patient’s soul forever. The patient dies during air rides and the triumph of Heavenly army is showed. Screwtape talks about the very natural and easy entrance of patient’s new life. All his doubts suddenly disappear and he finally sees the poor and hurt tempter who just lost his last chance. Moreover, he can see the Heavenly army who was behind him the whole time. The patient can look at Jesus and Screwtape is full of overflowing anger that he was able to look on Jesus, who’s light is so blinding that it is a suffocating fire to all demons. This light, the clarity itself in the form of Man, was a cool light to the patient.

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<sup>12</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 88-89.



## 2.2 The Perspective

The point of view Lewis uses, according to the research in the article *The Use of Stylistic Devices to Raise Religious Consciousness in C.S. Lewis' The Screwtape Letters* is to relate the happenings in the novel. All 31 Letters are written by the Screwtape, who is a narrator but also a character in the story. As the article reveals, he refers to himself as 'I'. "This gives the indication that it is the first person omniscient point of view that is used and it implies the authorial involvement of the narrator."<sup>13</sup> All the words are expressed by the narrator only. Even the words of Wormwood or thoughts of the patient are presented through the Screwtape's letters. Also the plot of the novel is described through the evaluation or narration of Screwtape.

As the article<sup>14</sup> explains, the perspective are *points of view* on a very same situation by two characters that differ in its interpretation. In the most of the letter there can be seen two perspectives on things happening to the patient. The first perspective is from the point of view of Wormwood, who is underestimating the situations and gets very easily excited about his deeds. The contrary perspective is the perspective of Screwtape, whose reaction is mostly expression of displeasure and anger. Screwtape expresses his opposite, wise and haughty detached view on the same thing. "This device as used in this novel serves to show the conventional truths vs. the demon's falsehood."<sup>15</sup>

An example of such double perspective can be seen in the oncoming of the Second World War. Screwtape calls Wormwood "singularly obtuse"<sup>16</sup> in the way he perceives the war. "Thus you tell me with glee that there is a reason to expect heavy air raids on the town where the creature lives. This is a crying example of something I have complained about already – your readiness to forget the main point in your immediate enjoyment of human suffering."<sup>17</sup> Then Screwtape explains that war brings death and it is not something they would want for their patient. This kind of suffering brings souls even closer to God and also the death brings Christians into his open arms.

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<sup>13</sup> British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences, [online]. p. 273-274.

<sup>14</sup> British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences, [online]. p. 275.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 112.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

Another example can be seen in Letter 8 of *Screwtape*. It is obvious that Wormwood expressed his excitement and “great hopes that the patient’s religious phase is dying away.”<sup>18</sup> His perspective differs from the point of view of his supervisor. *Screwtape* informs him about the “law of Undulation”<sup>19</sup> and that the lower stage of faith the patient is going through is not caused by the deeds of Wormwood. He even warns that this phenomenon will do them no good. It is mentioned, that the Enemy is using these situations to get closer to the human being.

A third example of two different views on the same thing is seen in the comment of the sin of gluttony. Wormwood looks contemptuously at this “mean of catching souls.”<sup>20</sup> He is confronted by his supervisor with his ignorance. *Screwtape* explains that this sin of gluttony should never be underestimated and that the state of society in Europe is due the success of demons who have encouraged this sin deaden in this area. People become slaves of this sin and it opens doors for demons to add hate and selfishness.

Lewis uses this double perspective for revealing the very often shocking truth about demons and humans’ souls. The reader can easily identify with the perspective of the Wormwood, but is then shown the difference in *Screwtape*’s perspective. *Screwtape*’s perspective is full of wisdom indeed, and is a device showing Lewis’ ideas and uncovering the hidden and the invisible.

### 2.3 The Setting

The narrator writes his letters from the office that takes place in Hell. Each letter is sent about a week apart. The recipient of his letters, the young Wormwood is on Earth with his patient whom he tries to tempt. The story is written before and during the Second World War, which is important only for the demons as they use society to influence the soul of the tempted human. It is clearly more important for the reader notice the spiritual war about the faith of the patient, which takes place at the forefront.

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<sup>18</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 34.

<sup>19</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 34.

<sup>20</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 68.

## 2.4 The Characters

The episcopal novel is told through the letters of the devil Screwtape, who is also one of the characters. All the letters are signed, beside one, as “Your affectionate uncle,” so it is obvious that the senior demon writes to his nephew. C. S. Lewis chose a senior demon Screwtape to express thoroughly many biblical truths. He does that through an opposite description of the Lewis’ theological understanding. Therefore, his descriptions have a negative form and for example Jesus is called “the Enemy.” However, in the preface it is mentioned that “not everything that Screwtape says should be assumed to be true even from his own angle.”<sup>21</sup>

### 2.4.1 Screwtape

As mentioned before, Screwtape is the author of the letters. In the letter 4 Screwtape talks about himself as about “the under-secretary of a department”<sup>22</sup> of Hell. Lewis’ Hell has some kind of bureaucracy and Screwtape names another demons and institutes as “Secret Police”<sup>23</sup> or “House of Correction for Incompetent Tempters”<sup>24</sup>. Screwtape himself is able to look into human’s dossiers. In the 22<sup>nd</sup> letter Screwtape shares that he has unintentionally transformed into “the form of a large centipede.”<sup>25</sup> Screwtape mentions that this transformation was already described by Milton, who described it as a punishment from God. He also reveals that he has a secretary who signs the letter as Toadpipe and who signs his boss as “Abysmal Sublimity Screwtape, T.E., B.S., etc.”<sup>26</sup>

### 2.4.2 Wormwood

Wormwood, the young tempter demon hates his uncle Screwtape. One of the letters reveals his attempt to raise the Secret Police against some unguarded expressions in Screwtape’s letters. The assignment to tempt the patient is his first mission. His uncle finds

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<sup>21</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 7.

<sup>22</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 19-20.

<sup>23</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 88.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 91.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

him highly irresponsible and careless. William O’Flaherty in his publication<sup>27</sup> mentions that the name “Wormwood” is used in the biblical Revelation<sup>28</sup> for a fallen star.

### **2.4.3 The patient**

The best description and highest occupation of the letters are given to their subject, the patient. This young man, whose name is never given, becomes a new Christian. He experiences the first steps in faith and has a close relationship with his mother. Later in the story, this character falls in love with a Christian girl. She is “not only a Christian but such a Christian—a vile, watery, insignificant, virginal, bread-and-butter miss”<sup>29</sup> The relationship with his girlfriend, who is not even mentioned in Hell dossiers, brings him closer to God. She introduces him to another Christians and her highly spiritual family.

From Letter 10, the reader can learn that the patient is working in the office. He is not aware of the spiritual war happening behind his story, nor of the existence of his personal tempter Wormwood. He gets to see him in the day of his death. By that time, Wormwood is wounded by the light and angels. In that moment the patient also meets Jesus and the angel army and recognizes them suddenly as his life helpers.

### **2.4.4 Our Father Below**

‘Our Father Below’ or simply ‘Our Father’ is the name for Satan. Satan’s dominion is Hell and he has a superior position in Screwtape’s life. Screwtape admires him and leads Wormwood to do all the things to gain his favour. In the 22<sup>nd</sup> letter Screwtape mentions that he worships nothing but himself. He obviously tries to take advantage of anything for example, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> letter, the relationship of the patient to his mother.

### **2.4.5 The Enemy**

The Enemy is named God or his Son Jesus. Screwtape describes him with hate and contempt but also with respect to his power. His light is hurting all demonic powers and his

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<sup>27</sup> O’FLAHERTY, William. *C.S. Lewis Goes to Hell*, Location: 175.

<sup>28</sup> Bible (NIV), Revelation 8:10-11.: “The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star, blazing like a torch, fell from the sky on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water— the name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters turned bitter, and many people died from the waters that had become bitter.”

<sup>29</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 88-89.

unselfish attitudes towards humans are incomprehensible for Screwtape. The Screwtape and Wormwood have a goal to “keep the patient out of the Enemy’s clutches.”<sup>30</sup> Screwtape describes God’s love to be true and that He really wants humans to become His sons. He also characterizes God’s creation (humans) to be such “a revolting hybrid,”<sup>31</sup> “half spirit and half animal”<sup>32</sup> and that determined Satan to “withdraw his support from Him.”<sup>33</sup>

## 2.5 Theological themes

As Lewis said, he shares the wisdom he gained “from his own heart” rather than from the study of theology or ethics. According to Bible, people are all sinners and are facing the temptations. The purpose of this book, according to Lewis, is to view the human life from another perspective and point out the danger of sin.

The following chapters are researching the major theological topics hidden in Screwtape’s letters.

### 2.5.1 Church & Pride

C.S. Lewis writes through the letters of the wise demon Screwtape, many about the institute of church. He dares to call it “one of the great allies”<sup>34</sup> of Hell. He does not speak about the “real” (eternal) Church that lasts through all the ages and is described as “heavily defended”<sup>35</sup> by the terrifying army with flags. Lewis mentions that this power is unfortunately not really noticed by the Christians. But the earthly church, very often tied to liturgy and false pictures of each other sitting in the banks, belonging to the body of Christ only on Sundays and only in his holy building. Lewis points out another problem meeting the church members. Christians became the experts searching for the best that suits them. Church becomes something more like “a club”<sup>36</sup>. People are critical of the place where they should be disciples and pupils. Because of this attitude, they miss the spiritual nourishment.

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<sup>30</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 9.

<sup>31</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 34.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 13.

<sup>35</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 32.

<sup>36</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 65.

One big danger for the church and its members is a prideful combination of “modesty, and vanity”<sup>37</sup>. Satan wants to create rivalry between churches, even in the same denomination. Christians are also tempted to feel much better about themselves than the non-Christian. Lewis’ *Screwtape* in letter 24 even calls the spiritual pride as “the most beautiful of the vices”.<sup>38</sup> People can become proud almost about anything, including their humbleness.<sup>39</sup> The main goal of humility, according to Lewis, is to turn the attention from oneself to another people. When people despise themselves, they keep thinking just about themselves. It has nothing to do with the humbleness. Christ wants people to stop searching for their identity and evaluating themselves. He wants them to realize that all beings (and so He Himself) are beautiful and perfect. He wants people to leave their self-love and wants to give them the perfect kind of love for them to give to their fellow men. Then they become grateful for themselves and for others. God rejoices when people in repentance turn away from their sins and make a genuine change for good.

Jesus wants real followers. Lewis warns against moderate religion, which is the same as no religion.<sup>40</sup> According to *Screwtape*, moderation brings even more fun to demons. He also mentions, that the preaching about ‘the world’ almost disappeared from the church and Christian literature. ‘Worldly Vanities’, ‘The Choice of Friends’, and ‘The Value of Time’ are rarely spoken about. “All of that, your patient would probably classify as “Puritanism”—and may I remark in passing that the value we have given to that word is one of the really solid triumphs of the last hundred years?”<sup>41</sup> The false understanding of this term among humans causes that people do not want to be labelled as “puritans” and therefore they easily yield to temptation of unchastity or being inebriated.

A very interesting point, made by Lewis’s *Screwtape*, is that church does not preach against gluttony.<sup>42</sup> *Wormwood* presents the point of view of humans who also underestimate the trap of this sin. *Screwtape* brings to light, that this sin leads to

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<sup>37</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 42.

<sup>38</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 97.

<sup>39</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 56.

<sup>40</sup> Bible (NIV), Revelation 3,16-17: “I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.”

<sup>41</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 42.

<sup>42</sup> Bible (NIV), Proverbs 23, 20-21

cultivating the desire of ownership of perfect products. Most people think only about “gluttony of Excess”<sup>43</sup> but Screwtape warns against “gluttony of Delicacy”.<sup>44</sup>

‘The Great Commission’ described in the Gospel of Matthew<sup>45</sup> shows the task the church is supposed to do here on the Earth. Lewis points out that first disciples were preaching two basic things: The Resuscitation of Jesus Christ and The Redemption of the man (which both operated with the being aware of ones sins he made against the Lord). However, according to Lewis, nowadays the preached Gospel is revealing mostly the biography of ‘Historical Jesus’.

### 2.5.2 Demons and angels

“There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and had a materialist or a magician with the same delight.”<sup>46</sup>

The author in the prologue<sup>47</sup> describes his perspective to the ‘demon’s thematic’. He rejects the existence of the Devil as the opposite power to almighty, everlasting and not created God. Lewis proclaims there is no other existence that would present the opposite of God and also that would be the ‘perfect evil’ as an opposite to God showing us his perfect goodness. Every creature contains some good (given) aspects, as intelligence, energy, will; without these things there would be no existence. But Lewis shows his belief in demons, being the same as in angels. He shows us the Biblical aspect of demons as fallen angels. They are followers of the angel of light (Satan), who through his revolt against God, became the enemy of him. Demons are therefore more on the same level as angels rather than creatures with any greater power. In the pages of the book some aspects and reasons of this revolt are described.

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<sup>43</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 68.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Bible (NIV), Matthew 28, 18-20: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

<sup>46</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 7.

<sup>47</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *Screwtape letters*, preface to the 1961 edition

A very interesting and important fact should be mentioned here. Lewis writes about the portrayal of angels in human culture. As Lewis mentions, both angels and demons are portrayed with wings (one with the wings of birds, one with the wings of bats) that show the speed of spiritual energy, for which there are no obstructions. They have the appearance of humans because people don't know any other creation with the reason. All of these depictions are symbolical. However, the portrayal of angels changed during the centuries, people usually miss the fact that the apparition of angels in biblical stories were accompanied by the fear and angelic words of comforting.<sup>48</sup> Lewis also mentions in his Prologue the degeneration of the angelic appearance. As can be found in the book of the prophet Ezekiel<sup>49</sup>, the Biblical appearance of the angels differs from the imaginations of painters or many writers. Lewis shows the point of view of Dionysius, who in the 5<sup>th</sup> century mentioned that only fools think that spirits are humans with wings.<sup>50</sup>

Demons, as fallen angels, are still very powerful and in the pages of *The Screwtape Letters*, they try to control every piece of human's lives. Lewis describes demons as real existences in reality.

### 2.5.3 Family

Screwtape shows his disapproval of the concept of family because he notices the love people are receiving in that unit. Lewis shows the transformation of man through becoming a Christian which influences also his family. He sees Jesus Christ "working from the centre outwards, gradually bringing more and more of the patients conduct under the new standard, and may reach his behaviour to the old lady (patient's mother) at any moment."<sup>51</sup> Screwtape then gives the advice to connect with the tempter of the patient's mother and shows the steps of how to ruin the plan of the "Enemy" (Jesus). Lewis shows how connected the aspects are and how easily good attempts can be misused by human's sinful nature.

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<sup>48</sup> Bible (NIV), Luke 1:11-13: "Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah..."

<sup>49</sup> Bible (NIV), Ezekiel 1: 5-28

<sup>50</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *Screwtape letters*, preface to the 1961 edition, p. xxxiv.

<sup>51</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 16.



#### 2.5.4 God's Love

C.S. Lewis talks about God's love in the connection to the war but with such an emphasis that a separate paragraph should be given to this theme. Screwtape repeats on many places that God truly loves his creation – people – and that love is the motivation by which he wants to set them free. If human beings and even devils understood what he means under the term “love”, the war would end, and devils would come happily back to the Heaven, to Him.

“On the whole, God's love for us is a much safer subject to think about than our love for Him. Nobody can always have devout feelings: and even if we could, feelings are not what God principally cares about. Christian Love, either towards God or towards man, is an affair of the will. If we are trying to do His will we are obeying the commandment, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God.’ He will give us feelings of love if He pleases. We cannot create them for ourselves, and we must not demand them as a right.”<sup>52</sup>

In the *Mere Christianity*<sup>53</sup> Lewis points out that humans are unable to create such love. But God is the one who loves unconditionally. He is not “wearied by our sins, or our indifference”<sup>54</sup>. The theme of God's love pervades Lewis' work and will be further displayed also in *The Great Divorce*.

#### 2.5.5 Grace

Lewis through the letters of the devil Screwtape reveals the scandal of grace that is so alarming and shocking for evil powers. Humans are creations that are “half spirit and half animal”<sup>55</sup>. This double perspective of humans classifies them spiritually to the eternal world, and they can be “directed to an eternal object”<sup>56</sup>. But their human body, passions and imaginations “are in continual change, for to be in time means to change. Their nearest approach to constancy, therefore, is undulation-the repeated return to a level from which they repeatedly fall back, a series of troughs and peaks.”<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *Mere Christianity*, p. 132-133.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 34.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

Jesus Christ is not interested in perfection of the man; he is focused on the troughs of man. He wants to be present there as a help for those who really need him. His motivation is love. Screwtape's words are emphasizing the words which can be found in Scriptures. Jesus said: "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick."<sup>58</sup> He wants to detach people from themselves in the way that they would not lose their individuality. "When He talks of their losing their selves, He only means abandoning the clamour of self-will; once they have done that, He really gives them back all their personality, and boasts that when they are wholly His they will be more themselves than ever."<sup>59</sup>

Jesus wants humans to act upon and not just keep the piety in their imaginations and affections. They must keep it in their will. Screwtape warns that passive habits weaken the people, but the active ones will get stronger by repetition. Wormwood gets this advice to keep the patient in passivity. Such passivity will create an obstacle to the ability of acting, and furthermore, he will not be able to feel anymore.<sup>60</sup>

God called his followers holy. He created pleasures and many good and enjoyable things for human. Screwtape's words, "He has filled His world full of pleasures. There are things for humans to do all day long without His minding in the least Sleeping, washing, eating, drinking, making love, playing, praying, working. Everything has to be *twisted* before it's any use to us."<sup>61</sup> Satan, according to Lewis, cannot create a single one pleasure. The Devil can only misuse them – he tempts a man to use it in the wrong time or in the wrong amount. "Satan has no greater agenda than attempting to desecrate what God consecrates."<sup>62</sup> Readers are repeatedly warned that devil is a liar.<sup>63</sup> He lies to people and puts in their minds they are not who they are in the eyes of God. He tempts humans to feel desperate. The desperation, according to Screwtape, is the worst sin, much worse than the sins that caused it. Humans stop to believe even in the power of grace.

Another tool Screwtape uses is prosperity. As God intended the humans as his sons to be holy, it means separated from this world with the home in Heaven; however, success and prosperity make people think they found their home in this world. The Devil is trying to attach people to earth and make them believe that "earth can be turned into

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<sup>58</sup> Bible (NIV), Matthew 9,12.

<sup>59</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 54.

<sup>60</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 55.

<sup>61</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 89.

<sup>62</sup> MOORE, Beth. *Daniel: Lives of Integrity*, p. 91.

<sup>63</sup> Bible (NIV), John 8,44: "You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies."

Heaven at some future date by politics or eugenics or ‘science’ or psychology, or whatnot.”<sup>64</sup> Jesus in Scriptures says about his followers: “They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.”<sup>65</sup> Only by the Grace of God people can be found clean and holy, separated for God.

### 2.5.6 Hell

When Lewis talks about Hell, he introduces the idea of Chesterton; the fall of Satan was caused because of his seriousness.<sup>66</sup> Hell should be imagined as a state where everybody tries to care about his own career and dignity. Everyone complains and hates others. One’s own desires are more important than others. According to Lewis, all demons are connected through fear and greediness. The demons of C.S. Lewis are perfectly practical. They are motivated by the fear of punishment and by starving. The desire on the Earth is very often called ‘love.’ The desire reigning in Hell is ‘hunger.’ Demons want to eat each other, the sons of Eve and also Satan want to have everyone inside of them. On the other hand, God wants to have all humans as his children. He accomplishes this through the freedom of love. Lewis’ demons see themselves very disadvantaged by being the only spirits that never were physical humans (as God through Jesus Christ was.) They can never hear what He says to them.

Another point describing Hell through the Screwtape’s letters is that silence and music are something Satan hates and have no place in Hell. Hell is described as a place of noise. “Noise, the grand dynamism, the audible expression of all that is exultant, ruthless, and virile. Noise, which alone defends us from silly qualms, despairing scruples, and impossible desires. We will make the whole universe a noise in the end. We have already made great strides in this direction as regards the Earth.”<sup>67</sup> On other place in the Scriptures is written: “They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”<sup>68</sup> Music and silence are ways praising and communicating with God. Scriptures reveal on many places that humans should praise

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<sup>64</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p.115.

<sup>65</sup> Bible (NIV) John 17,16

<sup>66</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *Screwtape letters*, preface to the 1961 edition, p. xxxv.

<sup>67</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 90.

<sup>68</sup> Bible (NIV), Matthew 13,42.

God. Worshiping God is not only blessing him but it blesses also the one who worships.<sup>69</sup> Pointing out, that Screwtape hates silence only underlines the biblical view on a man who in the silence waits for God to answer. “Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him...”<sup>70</sup> This situation of God’s presence that he entered in the quietness when “the asphyxiating cloud”<sup>71</sup> appears and protects the human. Screwtape explains that some people are constantly under this protection, in the presence of God and it is impossible for demons to attack them.

When people stop believing in the existence of the demons, demons miss all the pleasure from the direct terror to these people. But according to Screwtape, they can at least become materialists and sceptics. Lewis points out, that present generation is willing to believe in “Forces” but not in the existence of “spirits”. Through worshiping the “Life Forces”<sup>72</sup> as sex, materialism etc., they are actually worshiping devils. Even though they do not believe in their existence, they portray them as comical figures. Screwtape writes to his nephew that devils are being received as comical figures in the modern imagination and that will help him in his work.<sup>73</sup>

### **2.5.7 Ownership**

Screwtape in the letter 21 talks about human’s “sense of ownership”<sup>74</sup> which he highly encourages. Screwtape expresses that devils produce such thing “not only by pride but by confusion.”<sup>75</sup> All that confusion when human think to own their bodies, property or relationship is “equally funny in Heaven and in Hell”<sup>76</sup>. Screwtape also explains that it was their intention to teach humans to understand the possessive pronoun “my” as an appellation for their possession. People no longer see the difference between the expression “my boots” and “my God”. “The God on whom I have a claim for my distinguished services and whom I exploit from the pulpit—the God I have done a corner in”.<sup>77</sup> They are in the trap of their

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<sup>69</sup> Bible (NIV), Exodus 23,25: “Worship the Lord your God, and his blessing will be on your food and water. I will take away sickness from among you.”

<sup>70</sup> Bible (NIV) Psalm 37,7.

<sup>71</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 52.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 31.

<sup>74</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 86.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid

<sup>77</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 86-87.

“sense of ownership”, and their image of God is confused. They grow into the feeling of freedom to do whatever they want with their possessions.

Lewis displays the theological truth that there is nothing a man would have right to call “mine” because he owns it. Everything is a gift. As the Scriptures reveals: “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.”<sup>78</sup> Or in another place: “For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?”<sup>79</sup> The Owner of all things is God, who will say ‘mine’ about everything and everyone in the end. Except those, whom the devil conquers.

### 2.5.8 Prayer

Prayer is presented as a powerful and effective weapon against the evil. By praying, a human is coming into the presence of God and is unable to receive evil attacks.<sup>80</sup> In many places, the Scriptures highlight the importance of prayers. At the end of Ephesians, Paul talks about ‘The Armour of God’ and in one of the final verses he makes an appeal to all Christians regarding all prayers: “And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.”<sup>81</sup> Another place in the Scriptures, God calls Christians into His presence through prayers. Screwtape, understanding the “danger” of prayers, advises his nephew to keep the patient from all intentions of praying as much as possible.<sup>82</sup> He also recommends reminding the patient about the “Parrot-like prayers from patient’s childhood”.<sup>83</sup>

In the letter 27, Screwtape advises Wormwood to tempt his patient in thinking that prayers about practical little things are not important and cannot bring any objective results. Also, he recommends to tempt him in the moments when God answers “no” to his prayers. If his prayer is fulfilled, Wormwood is advised to find materialistic reasons why it happened and leave God out of it.

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<sup>78</sup> Bible (NIV), James 1,17

<sup>79</sup> Bible (NIV), 1. Corinthians 4,7

<sup>80</sup> Bible (NIV), James 4, 7: “Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you.”

<sup>81</sup> Bible (NIV), Ephesians 6,18

<sup>82</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 20.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

Lewis also shows that there are things that can distract Christians from concentration. When people are trying to concentrate through using self-control (as Devil tempts them to do), there is no victory. Humans need to pray about their concentration and ask for God's help. The body posture while praying plays also a role. When a Christian turns to God, the Devil is defeated. When people get close into God's presence, He protects them from the attacks of the Devil. According to Screwtape, while praying there is 'the danger' of the reaction from God. Anything, even human's sin, which brings people closer to God is long-acting against the devil.

However, Screwtape shows the danger for Christians who create some object that portrays God they are praying to. Satan wants to occupy their minds while praying to concentrate on that object or their self-pity, and then the prayer is not a prayer anymore for it has turned into complaining or defending themselves. Screwtape describes the moment when the human forgets everything earthly, and his naked soul starts talking to God as something "incalculable". Nevertheless, he finds it easy to avoid such a situation. As he explains to Wormwood: "you will be helped by the fact that the humans themselves do not desire it as much as they suppose. There's such a thing as getting more than they bargained for!"<sup>84</sup> This truth only underlines the biblical truth, very often forgotten by Christians. A prayer can affect everything, and God can do much more than the man is asking him for.<sup>85</sup> The Devil is persuading humans that prayer has no sense.

### 2.5.9 Sexuality

As it was already mentioned in one of the preceding chapters, Satan does not create any pleasure, only misuses them. Nowadays the world is very upturned in the perception of sexuality and love. Lewis warns that the devil persuades humans, that amorousness is the basis of a marriage. Such amorousness and the feeling of being in-love are supposed to be permanent. When it disappears, the marriage is not binding anymore. It absolutely parodies God's intention for marriage.<sup>86</sup> He does not talk about happy couples but about

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<sup>84</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 22.

<sup>85</sup> Bible (NIV), Philippians 4, 6-7: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

<sup>86</sup> Bible (NIV), Matthew 19, 5-6: "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate."

one flesh. Lewis reveals that the philosophy of Hell is that one thing cannot become the other thing. One human being cannot be another human being. One's good cannot be other one's good. When one gets, the other one loses. Jesus Christ evades this 'truth'. "He aims at a contradiction. Things are to be many, yet somehow also one. The good of one self is to be the good of another. This impossibility He calls love, and this same monotonous panacea can be detected under all He does and even all He is—or claims to be."<sup>87</sup> Screwtape opens the topic about the Holy Trinity – God being the Father, the Spirit and the Son. Screwtape dislikes marriage and the intention of God that both parts are together to complete each other and to co-operate. God created marriage, and it was his intention to associate it with affection between two people with sexual desire.

Lewis also mentions the danger of Christians marrying non-Christians.<sup>88</sup> He also sees important the marriage that is made in the church before the eyes of God.

Through the twist of Screwtape words, the author warns against the trends that cause the changing views on female bodies. Advertisements, actresses and models are showing the standards of beauty, which is a work of the evil. There is an everlasting fear of 'getting old' in every woman, which is even more supported by the trends, which can very often be considered as fake. The view of human body is wicked. Lewis warns against the trends, which make women less able to have and even want children.

### **2.5.10 Time**

When Screwtape talks about the ownership, he also mentions the question of time. Humans act like they own it and feel a grievance when somebody takes a part of 'their time'. "The man can neither make, nor retain, one moment of time; it all comes to him by pure gift; he might as well regard the sun and moon as his chattels."<sup>89</sup>

More on Lewis' thoughts, that should keep readers alert, are that devil enjoys humans' fear about the future, and he tries to keep them in uncertainty. Humans were created for the eternity. According to Lewis, there are only two aspects of the time people should focus on: the Eternity (which is Christ himself) and the Present (that people live connected to Christ – with the touch of eternity or separated from him). The Devil

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<sup>87</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 73.

<sup>88</sup> Bible (NIV) 2. Corinthians 6,14.

<sup>89</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 85.

separates people from the focus on the Eternity and the Present. He wants them to live in the past or imagining, fearing and hoping for their Future. The Past is known, and people are familiar with it. Whereas focusing on the Future relates to the Eternity the least and thus it is the most temporal part of time. According to Screwtape, “nearly all vices are rooted in the future. Gratitude looks to the past and love to the present; fear, avarice, lust, and ambition look ahead.”<sup>90</sup>

Another issue the author through Screwtape’s Letters describes is that people are furiously scared of ‘the Same Old Things’<sup>91</sup>. “The humans live in tie, and experience reality successively.”<sup>92</sup> Because of this feeling, people are scared of things that last. Devil is trying to encourage the joy of changes and disable the permanence of friendships, marriages that build fickleness and adultery. “But since He (God) does not wish them to make change, any more than eating, an end in itself, He has balanced the love of change in them by love of permanence. He has contrived to gratify both tastes together in the very world He has made, by that union of change and permanence, which we call Rhythm.”<sup>93</sup> This Rhythm is a spiritual church year. The Devil perverted the joy of change that God intended, and instead of pleasure, humans are tempted to increasing desire. The positive meaning of ‘unchanging’ or ‘immutable’ is in humans’ understanding often twisted into the negative term ‘stagnating’. Fashion and popularity has an influence in this process. It takes the attention of people away from important things and into danger.

Another attempt of evil, according to Lewis, is an effort to make humans forget everything that proceeded them and prevent them from taking the lesson from it. Humans tend not to take lessons from previous events, experiences or from history. The problem is shown on intellectuals who research “a historical point of view”<sup>94</sup> (term that devils spread). Screwtape explains that the historical point of view means the reading “an ancient author” and never questioning “whether it is True”.<sup>95</sup> According Screwtape, they rather ask what caused that the writer wrote such statement and what was his inspiration. He does not think about the “present state of the question”<sup>96</sup> nor takes it as a lesson for

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<sup>90</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 61-62.

<sup>91</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 100.

<sup>92</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 101.

<sup>93</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 101.

<sup>94</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 111.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 111.



his lifetime. As Screwtape adds: “And since we cannot deceive the whole human race all the time, it is most important thus to cut every generation off from all others.”<sup>97</sup>

### 2.5.11 War

“It’s important to realize that Lewis wrote this book before the end of what is now known as World War II. When the letters were first composed Lewis used the term “European war” which was common at the time.”<sup>98</sup>

Through his Screwtape, Lewis shows another perspective of war. The Devil is not so excited about the presence of war in the Europe as people would think. Together with war, the consideration between good and bad comes. People consider the values of things, and they fear the demons. People prepare for possible death and turn to Jesus. Much more dangerous is a time of peace when people don’t even consider the values and the presence of death. However, war can also be considered as a way in which devil tries to tempt and eat human souls.

Another tool of the devil is to focus the anger that war can create against the fellow men and the good that is in people towards the most distant people, which are probably even unknown. “The malice thus becomes wholly real and the benevolence largely imaginary.”<sup>99</sup>

With the topic of war, Lewis opens the theme of death. Death is being experienced, as the biggest evil humans have to go through. Surviving is imagined as the good because of the Devil’s intention for the humans to think so. When the Apostle Paul says “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain,”<sup>100</sup> he reveals the truth about death from a Heavenly perspective. If humans understood better what God’s kingdom really means for them, they would not want to live for another minute. The fact God that wants humans to stay here is the inability to understand and see who God is. War ends the plot of the book with the human rejoicing from meeting his Saviour and angels who helped him all the time, even when he didn’t feel them. Now he recognizes his life-time helpers in them.

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<sup>97</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 111.

<sup>98</sup> O’FLAHERTY, William. *C.S. Lewis Goes to Hell*, Location: 1494.

<sup>99</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*, p. 29.

<sup>100</sup> Bible (NIV), Philippians 1,21

## 2.6 Analysis of literary devices

“When we want to talk about the artistic style Lewis’ writing, it is good to notice that C.S. Lewis longed to be a poet since his very young age. With some of his friends in the time of college, they wanted to return romanticism into English poetry. After some not really successful attempts Lewis came to the conclusion that his domain is rather poetical prose. In his understanding of the role of poets in contemporary times he was influenced especially by his friends as Owen Barfield and J.R.R. Tolkien. The language Lewis is using reflects his poetical thinking. Words do not have ‘empirical meaning in the first place’ and then they are used as metaphor. In the opposite, the original language was deeply meant to be metaphorical in its actual fact.”<sup>101</sup>

The following paragraph focuses on analysing selected literary devices used in the novel. As mentioned in the introducing paragraph from Hošek, Lewis uses very rich and poetical language to express his theological thoughts. Through the allegory and metaphors, the reader is confronted with the practical and experienced thoughts.

### 2.6.1 Allegory

“The term derives from Greek *allegoria* ‘speaking otherwise’. As a rule, an allegory is a story in verse or prose with a double meaning: a primary or surface meaning; and a secondary or under-the-surface meaning. It is a story, therefore, that can be read, understood and interpreted at two levels (and in some cases at three or four levels).”<sup>102</sup> The Dictionary also mentions the similarity between the allegory and the parable, which is a means Jesus typically used to explain theological thoughts. “The biblical parables have allegorical elements – allegory is a type of instruction. Lewis gives his own definition in a letter written 29 December 1958: ‘a composition... in which immaterial realities are represented by feigned physical objects’”<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> HOŠEK, Pavel. *C.S.Lewis mýtus, imaginace a Pravda*, (paraphrased), p. 75.

<sup>102</sup> CUDDON, J.A. *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, p. 22.

<sup>103</sup> DURIEZ, Colin. *The A-Z of C S Lewis: An encyclopaedia of his life, thought, and writings*, Loc:291.

“In *The Screwtape Letters*, Lewis uses allegories to illumine the Devil’s attack on three subjects: a man’s interpersonal relationships, his perspective of the church, and, finally, his own character. These allegories help the reader to better understand spiritual warfare as it pertains to them.”<sup>104</sup> Lewis used *Screwtape*, the devil, to utter the truths about Christian life and to bring awareness of the spiritual war. All the topics that mirror the thoughts of Christianity are revealed through the allegorical expressions of the devil. As two examples of this allegorical arrangement, the following expressions can be shown: Jesus and God are named the “Enemy.” Becoming a Christian is presented as “being in the Enemy’s clutches.”<sup>105</sup> The reader has to read between the lines and think about the contrary of *Screwtape*’s utterances to understand Lewis’ message. As Lewis utters in the prologue<sup>106</sup>, when he was writing *Screwtape* letters he had to twist his mind into demonic way of thinking and “diabolical attitude.”

It offers the question of the extent to which Lewis used the allegory. Lewis is aware of the real evil power of fallen angels. The way he describes the temptations are allegorical only in the way they are shown on the fictional story. There are allegorical relationships of devils, descriptions or bureaucracy of Hell same as the fictional line and background of the story. This allegory should reveal the biblical truth. On the other hand, the usage of demons in the story and the description of their cleverness can be a picture of the evil power that should not be underestimated.

## 2.6.2 Metaphor

A Metaphor, according to the *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* is “a figure of speech in which one thing is described in terms of another... A comparison is usually implicit; whereas in simile it is explicit.”<sup>107</sup> Following lines will bring several examples of Lewis’ use of the metaphor in *The Screwtape Letters*.

*Screwtape* admonishes Wormwood for being too excited about the war that started in Europe. Wormwood uses words “delirious of joy”<sup>108</sup> to describe his feelings. He is admonished by his uncle that he is “only drunk”<sup>109</sup>. The metaphor “being drunk” by some development or action expresses the fleetingness and falseness of such joy. The metaphorical speech of

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<sup>104</sup> LOGANS HENKEL. A rhetorical Analysis of “The Screwtape letters”, *June 2 2015*, [online].

<sup>105</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 9.

<sup>106</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *Screwtape letters*, preface to the 1961 edition, p. xlii

<sup>107</sup> CUDDON, J.A. *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, p. 542.

<sup>108</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 23.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

Screwtape continues by using words: “you have tasted that wine which is reward of all our labours-the anguish and bewilderment of a human soul-and it has gone to your head.”<sup>110</sup> Also this sentence is not meant literary, there is no wine Wormwood would have drunk, but through this metaphor Screwtape, warns against the feeling of victory after experiencing the sorrow of a man – which brought joy to Wormwood. Talking about this topic, Screwtape used another metaphorical term in the sentence: “I do not expect old head on young shoulders.”<sup>111</sup> By this metaphor is meant that it is obvious that young Wormwood cannot have same experiences as an old devil.

Other metaphors are used in the last letter when the patient loses his life and enters the Eternal Glory. His death and therefore leaving of devils hands happened unexpectedly. He suddenly forgets all his doubts, fears and sorrows. Screwtape expressed that quick moment of the losing the patient’s soul by using the metaphor as it happened: “in the twinkling of an eye.”<sup>112</sup> Screwtape in his furious anger describes the patient as the “animal, this thing begotten in bed, could look at him (Jesus).” He points out the human substance of a man and by the usage of the word “animal” his disgust and outrage are obviously shown. Another metaphor influenced by Screwtape’s negative feeling toward the human race is expressed in the letter 13 when he calls humans “the little vermin.”<sup>113</sup>

### 2.6.3 Simile

The *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* explains that Simile is “a figure of speech in which one thing is likened to another, in such a way as to clarify and enhance an image”<sup>114</sup>. This likening is based on external similarity of compared things.

When Screwtape writes his first letter to his nephew Wormwood a simile is used to describe the nature of Wormwood’s patient. “Remember, he is not like you, a pure spirit.”<sup>115</sup> The nature of the patient who is a spirit but also a human is compared to the nature of the devil who is only a spiritual being.

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<sup>110</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 23.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 125.

<sup>113</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 54.

<sup>114</sup> CUDDON, J.A. *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, p. 880.

<sup>115</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 10

Another simile can be found when Screwtape recommends Wormwood to keep the patient from serious prayers. Wormwood is advised to remind his patient of “parrot-like nature of prayers”<sup>116</sup> from his childhood. By the comparison to praying as a parrot, it is meant that man repeats prayers without thinking of or understanding the meaning of the expressed words. The praying man is here compared to a parrot who is repeating words without wanting to express his thoughts.

When the patient falls in love with his girlfriend he is excited by her family. He loves to talk with them about spiritual things, but the devil finds the cause and motivation for it in the love he has for her. The patient might think to understand them and to be on the same spiritual level, but he is much behind. Screwtape compares him to a dog by using a simile: “He is like a dog which should imagine it understood fire-arms because its hunting instinct and love for its master enable it to enjoy a day’s shooting!”<sup>117</sup>

#### 2.6.4 Irony

“It seems fairly clear that most forms of irony involved the perception or awareness of a discrepancy or incongruity between words and their meaning, or between actions and their results, or between appearance and reality. In all cases there may be an element of the absurd and the paradoxical.”<sup>118</sup> As the dictionary also explains, irony has many functions, however it is wittingly or unwittingly used as an instrument of telling the truth.<sup>119</sup>

Screwtape uses irony and sarcasm when he talks about humans, God or God’s rules and inventions. Through the irony he expresses his contempt and disagreement. Lewis chose this ironical language and sarcastic comments as a means to explaining and clarifying the truth about God, the sin and the life of humans. Here one example of such irony can be shown Screwtape’s naming God as “the Enemy” or Satan “Our Father”. Both expressions are used in Christianity but with the opposite meaning.

An example can be seen on Screwtape’s description of pleasures that God created for his people. The devils are trying to find the best way to tempt the patient. Screwtape advises that if the patient prayed for strength for the Future and lives fully in the Present where all the

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<sup>116</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 20.

<sup>117</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 98.

<sup>118</sup> CUDDON, J.A. *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, p. 460.

<sup>119</sup> CUDDON, J.A. *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, p. 461.

Grace, duty and pleasure dwell, Wormwood should attack him. He also notes that it is obvious that the patient is not worried and lives happily in the Present, because he is a healthy and employed man. “All the same, I should break it up if I were you. No natural phenomenon is really in our favour. And anyway, why should the creature be happy?”<sup>120</sup> Not only does Screwtape call the patient “the creature”, he also talks ironically and assails the fact that a human can be happy.

Another example of irony is when Screwtape talks about the Enemy – Jesus. Even though he is talking ironically with disrespect, he is showing the truth about Him to the reader. Screwtape tells Wormwood: “Remember, he is not, like you, a pure spirit. Never having been a human (Oh that abominable advantage of the Enemy!) you don’t realize how enslaved they are to the pressure of the ordinary”<sup>121</sup> The irony can be seen in the combination of words “abominable advantage” by that Screwtape condemns the act of God becoming a man to die for sins of humans.

### 2.6.5 Symbol

The symbol, according to the *Dictionary of Literary terms and Literary Theory* “is an object, animate or inanimate, which represents or ‘stands for’ something else. As Coleridge put it, a symbol ‘is characterized by a translucence of the special [i.e. the species] in the individual’. A symbol differs from an allegorical sign in that it has a real existence where as an allegorical sign is arbitrary.”<sup>122</sup>

The first symbol can be seen already in the title of the book. Lewis chose symbolic names to present the characteristics of the devils. Their names have mostly negative meanings. The name ‘Screwtape’ comes together as a compound word from words ‘screw’ and ‘tape’. The symbol hidden under this name is to screw things together. Screwtape, the experienced devil, puts things together and through the knowledge is able to find perfect strategy of tempting humans. ‘Wormwood’ symbolizes bitter weeds that spread quickly and are hard to kill. As mentioned before, his name was chosen according the Scriptures.<sup>123</sup> It can also symbolize a worm spoiling the wood. Lewis used other symbolical names for devils as

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<sup>120</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 63.

<sup>121</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. p. 10.

<sup>122</sup> CUDDON, J.A. *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, p. 939.

<sup>123</sup> Bible (NIV), Revelation 8:10-11

Glucose, Slumtrimpet, Triptweeze, or Toadpipe. All of them are meant to symbolize negative feeling and damage.

### 3 *The Great Divorce*

C.S. Lewis wrote *The Great Divorce* as an allegorical narrative. The story is a theological dream vision and allegory of Heaven and Hell. The storytelling passenger meets other ghosts and learns about rules of Heaven and about the exclusivity of evil in Heaven. On the title page of the book, Lewis quotes the idea of George MacDonald, which pursues the whole book: *No, there is no escape. There is no Heaven with a little of hell in it – no plan to retain this or that of the devil in our hearts or our pockets. Out Satan must go, every hair and feather.*

“*The Great Divorce* arose out of Lewis’ interest in the nature of spiritual choices. The idea for allowing damned spirits a “holiday” in Heaven was suggested to him by his reading of the seventeenth century Anglican divine Jeremy Taylor, who introduced him to the ancient Catholic notion of Refrigerium – that the damned are given occasional repose from the torments of Hell by being granted “days off in other places.”<sup>124</sup>

Such an idea is therefore not something to be found in the Bible, and its fictional frame helps to open spiritual topics. According to the Study Guide<sup>125</sup>, the title of the book is a reaction on William Blake’s *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. Lewis in *The Great Divorce* is implying that such a marriage is not possible.

The following paragraphs are researching the fictional and theological points of view on *The Great Divorce*.

#### 3.1 Lewis’ inspiration

Lewis in the preface<sup>126</sup> of *The Great Divorce* mentions William Blake’s *Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and explains that this book is meant to be their Divorce. Lewis does not try to underestimate the significance of Blake, but he wants to share his belief that such marriage

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<sup>124</sup> Study Guide to *Great Divorce* by C.S. Lewis. [online].

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. vii.

is not possible. As will be described later, Lewis believes in the ‘either-or’ in the question of the good and evil, Heaven and Hell. As he mentions, “if we insist on keeping Hell (or even Earth) we shall not see Heaven: if we accept Heaven we shall not be able to retain even the smallest and most intimate souvenirs of Hell.”<sup>127</sup>

Such belief is shared by many theologians, for example St. Augustine who inspired Lewis’ theological way of thinking. Lewis with the allegorical topic of escaping Hell (or Earth that contains evil) to pilgrimage to Heaven (or some holy place) was inspired by other authors and their writings. This paragraph will give a few examples of them.

“Lewis is by no means the first writer to envision a trip to the realm of the dead. The great Latin poet Virgil also described such a visit in his *Aeneid*, an unfinished work of twelve books... The epic tells how the Trojan hero Aeneas escapes from the sacking of Troy and makes his way to Italy.”<sup>128</sup> Virgil, guided on his journey by Sibyl, became an example and inspiration for Dante Alighieri and his *Divine Comedy*.

Dante Alighieri and his writings had a big influence on Lewis’ life and conversion to Christianity. “The year after he first read *Paradise*, C. S. Lewis became a believing Christian, and he was clearly influenced by Dante for the rest of his life. There are traces of *The Divine Comedy* throughout his writing, from *The Pilgrim’s Regress*, his first Christian book, to *Letters to Malcolm*, his last.”<sup>129</sup> “Dante gave his journey to the Spirit World the title of ‘Comedy’...”<sup>130</sup> “Dante gave that genre a transcendent quality by taking his readers to spiritual places not on the earth, and Lewis followed his example.”<sup>131</sup> Lewis, same as Dante, are both the protagonists who undertake the journey. Both of them are guided by their supervisors who reveal the biblical truths to them. Both of them lead various conversations and encounters. As mentioned in the article from Lindskoog,<sup>132</sup> in both works the entrance into Heaven was connected with the surprise about ranking there, as two female characters (Dante’s Beatrice and Lewis’ Sarah Smith) are compared.

“The best known allegory in the English Language (if not the world) is Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* (1678). This is an allegory of Christian Salvation.”<sup>133</sup> Bunyan’s Christian

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<sup>127</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. viii-ix.

<sup>128</sup> CLARK, David. *C.S. Lewis Goes to Heaven: A Reader’s Guide to The Great Divorce*, Location: 440.

<sup>129</sup> LINDSKOOG, Kathryn. C.S. Lewis and Dante’s Paradise, [online].

<sup>130</sup> Clark quotes the explanation of Parker, Deborah (*Commentary and Ideology: Dante in the Renaissance*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1993, p. 28.). “Comedy” in the time of Dante was a “sympathetic treatment of the lower classes of society and a plot describing their escape from difficult situations.”

<sup>131</sup> CLARK, David. *C.S. Lewis Goes to Heaven: A Reader’s Guide to The Great Divorce*, Location: 392.

<sup>132</sup> LINDSKOOG, Kathryn. C.S. Lewis and Dante’s Paradise, [online].

<sup>133</sup> CUDDON, J.A. *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, p. 22.



leaves the City of Destruction which represents Hell and pilgrimages to the Celestial City, representing Heaven. “On the way he meets various characters, including Mr. Wordly Wiseman, Faithful, Hopeful, Giant Despair, the fiend Apollyon, and many others. In the second part of the book, Christian’s wife and children make their pilgrimage accompanied by Mercy. They are helped and escorted by Great-heart who destroys Giant Despair and other monsters.”<sup>134</sup> They also reach Heaven, the Celestial City. According to the *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*,<sup>135</sup> Bunyan’s allegory represents the life of a Christian and all the trials he must face before he reaches Heaven. Lewis’ narrative is also an allegorical story of symbols referring to Christian life and reality that leads to Heaven.

C.S. Lewis admired also the work of John Milton. As a Fellow and Tutor of Middle English literature at Oxford University he wrote *A Preface to Paradise Lost*. According to the article<sup>136</sup> of written by Eric Young, Lewis opens several themes of Milton that are also displayed in his works. “One is the Augustinian account of goodness and evil, where the latter is the privation or perversion of the former. We are further reminded that it is not Satan vs. God but rather Satan vs. Michael, for evil has no hold against the Good.”<sup>137</sup> This is clearly seen in both (*Screwtape Letters* and *The Great Divorce*) analysed works of Lewis.

Another highly influential author for Lewis was George MacDonald who became his supervisor in *The Great Divorce*. Clark<sup>138</sup> writes that according to the Lewis’ anthology for MacDonald, there is no book he did not quote him. Also in *The Great Divorce*, the narrator meeting George MacDonald is overwhelmed and starts to trust him. He mentions MacDonald’s work *Phantastes*, which was very inflectional for Lewis. Moreover, the influence this book had on him is compared to the “first sight of Beatrice had been to Dante: *Here begins the new Life*.”<sup>139</sup>

“Add to his (Lewis’) theology a rich background in mythology, his enjoyment of and deep familiarity with Dante and Milton, the impact of the revelations of Julian of Norwich, to mention just a few influences, and the result is one of the most powerful expressions of the twentieth century of an outstanding intellect at the height of its powers.”<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> CUDDON, J.A. *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, p. 22.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> YANG, Eric. *C.S. Lewis and The Preface to The Paradise Lost*.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> CLARK, David. *C.S. Lewis Goes to Heaven: A Reader’s Guide to The Great Divorce*, Location: 502.

<sup>139</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 66.

<sup>140</sup> CLARK, David. *C.S. Lewis Goes to Heaven: A Reader’s Guide to The Great Divorce*, Location: 328.

### 3.2 The Plot Summary

The story starts in the Grey town where the narrator appears at the bus stop. He listens to the conversation of crowded line of people waiting for the bus. Everybody seems to be anxious to get in the bus. People are rude and angry with each other. The city is a picture of Hell or some kind of purgatory. When the narrator reaches to get into the bus, he is able to watch the landscape on their way to Heaven. During the bus ride he finds out that the trip is some kind of excursion to the foothills of Heaven. He observes and has various conversations with his co-passengers until they reach the final station. After stepping off the bus, they find out that they are indeed transparent ghosts. All the surrounding seems wonderful and solid, yet impossible for their transparent bodies to touch.

Since the time the ghosts stepped off the bus, each of them has a meeting with a tangible human – spirit, who came to be their guides. The narrator observes and describes all the conversations he hears. The main topic of all conversations is about repentance and getting a chance to get closer to The Mountains and The Sunrise. The Spirits offer themselves to be guides and bearers of the ghosts on their way there, because every step on the solid and hard grass brings them unbearable pain.

Almost all ghosts decide to get back on the bus and refuse to continue in their journey. They have various reasons and excuses, such as they would rather be back in their Grey town. The biggest obstacle is presented in proving their imperfection and sins and not wanting to accept the forgiveness and grace. Only few ghosts realize that the Grey town is actually Hell. Due to fear of The Night, they want to go back, although there is neither joy nor laughter.

The narrator, while exploring the Heavenly nature and listening to various conversations, is amazed and scared of the wonderful sceneries. He is then met by a Scottish author, George MacDonald, whom he used to admire highly. He read his books since his youth. The narrator explains to MacDonald some special moments of his life that were influenced by him, but he is interrupted by his guide, who says that he knows him and knows more about these moments than he himself. George MacDonald opens many topics about Heaven, Earth and Hell and tries to explain the rules of it. He shares that only repentance can lead to the eternal joy.

An escalated climax of the story is a picture the narrator sees at the end of the book. It is a huge assembly of motionless gigantic figures standing by a silver table, which is the time. On the table, there are little chest figures and puppets that represent the giant figures. All the gestures and deeds of the little chest figures represent the nature of the giant figures standing

nearby. All this scenery is shocking, and after George MacDonald's explanation, the narrator understands that it is a model of the end of all things. He is assured that he is only dreaming, and everything he experienced was seen through the lens of a dream. By The Dawn, the huge unbearable light, the narrator wakes up falling from the chair next to his study table with his books falling on him as he pulled them down with him.

### **3.3 The Perspective of the narrative**

C.S. Lewis decided to write his story as a first person narrative. The narrator tells the story with personal feelings. He describes the surroundings first in the Grey city, then on his way to Heaven and then his experiences in the Heavenly reality. He is very often witnessing various conversations of the ghosts and spirits, and these are written in direct speech.

### **3.4 The Setting**

Lewis set his allegorical narrative first to the Grey town – which presented Hell (or The Purgatory). Most of the story, however, takes place in the Heavenly reality, which is something new and hard to be described by its visitors from the Grey Town. Through the special characteristic of Heaven and Hell, Lewis shows his theological perspective; although, as he emphasizes, all the setting and descriptions are just allegory and imagination and should be never taken as a biblical truth.

#### **3.4.1 Lewis' Image of Heaven**

When the bus comes closer to the terminal station, unbearable light shines inside. The narrator does not feel comfortable, the light is hurting the ghosts, and he can finally see clearly the characteristic features of his co-passengers. When he steps off the bus, he is hit by the light and coolness of Heaven. He feels like being in a larger space and experiences something he has never experienced before. Everything seems more distant and bigger than anything he has ever seen. The Earth is compared to Heaven by using words of a metaphor “little ball of earth”<sup>141</sup>. The Solar System itself looked like an “indoor affair”<sup>142</sup>. Then he continues

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<sup>141</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 20.

<sup>142</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 20.

describing Heaven as a place that brought him feelings “of freedom, but also of exposure, possibly of danger, which continued to accompany me through all that followed. It is the impossibility of communicating that feeling, or even of inducing you to remember it as I proceed, which makes me despair of conveying the real quality of what I saw and heard.”<sup>143</sup> He is filled by wondering about this special place, which is so overwhelming, wonderful, and amazing but also scary and indescribable.

The passengers coming in Heaven became transparent; they were practically ghosts. But as the ghosts, they were able to touch and to feel. As the ghost, they were even more fragile and vulnerable while walking in heaven which brought them a lot of pain. On the contrary, the passengers meet the “spirits” – the saved souls. These human beings were more real. In the Czech translation of the book, they are even called “tangible humans”. The Czech translation might have gone further with the underlining the more solid, reality of Heaven and also the Heavenly human beings. All that surrounded the passengers was suddenly more real and material than what they have ever experienced before. The light, the grass, the water, the trees were different. All the nature was made of different substances. Heaven of the Lewis’ *Great Divorce* is much more solid than Earth or Hell, which the humans experienced before. When the storyteller tries to pluck a daisy, the stalk wouldn't break. He couldn't even twist it. When he tries to tug, he loses most of the skin off his hands. He compares the hardness of the little flower as toughness of diamond. Even a leaf was so heavy that picking it up was compared to picking something heavier than a sack of coal.

Lewis presented Heaven from a new perspective. People, as human beings, tend to think about this earthly world that it is the real one, and everything spiritual is “abstract”. Lewis shows us the idea of the opposite. Passengers leaving Hell and coming to Heaven become transparent ghosts. Everything around them is solid, real and from different overwhelming substances. Every move brings pain, because even the grass is too sharp and heavy. As Leanne Payne in her publication *Real Presence*<sup>144</sup> explains, they choose Hell because they are not able to bear the reality of Heaven. They reject the opportunity to fill their empty and immaterial beings with and by God's Spirit. The saved spirits are described as material beings. Lewis shows us his great capability of God's reality and presence. God is real and present. His world is the only real and the first one. The Earth (or Hell) is not the reality; but rather, it is the second creation and something much more ephemeral. “But Heaven is not a state of mind. Heaven is

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<sup>143</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 20.

<sup>144</sup> PAYNEOVÁ, Leanne. *Skutečný a Přítomný*. p. 17-18.

reality itself. All that is fully real is Heavenly. For all that can be shaken will be shaken and only the unshakable remains.”<sup>145</sup> According to Payne’s explanation of this idea, people with their human, limited senses are not able to comprehend the reality of the spiritual world. They are not even able to see the whole reality of the physical world people live in (as Payne mentions the example of limited spectre of light perceived by humans), moreover the spiritual reality. Only with the Holy Spirit, people are able to touch God’s perfect and so often unseen reality of his creation.

### 3.4.2 Lewis’ Image of Hell

In *The Great Divorce*, the narrator calls Hell the Grey Town. This place is joyless. and there is not much light. The time seems to run very slowly and everything lasts in some kind of twilight, expecting the night which is scary and not about to come. The weather is rainy. The characters living in the Grey town have various personalities. When their bodies step off the bus, they realize they are only ghosts. Even when there was a fight on the bus and few bullets were shot, nobody was hurt. According to one of the characters on the bus, the intelligent man, the Grey city is a place where everybody fights. Because people can’t stand each other, they move further and further away from each other, leaving the streets empty. The biggest problem, according to the intelligent man, is that everybody gets what he wants – in worse quality. So it causes the fact that nobody needs anything. People without needs don’t tend to create a community that enables the society to exist. People live in the houses that don’t even protect them from the rain. The houses serve as a feeling of protection from the moment of evening turning into night which everyone is expecting with the great fear. Nobody wants to be outside when it happens.

Lewis’ kind of Hell is able to fit in the little crevice in the ground between two tiny steels. Payne in her publication<sup>146</sup> presents different notions of Hell by various important thinkers, among them also C.S. Lewis, whose image is based on the idea of St. Augustine. God of Lewis and Augustin is absolutely good, and everything he had created is good as well. Even the Devil used to be Lucifer, the beautiful and powerful angel of lights. As can be read in the Scriptures, he is even being compared to the morning star, son of the dawn. When Satan chose evil – something which practically does not exist, he has chosen the not being, the nothingness.

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<sup>145</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 70-71.

<sup>146</sup> PAYNEOVÁ, Leanne. *Skutečný a Přítomný*. p. 122-134.

He himself and everyone who follows his ways to such nothingness are suffering. Satan is in the Scriptures often called as a father of lies.<sup>147</sup> According to Lewis' imagination presented in the *Great Divorce*, Satan himself, along with everyone who believed and choose to follow his lies, will end up as ghostly monsters, and they, along with the whole Hell, will become smaller until they will be able to fit into the little crevice in the ground. He also points out that the Real world –Heaven, they are currently in, is obviously incomparably bigger than Earth. But the Hell is even smaller than a pebble from the earthly world and even smaller than one atom of Heaven. "Look at yon butterfly. If it swallowed all Hell, Hell would not be big enough to do it any harm or to have any taste."<sup>148</sup>

### 3.5 Themes

Besides the point of view on different reality of Heaven, Hell and Earth, *The Great Divorce* opens other interesting themes. Most of them will be described later through the conversations and the characters.

Leanne Payne ruminates on Lewis' view of God, who is present and who has victory in everything.<sup>149</sup> Lewis presents evil as a power which is not in opposition to God (as was presented before in Lewis' prologue to the *Screwtape letters*)<sup>150</sup> Payne even explains the relationship between good and evil as the evil being a parasite on the good. Lewis emphasizes that these two are implacable. Evil cannot create anything, only misuse and destroy. Human beings are not the only fallen creations, there are other estranged ones. The Satan and his fallen angels are the evil power. As mentioned in Payne's *Real Presence*<sup>151</sup>, these powers are in constant battle, and evil might be seen reigning this world but its days are counted. The result of this battle is already decided by the victory of Jesus Christ on the cross. When the time will come, Jesus will clean the world from all the evil. As the Scriptures reveal: „For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendour of his

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<sup>147</sup> Bible (NIV), John 8:44: „You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”

<sup>148</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 138.

<sup>149</sup> PAYNEOVÁ, Leanne. *Skutečný a Přítomný*. p. 121.

<sup>150</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *Screwtape letters*, preface to the 1961 edition

<sup>151</sup> PAUNEOVÁ, Leanne. *Skutečný a Přítomný*. p. 127.

coming.”<sup>152</sup> The topic of war between good and evil is very typical for the works of C.S. Lewis, for example in the *Chronicles of Narnia* everything is being prepared for the second coming of Aslan, the lion presenting Jesus Christ. In *The Great Divorce*, Lewis was also convinced that the best is yet to come and that the best is Heaven. In Heaven where is no place for any bit of evil. This message is essential in the perspective of Heaven presented by Lewis through *The Great Divorce*.

Another interesting theme of *The Great Divorce* is Lewis’ presentation of the question of time and reality in Heaven and Hell. The narrator, describing his comprehension of the time in the Grey town – Hell, talks about time that has paused on dismal moments. There were only a few places with dim light, and the evening lasted and never seemed to advance into night. For the inhabitants of Hell, everything seemed to last without ending. All the pain, desperation or struggles seemed huge and unbearable. In Lewis’ understanding of Hell as a place of nothingness, if all its loneliness, anger, hate and fighting connected into one moment, they would not be even comparable with the shortest moment of happiness experienced by the last creature living in Heaven. Having seen Heaven through this comprehension, it shows the huge difference between the time of the Earth, Hell and the reality of Heaven.

Once when a soul has left the Earth, time does not work the way it had worked there. As George MacDonald in *The Great Divorce* explains, the crucial moment was the time when Jesus entered Hell. “All moments that have been or shall be were, or are, present in the moment of His descending.”<sup>153</sup> The time in Hell lasts way longer than the time on Earth. In the eyes of God, the time on Earth is way shorter in contrast to the reality of Heaven. This is what also the Bible teaches. The crucial moment was the time of Jesus’ death. Lewis presents that in the time of his descending to Hell, he gave a choice to the souls of the people in there as he was talking to them. When people still live on Earth in time, they have a choice to choose the eternal death and then they will have it. But the mortals – those who live in time are incapable to understand the timeless nature of eternity. “Ye cannot fully understand the relations of choice and Time till you’re beyond both.”<sup>154</sup> As Lewis describes, Heaven is the true and perfect form of eternal reality. Heaven is everything. Hell is only a state of mind that happened through the wrong choice caused by the free will. “And every state of mind, left to itself, every shutting up of the creature within the dungeon of its own mind is, in the end, Hell. But Heaven is not a state of

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<sup>152</sup> Bible (NIV), 2. Thessalonians 2:7-8

<sup>153</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 139-140.

<sup>154</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 71.

mind. Heaven is reality itself. All that is fully real is Heavenly.”<sup>155</sup> If God did not give a free will, there could not be Hell.

In the ninth chapter, Lewis opens the topic of living in Heaven already on Earth and in opposite living in Hell already during the earthly life. As it was mentioned before, people as mortal beings cannot understand the eternity. But they can understand a hint of it, when they realize that, both good and evil in their fullness take retroactive effect. During the life on Earth, people think about their suffering that nothing good coming in the future can ever fix the pain they are feeling. But when they come to Heaven, Heaven itself “will work backwards and turn even that agony into a glory.”<sup>156</sup> All the hard, bad and bringing sorrow during their life on Earth will turn in good after coming to Heaven. Also in the Scriptures can be found that all things work for good for those who love God.<sup>157</sup> On the other hand, when people stay in the attitude of enjoying sinful pleasures with the decision of taking the consequences of their doing, they do not realize “how damnation will spread back and back into their past and contaminate the pleasure of the sin. Both processes begin even before death.”<sup>158</sup> For those who are saved, their past begins to change in the moment when their sins were forgiven and it brings a beam of Heaven shining into their lives. All the struggles and sorrows are incomparable with the quality of Heaven. The past of bad men is filled by sorrow because it was conformed to their badness. Therefore, when it comes to the end of days, the Blessed will say that they never lived anywhere else than in Heaven, and the Lost will say that they have never lived anywhere except in Hell. The life on Earth is nothing in comparison to what is to come in Heaven. For people who prioritize Earth, it will become only a part of Hell. For those who will give their priorities to Heaven, they will found out that they experienced Heaven on Earth.

### 3.6 Characters

The main protagonist is the narrator whose name is never revealed. According to the personal feelings and interests, it is obvious that the narrator is C.S. Lewis himself. Most of the time he observes other ghosts and their conversations. He himself does not long for attention or action. Through these observations the reader can immerse into studying the personalities

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<sup>155</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 70.

<sup>156</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 69.

<sup>157</sup> Bible (NIV), Romans 8:28: “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”

<sup>158</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 69.



of the characters, principals of Heavenly rules, sin and redemption. “All the conversations in *The Great Divorce* are aimed at unearthing the deceptions with which damned humanity defends its refusal of God.”<sup>159</sup>

When the narrator appears in the Grey town, he can see only rough features of the people he meets, because of the absence of clear light. First proper look opens to him while the bus gets closer to the light of Heaven. The picture he finally sees brings him no pleasure. The faces of the ghosts are fixed, “full of impossibilities, some gaunt, some bloated, some glaring with idiotic ferocity, some drowned beyond recovery in dreams; but all, in one way or another, distorted and faded.”<sup>160</sup> These ghosts walking in Heaven meet Bright People who were sent to them to help them to get to the Mountains. These Bright Men were somehow connected with the ghosts during their Earthly life. They lead them to repentance, understanding and rebirth in the Mountains. “The ghosts see these beings as antagonists because they confront the ghosts with their sin. However, they do this for the good of the ghosts.”<sup>161</sup>

Following subchapters will give the description of the characters the protagonist meets. It will focus on their way of thinking, their personality, life story and the theological topics hidden under their characters and behind the conversations they have.

### **3.6.1 The Big Man**

The first encounter of the narrator with the Ghost characters takes place in the bus line in Grey Town. The first character is the Big Man, whom the narrator names according to his tall figure. The Big Man is a ghost who presents himself to be a usual human who only deserves “his rights”. His reactions and temper are aggressive. When he leaves the bus in Heaven, he is asking for the departure time for the way back and is informed, that there is no need for a return unless he would want to. The Big Man stays speechless. His passion for getting what he deserves goes further in the book when he meets his solid Spirit, who was sent to guide him to the Mountains.

The Spirit who meets the Big Man is Len, a murderer and the Big Man’s employee. The Big Man is shocked and very unhappy about the fact that Len is here and looks happy. He asks about the murdered Jack and is assured that he is there too and that “everything is all right

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<sup>159</sup> Study Guide to Great Divorce by C.S. Lewis, [online].

<sup>160</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 17.

<sup>161</sup> Study Guide to Great Divorce by C.S. Lewis, [online].

now”<sup>162</sup> The Big Man does not seem satisfied with such an answer. In his eyes, there is no justice in Heaven. He presents himself as a man who went straight all his life. He might never had been religious, but he gave all his best all his life. And now, he asks for his rights. The Spirit Len tries to explain to him that if he got what he asks for it would not be for his good. He offers him something much better. The only thing he must do is to go with him to the Mountains and repent his sins. The Ghost does not want any kind of “Bleeding Charity”<sup>163</sup>, as he named the offered grace.<sup>164</sup> The Spirit explains the rules of grace in Heaven: “Everything is here for asking and nothing can be brought.”<sup>165</sup> The ghost refuses any mercy on him because he does not want to be in the place where the people as the murderer are. He is explained that with such attitude his feet will never grow hard enough to walk on Heavenly grass. He is also told that he was not a decent man nor did he always do his best. It is something what human cannot do, and it is a truth that many do not learn. The Spirit also reveals that even worse than a physical murder was that he was murdering him in his heart for years. The ghost is also assured that there are no private affairs in Heaven. The conversation ends with the refusal of the Ghost; he would rather be damned than to accept any kind of charity.

Lewis shows on this character the revolution of Grace and God’s justice. God’s Grace is unbearable and incomprehensible for many, including the Big Man. There is no other way to reach this Grace than asking for forgiveness and accepting redemption.<sup>166</sup> The Grace is offered to everyone, the seriousness of a human’s sin does not matter, everyone has a chance to except the Grace or to choose to die.

### 3.6.2 A Tousel-haired Poet

Another ghost who is shortly described is a tousle-haired youth who came to sit next to the narrator in the bus. “He appeared to be a singularly ill-used man.”<sup>167</sup> He was not pleased by the company in the bus, nor the Grey Town itself. More than everything, he missed there the intellectual life. He spent his time in the town to wake its people up, but his attempts of making a little literal circle brought no success. The tousle-haired poet explained how badly

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<sup>162</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 26.

<sup>163</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 28.

<sup>164</sup> Lewis in *Mere Christianity* (p. 116-117. says: “Some writers use the word charity to describe not only Christian love between human beings, but also God’s love for man and man’s love for God.”

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Bible (NIV) Romans 3:23-24: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.”

<sup>167</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 7.

people behaved towards him all his life, how undervalued he was at each of the five schools he attended and how the whole world and its systems were unfair to him. He learned that all the suffering is made by the economical system and found the way in communism. After the disappointment from Russia's cooperation with the capitalistic world during WWI, he became a pacifist. He became bitter. All the countries he traveled and people he met brought him only disappointment. So full of these feelings, he jumped under the train. And even after that, by ill luck, he was sent to the Grey town, which was a mistake. So he decided to stay in the terminal station of the bus and never return back again. He was certainly expecting a place where his "finely critical spirit" would never be underestimated but appreciated.

Lewis presents through the story and character of the Poet the danger of being self-centered. A very interesting image can be seen when looking closely into Lewis' life. David Clark in his publication<sup>168</sup> explains that Lewis could in the character of the Poet easily describe himself. "The specific details about the Poet's life reveal Lewis' special interest in this person. And there are many points of correspondence."<sup>169</sup> Clark shows similarities in the relationship of Lewis with his father - Lewis' attendance and misunderstandings at schools, his passion for writing poetry that brought many obstacles, and his shared opinion on the educational system in the west. Clark also mentions that there is no evidence of Lewis intention of committing suicide but "his diary does reveal that his programs at Oxford were so fatiguing that at times death seemed more inviting than continuing with his studies."<sup>170</sup> Lewis, same as a poet, led the small literary group. "But by then the drive for fame had given way to the desire to place God above his own reputation, and to mentor the many people who wrote to him for spiritual advice."<sup>171</sup> Clark observed, that Lewis add this part of the personal story through this ghost to show where the self-centered and self-pitiful life could lead. By the Grace of God, Lewis chose another way and chose the God-centered life. The end for the Poet Ghost is left open-ended. But to finish the story in the way Lewis did, the Poet would have to leave his expectations of being recognized and appreciated in Heaven.

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<sup>168</sup> CLARK, David. *C.S. Lewis Goes to Heaven: A Reader's Guide To The Great Divorce*, Location: 632.

<sup>169</sup> CLARK, David. *C.S. Lewis Goes to Heaven: A Reader's Guide To The Great Divorce*, Location: 723.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

### **3.6.3 The Intelligent Man – Ikey**

The intelligent man who the Big Man calls Ikey wears a bowler. During the conversation with the narrator, he helps him to understand the cause of emptiness of the Grey town, comes to this trip to bring something with some “real commodities”, “anything at all that you could really bite or drink or sit on -why, at once you'd get a demand down in our town.”<sup>172</sup> He obviously knows about different substance of the goal station and he has decided to use it for his own prosper. He wants to start a little business and cause the centralization in Hell. He wishes to make a good deal and also became a public benefactor.

Further on in the sixth chapter the narrator sees Ikey trying to hide and steal. With enormous effort he tries to pick a few golden apples and put them into his pockets but without success. Then, considering their weight, he picks the smallest apple, and sagging under its weight, he heads back to the bus. Then he hears a strong voice telling him to put it down. It is a sound of the Waterfall itself. Ikey is told that there is no place for real commodities in Hell, and he is challenged to stay in Heaven and learn to eat such apples. Without any answer, the ghost continued on his way towards the bus.

Lewis, through the voice of the Waterfall, emphasized that there is no place for good in Hell and no place for the bad in Heaven.<sup>173</sup> Even though the idea of the centralization and making order in Hell is not bad, only God can transform the people to good. Ikey was not able to bring material good things to Hell to make the society there better. Only God is able to create good in people.

### **3.6.4 The Fat Ghost – The Bishop**

The Fat Ghost, so called fat, clean-shaven man, is another character who travels from the Grey town. Further in the story, it is revealed that not only was he a bishop but also a defender and innovator of liberal theology. He proclaims that there is no proof that The Twilight should ever transform into Night and that these ideas are only superstitions. He addresses the scientists who had researched this theory and supports the conclusion that this twilight is a promise of the coming dawn. He calls the “real commodities,” which Ikey wants to bring to Grey town, as materialism, which is retrogressive and “earth-bound”. He sees the

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<sup>172</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 13.

<sup>173</sup> Bible (NIV) 1. John 1:5: “God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.”

Grey town as a “spiritual city – as a nursery in which the creative functions of man, now dreed from the clogs of matter, begin to try their wings. A sublime thought.”<sup>174</sup>

Fat Ghost meets the Bright Man named Dick, who is a son of his friend also living in Grey town. The Spirit is sad to hear that he didn’t bring him too. Fat Ghost mentions the hope of Dick changing his belief in the existence of a literal Heaven and Hell. The Bishop Ghost believes in it only in a spiritual sense. He lives in the hope of Morning in the Grey town. When he is confronted with naming the Grey Town as Hell, he causes the Spirit of profaning and asks for talking more reverently and seriously about that place. On the contrary, he is explained that the Grey town is Hell where he was sent because of being an apostate. Grey town could become only a Purgatory for him in the case he would choose to stay Heaven and never return back. Fat Ghost believes that people can’t be penalized when they do things from their honest opinion, even though these opinions are mistaken. When he in his critical mind could not believe something in the Bible, he refused it publicly in the sermon, according to his best will and took every risk for it. He explains that he was afraid of the “crude salvationism”, “spirit of the age, afraid of ridicule and above all of real spiritual fears and hopes.”<sup>175</sup> During his life he reached the point of no longer believing the Faith and chose instead to be a modern and appreciated person.

The Spirit challenges the Fat Ghost to repentance and faith. But Fat Ghost replies that he already believes in his own religion. On a concrete suggestion to walk to the Mountains with the Spirit, the Fat Ghost agrees and is excited to get to the place where he can be useful, his talent will be used and where he will be in the “atmosphere of free inquiry”. He is being assured that there is no sphere of usefulness, he is not needed but he is the one in need of forgiveness of the God, whose face he will see. He is told that he is in the place where religion takes no place anymore and there is no place for questions, only answers. Everyone is thinking only about Christ. God is the “Eternal Fact, the Father of all other facthood”. The Fat Ghost does not believe in God in this way nor does he even believe in his real existence. He is not interested in a place without questioning.

The last attempt of the shining Spirit is to cultivate a conversation on happiness. The Ghost refuses even that and remembers the intellectual life down in the Grey town and his theological lecture about the possible Christianity if Jesus didn’t die so young and the tragic

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<sup>174</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 16.

<sup>175</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 37.

significance of Crucifixion. Here he decides to turn back without understanding the true significance of Jesus death in order to save his people.

“The theology of the Episcopal Ghost has its roots in ancient Gnosticism, which held that matter is evil and spirit good. The path toward spirituality is denial of the body and many in the early church turned to asceticism under the influence of Gnostic thought.”<sup>176</sup> Clark explains that The Fat Ghost does not believe as the Gnosticism that Jesus was God in the flesh. Same as in the character of Ikey, Lewis emphasizes also in the story of the Bishop Ghost the importance of “inner transformation that comes through the divine life that believer has through Christ.”<sup>177</sup>

### 3.6.5 The Hard-Bitten Ghost

The narrator meets the tall ghost in the nature nearby the waterfall, and he considers him to be reliable. “It was that of a lean hard-bitten man with grey hair and a gruff, but not uneducated voice.”<sup>178</sup> They start to talk about their possible intention of staying in the Solid Land. The Hard-Bitten Ghost proclaims that everything around is propaganda, because “a human being couldn’t live here.”<sup>179</sup> He considers himself as a human who likes to travel and likes meeting new and exciting things. He shares his experiences from Pekin and boasts about traveling everywhere. He summarizes all these experiences as “not worth looking at.”<sup>180</sup> Everything, according his point of view, is only an advertisement which is run by organisation of people. Even Hell is a “flop” to him. Heaven feels highly uncomfortable for him. The option to stay in Heaven is, according to him, also a lie. His life was full of people who lied to him. They would tell him that things will get easier when he goes on or does something, but his experiences always went differently. And all these lies were made of the same people. He believes that the same people run the Solid Land as well as the Grey Town, and the only official version is that they are at war. If they really were at war, the Solid people would find tools to destroy the Town. And if they wanted to save themselves, they would do it. Then, he is very sarcastic and pessimistic about the Solid Land’s idea. Everything is only an entertainment to him. The narrator gets into depression after talking to the Hard-Bitten Ghost, who walked away from him.

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<sup>176</sup> CLARK, David. *C.S. Lewis Goes to Heaven: A Reader’s Guide To The Great Divorce*, Location: 792.

<sup>177</sup> CLARK, David. *C.S. Lewis Goes to Heaven: A Reader’s Guide To The Great Divorce*, Location: 805.

<sup>178</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 51.

<sup>179</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 52.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

Lewis presents through the character of the Hard-Bitten Ghost another story of the man who is self-centred. This ghost is also cynical and believes in his own lies. “He let his experiences and his cynicism form his concept of God, rather than beginning with the character of God as revealed in the Bible. Since Heaven can’t change to suit his demands, the Hard-Bitten Ghost will never stay in the painful environment of Heaven.”<sup>181</sup>

### **3.6.6 The Woman Self-centred Ghost**

The narrator witnesses another conversation between Bright Man and Ghost, this time a female Ghost. This woman is obviously ashamed of her appearance, nakedness and transparency between the Bright People and Solid surrounding. Her pride does not let her to show up in her transparent body naked in front of Bright people. Everybody could see through her. Even though she is confronted that all of the Bright People were once a bit ghostly when they arrived there. The Woman Ghost would rather die than to be seen like this. She is confronted that she is dead already.

The Ghost Woman wishes to never be born and asks about life’s purpose. The Bright Man answers that the purpose of a human’s life is the infinite happiness, which is very close to her now. He tells her that this kind of shame which obstructs her to come to his happiness should be accepted and drank as a cup to its bottom, and then she would find it nourishing. In this moment, the narrator believes that she has decided to accept but her self-centred being refused. Lewis shows how the pride and self centred mind can blind one from the true and offered infinite happiness.

The Spirit tried the last thing by calling the herd of unicorns, who come thundering and scare the Woman Ghost out of herself. This fear was not supposed to clean the person but rather cause, for just a moment, an opportunity for the Woman to be interested in something more than just herself. The narrator himself is so scared and running away that he never learns the end of female ghost’s story.

The story of a Self-centred Female Ghost is a story about a woman who is proudly more interested in her appearance than about the fact that she can receive the infinite happiness. Although, she is ashamed because of her sinful, transparent body, she still cares more about her appearance than her sins. “When any human is confronted by the Divine presence, the awareness of sin will produce shame and the desire to retreat, to go anywhere to just escape

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<sup>181</sup> CLARK, David. *C.S. Lewis Goes to Heaven: A Reader’s Guide To The Great Divorce*, Location: 990.

that scrutiny.”<sup>182</sup> The woman’s thinking is so occupied by herself that she is not able to think about the gifts God offers her. Lewis in this story warns again against the sin of self-centrism of humans. He recalls the work of Christ, who came to take all the sins that bring people to shame on himself and give them eternal happiness where shame takes no place.

### **3.6.7 George MacDonald**

While running away, the narrator meets a giant tall Bright Man having a flowing beard and talking with a Scottish accent. The narrator suddenly looks closely and describes a double vision of the Bright Man: “Here was an enthroned and shining god, whose ageless spirit weighed upon mine like a burden of solid gold: and yet, at the very same moment, here was an old weather-beaten man, one who might have been a shepherd-such a man as tourists think simple because he is honest and neighbors think ‘deep’ for the same reason.”<sup>183</sup> The narrator describes his eyes to appear with far seeing look, as someone who has lived a long lonely life. He mentions his wrinkles that were washed by his rebirth into immortality. This Spirit was sent to talk with the narrator, and his name is George MacDonald, the Scottish author and theologian, who is not fictional but a real personality of Victorian era and had influenced C.S. Lewis and others. The narrator knows him as well; therefore, MacDonald seems like a trustworthy person to talk to. Lewis introduces through the narrator’s guide a father figure into his story. In the lesson guide<sup>184</sup> made by *The Center for Literary Education*, the author compares the guide figure of George MacDonald to Dante’s guiding poet Virgil in *The Divine Comedy*.

The story’s narrator and his teacher start the conversation about the ghosts’ holiday in Heaven, topics of grace, Heavenly reality and time and other themes which are more described in the preceding subchapters “Themes” of this thesis. The narrator’s ears are open to his teacher, and he allows him to hold him and help him move further towards the Mountains.

### **3.6.8 Female and other Ghosts near to Heaven**

Of all the Ghosts, the narrator found the most pitiful to be a female ghost who had the opposite problem as the Self-centric woman Ghost. This Female Ghost appeared

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<sup>182</sup> CLARK, David. *C.S. Lewis Goes to Heaven: A Reader’s Guide To The Great Divorce, Location: 1016*.

<sup>183</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 65.

<sup>184</sup> ANDREWS, Adam. *The Great Divorce by C.S. Lewis study guide*, [online].



“phantasmal”<sup>185</sup>. Always, when any of the Spirits tried to talk to her, she contorted her face and her smoked body into unnatural shape. The narrator understood her behaviour, that she still thought about herself as about attractive woman and tried to flirt. Concentrated on her appearance she was unable to lead a conversation. She considered everyone as “Stupid creatures”<sup>186</sup> and turned back to the bus.

“Old habits die hard. This woman was accustomed to attracting the opposite sex by using her physical qualities, and modern western societies certainly encourage this approach in countless movies and advertisements.”<sup>187</sup> Similarly as in *The Screwtape letters*, Lewis talks against the image of female body that influences people’s minds. Female Flirtatious Ghost can serve as a warning to the reader that the occupation the earthly world emphasizes can corrupt one’s mind in such an enormous way, that the human is too proud to see the situation objectively with its seriousness.

The narrator meets other ghosts who came closer to Heaven to tell Celestials about Hell. Most of them seemed to think that even more suffering and misery they went through, so superior they are now. These types of ghosts were mostly teachers, who wanted to give lectures about sheltered lives of Celestials. It appeared to the narrator as they were bringing the infernal images of Hell. When they noticed that nobody listens to them, they returned back to the bus. The narrator describes even worse attempts of describing Hell and bringing bodily form of Hell to Heaven: “There were tub-thumping Ghosts who in thin, bat-like voices urged the blessed spirits to shake off their fetters, to escape from their imprisonment in happiness, to tear down the mountains with their hands, to seize Heaven ‘for their own’: Hell offered her co-operation.”<sup>188</sup> The narrator also describes ghostly characters who suggested destroying nature and making the railway or the materialistic ones informed about no life after death and warned that the Solid Land is only a kind of hallucination. Some ghosts were frightened and tended to scare the others in order not to be scared themselves. They were even scared of themselves.

The narrator also meets ghosts who were motivated only by their hate. They hated all the joy they saw and they wanted to tell all the “snob” people what they think about them. George MacDonald informs the narrator that surprisingly, these ghosts “that hate goodness are sometimes nearer than those that know nothing at all about it and think they have it already.”<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 78.

<sup>186</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 79.

<sup>187</sup> CLARK, David. *C.S. Lewis Goes to Heaven: A Reader’s Guide to The Great Divorce*, Location: 1180.

<sup>188</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 80.

<sup>189</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 82.

Lewis shows the picture of hopelessness. “The Ghosts seem closed up, full of spite and beyond hope. Yet even for these Lewis leaves the door open a tiny crack. They did take the bus, after all.”<sup>190</sup> George MacDonald explains that the emotional feeling of hate to goodness is sometimes closer to understanding it in contrast to those who lie to themselves about living in it, although they have never experienced it.

### 3.6.9 The Famous Artist

The Protagonist witnesses the conversation between one of the spirits and the famous painter ghost. The artist is in awe from the beauty of the nature and views in the Solid Land and wishes to document it in the painting. The Spirit is trying to get him to understand the landscape first, but the Painter seems to know and understand everything enough to paint it. The Spirit tries to explain that the beauty the Artist saw and painted on Earth was just a glimpse of a beauty of Heaven and that was the reason why his paintings became famous. But now he is in Heaven and it makes no sense to paint the landscape they all see and meet, actually, way clearly than he does. Maybe one day when the Artist ghost will become a person he would be able to see things clearly than others and point them out, but first he must go and see endless God. The Artist seems interested, but mostly because the promising picture of him painting the landscape one day. The Spirit is trying to explain that if he has painting on the first place then he would never be allowed to paint again. In this place Lewis points out, that it is impossible to come to God and keep things on his first place.<sup>191</sup>

Spirit reminds the Painter of the beginnings of his painting career when he was concentrated on light as on his “first love”. He loved to paint as it was a means by which to tell about light. The painter agrees and adds that further and further he started to love painting “for its own sake”<sup>192</sup>. The Spirit reacts: “Every poet and musician and artist, but for Grace, is telling till, down in Deep Hell, they cannot be interested in God at all but only in what they say about Him. For it doesn’t stop at being interested in paint, you know. They sink lower-become interested in their own personalities and then in nothing but their own reputations.”<sup>193</sup> In the moment, a person starts to love the way and means of worshiping God; however, it loses the primary purpose when he becomes a worshiper of the means (or himself) and not God.

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<sup>190</sup> CLARK, David. *C.S. Lewis Goes to Heaven: A Reader’s Guide To The Great Divorce*, Location: 1209.

<sup>191</sup> Bible (NIV), Matthew 6:33: „But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.“

<sup>192</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 85.

<sup>193</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 85.

The Spirit also invites the Painter to taste the mountain to forget all proprietorship in his own works. It would cause unbounding from the ownership of his own works to enjoy it as they were made by someone else. The Spirit wants the Painter to reject the pride and glory of his success. He also explains that there are no famous men in Heaven, or better, everyone is famous and not for the success or works that they had done on Earth. When it comes to this point, the ghost is not able to do the step towards the Mountains. He is interested more in his reputation than in God.

Through the story of the Artist Ghost, Lewis opens the theme of nature as a glimpse of God's beauty. Lewis warns against the want of earthly fame that is very quickly fading. Fame or beauty of the earthly things is incomparable to the endlessness and beauty of God. Art, same as any other thing can be a blessing when it serves as a means to talk about the glory of God. When the activity itself takes the first place above God,<sup>194</sup> it is a sin and it brings no blessing to the man. The Spirit promises the Artist that by drinking from the fountain, he would forget about all ownership of his works and would stop being proud and modest about his works. "When Heaven has done its work, self will die and be reborn, cleansed from pride, ambition and desire for fame."<sup>195</sup> Man has to die to himself to accept the freedom and usefulness of the God's creation.<sup>196</sup>

### **3.6.10 The Wife Ghost**

Another heart conversation happened between a female, very talkative Ghost and a Bright Woman called Hilda. Hilda asks her Ghost friend to forgive her husband Robert, who is obviously in Heaven. The Wife Ghost does not want to forgive him completely. She feels that she gave him all her life to make him a man, to make him successful and to encourage him to be an ambitious man. She finds him lazy and unthankful. During her speech there can be seen that the wife does not think much of her husband. They obviously disagreed also in finding friends, and as time went on, she manipulated his friends and discouraged them to come to visit Robert. In the moment when her husband reached a promotion in his job, even though he hoped for more peaceful life, his wife took it as her duty to move them to bigger house for much bigger price than they could afford. She found him new friends and better social status

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<sup>194</sup> Bible (NIV), Exodus 20, 2-3: "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me."

<sup>195</sup> CLARK, David. *C.S. Lewis Goes to Heaven: A Reader's Guide To The Great Divorce, Location: 1238.*

<sup>196</sup> Bible (NIV), John 12, 24: "Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds."

than the old friends he had lost. She always tried to fix him. And then she started to feel how much he hates her. The Wife Ghost feels that all the reward for all her sacrifice and well done duty was a hate and her husband's breakdown. But her conscious is clear because she had done her wife's duty.

In the end of her speech she offers a fair offer to her Bright friend Hilda. She would go visit her husband only in the case that she would be given the right to take care of him; however, she would not go only for a small talk. She thinks that she would have plenty of time to fix him and lead him. As she shares with her friend, she feels so needy to have someone to fix and to work on. She hates it in Hell, because there is no one wanting to be fixed. And she hates Heaven for taking him from them. After getting to this point the Ghost of the wife "which had towered up like a dying candle flame snapped suddenly."<sup>197</sup>

Through this character, Lewis shows that the real motive behind all the "selfless care" is actually selfishness and manipulation. The Wife is also not critical to her own behavior, moreover she is self justified and righteous. On the outside it can look that she sacrifices her life to her husband, but in fact, she gave her life to the wrong purpose, rather than fixing her own spoiled life. Even a possibly good thing, as caring for others, can put God and the personal relationship with him below.

### **3.6.11 The Mother Ghost - Pam**

The narrator also witnesses, according to his words, the "painful meeting"<sup>198</sup> of a Bright Spirit and his sister Ghost. She is apparently expecting someone else and is very disappointed not to meet her dead son Michael. The Bright Man tries to explain that such a meeting would not be possible because she as a ghost would be invisible for him, and through this, the narrator learns that there are Bright People who are specialized for meetings with ghosts. The Spirit tries to explain that Pam needs to be thickened up from being a ghost and the thing that stays between her and Heaven is her mother's love for her son Michael. He reveals that she not only has to love also someone else other than her son, but even more.

This condition is very hard for a woman who would do anything, even accept religion, if it could get her to her son. But the thing the Spirit asks is giving exactly this desire away.

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<sup>197</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 95.

<sup>198</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 97.

She is treating God as a means to get her son back. God wants her to take Him for His own sake, and this can make her thicker.

At this point the woman reveals her hard past when she had lost her son. She blames God for taking her son away from her. Similar as the Wife Ghost, the Mother Ghost also feels like she gave her life to give Michael the best. The Spirit explains that it is impossible that two humans would make each other happy for long. And that the God's purpose of mother's love was to turn it into something better. Only people who love God fully can love the fellow creature. The Spirit also reveals that her love for her lost son was much stronger than the love for her husband and living daughter. She even suffered her life to the tyranny of the past, ten years in the ritual of grief. The woman was staying in her past, because it kept her alive and because it was all she chose to have. The Spirit opposes Pam's note about Mother-love as the holiest feeling, that there is no natural feeling holy or unholy in themselves. Only if God is having the first place then they can be made holy. When there is not God in the centre, nothing can make them holy. The Spirit shows that the absence of God in even humanly good things does not make the thing holy. George MacDonald later explains that even the obviously better thing being misused can lead to worse results. "It is a stronger angel, and therefore, when it falls, a fiercer devil."<sup>199</sup> Lewis points out that there is only one God and only one good. There is no marriage between good and bad, the divorce is complete. Everything that is bad turns away from good. And if it has stronger power, it will also be mightier and more demonic if it rebels. Therefore, the powerful Angels became the powerful Demons.

The Mother does not want to believe in God who lets the mother and son separate. She believes in the God of Love. She claims to have right on her son who is hers. She is confronted with the fact that nothing can be hers by nature, not even a son born from her own body. He even points out that Michael was not even a planned baby, and it was not even her intention to have him. Everything is run by the nature. She also remembers that she misses love for her own mother or for the Bright Brother of hers. But she is offered the love of the Lord.

The narrator has to leave this conversation but his Teacher explains to him that "what she calls her love for her son has turned into a poor, prickly, astringent sort of thing. But there's still a wee spark of something that's not just herself in it. That might be blown into a flame."<sup>200</sup> For God the "wee spark" is enough to set a fire. The Teacher explains that the love of humans is not enough, the real love has to die to rise again and live forever. He warns from everything

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<sup>199</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 105.

<sup>200</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 104.

that can occupy the first place in life, even good but not God. Lewis also shows that there is no thing that would belong to a man and that everything is a gift from God. Lewis warns against this confused sense of ownership also in *The Screwtape letters*. Another thing Lewis points out through this character is that when a man stays in the past, he occupies himself with nostalgia instead of finding God's purposes for him.

### 3.6.12 The Ghost with the Lizard

The narrator faces another meeting of the Bright Being and a ghost who is carrying a little red lizard on his shoulder. This ghost is unsubstantial as the others but this one appeared differently as his smoke was dark and oily. The lizard on his shoulder was twitching its tail and whispering threads in the ghost's ear. The ghost calls his adviser "a little chap". The Bright Being, this time an angel, is asking the Ghost if he wants to make the lizard quiet and be free from the fear the lizard was trying to keep him in. The Ghost would love to but when the Angel wants to kill it, the manipulated Ghost does not let him do so. The Angel with his burning hands explains that it is the only way to get rid of him and reminds him of having not time left for more discussion about that. But the Ghost must want it himself. The Ghost is worried of being also killed in the case of killing the Lizard. He confuses the demonic lizard's lies and his sins and himself into one personality. He is afraid to be killed if his sin and his adviser were killed too. The Lizard is manipulating the Ghost into the idea that killing him would mean to be lonely without him. He shows him the life without him, which means without fleshly pleasures. The Ghost realizes that even if he was killed too, it would have been better than to live like this and with this creature.

The Angel keeps asking again and promises to the Ghost to be free. The Ghost tries to reason himself to keep the lizard but then agrees on killing him. "'Damn and blast you! Go on, can't you? Get it over. Do what you like,' bellowed the Ghost: but ended, whimpering, 'God help me. God help me.'"<sup>201</sup>

The Angel kills the Lizard and the narrator can watch the Ghost growing every moment, becoming more and more solid until he becomes brighter and brighter. The narrator is distracted by the fact that also the Lizard grows into something new and bigger, silvery white stallion full of muscles and flesh. This stallion was the greatest the narrator ever saw. The new made hugged the feet of the Angel and his eyes were full of shining tears, compared more

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<sup>201</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 110.

likely to the liquid love and brightness. The new made Man is riding that stallion away. The one who was bounded is now free and riding the remade one who was binding him before. Appearing shining as a stars they were disappearing and getting closer to the Mountains, to the morning.

The Teacher asks the narrator if he remembers the story and emphasis the part when the lizard must have been killed to become a stallion. Nothing, even the best and nobles, of humans can go to the mountains as it is. It must be renewed through the death which it submits. Everything is too weak to get there, it must be renewed to become strong. The Lizard is incomparable with the stallion, also the killed lust, whimpering is nothing in comparison to the energy of desire which will arrive after killing these.<sup>202</sup>

### 3.6.13 Sarah Smith

The encounter with one of the brightest of the Bright People is accompanied by the procession of shining bright people. The light was coming from these persons and the narrator had never met anything so trembling with dancing light before. First, the narrator describes the bright Spirits who did not look like the Spirits of men. They danced and scattered flowers. The narrator also imagines what would these lightly drifting flowers do to the ghosts and how heavy they would be for him. In the lateral part of the procession there were youthful shapes, boys and girls on each sides. The narrator shares that it is impossible for him to remember their singing or write down the notes, no person on Earth would ever get sick or old, so healing their singing was. Among them there were musicians. After all these, there was a lady whose honour had caused all the procession. The lady was Sarah Smith.

“I cannot now remember whether she was naked or clothed. If she were naked, then it must have been the almost visible penumbra of her courtesy and joy which produces in my memory the illusion of a great and shining train that followed her across the happy grass. If she were clothed, then the illusion of nakedness is doubtless due to the clarity with which her innermost spirit shone through the clothes.”<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> Bible (NIV) Romans 6:8-11: “Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.”

<sup>203</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 118.

The clothes in the Solid Land serve not only as clothes but each of its threads lives together with the spiritual being and together they create one organism. The robe is a part of the person in the same way as the eye is a part of the body. Also the enormous beauty of the face of the lady named Sarah Smith is something the narrator can hardly remember.

The teacher describes the lady Sarah Smith as one of the great ones. He points out that the fame on the Solid Land is incomparable to the fame on Earth. The narrator also learns that the giant Bright Beings are Angels who accompany her. The young boys and girls are her spiritual children, because everyone who had ever met her become her son or daughter. She never stole them but taught them how to love their real parents even more. She is also accompanied by many animals. These cats, dogs, birds or horses are her animals in the way that she proved them love during her life. She is living now in the fullness of God, and it is being spread into all these creatures. "Its like when you throw a stone into a pool, and the concentric waves spread out further and further."<sup>204</sup> Nobody knows where it ends.

Through the character of Sarah Smith the happiness and fullness of God is shown. She experiences and understands the love and is full of it. She is patient and able to ask for forgiveness from the little dwarf without any obstacles. Her life and posture is pure. She is glorified in heaven, however on earth she was giving love to others and was a faithful servant of God. Lewis shows that the glory of Heaven is incomparable with the passing fame on Earth.<sup>205</sup>

### **3.6.14 The Tragedian and Dwarf Ghosts**

While the narrator observes the lady, two strange creatures come nearby. He describes the picture he sees as: "an oddly-shaped phantom". There are two ghosts, one of them was "a great tall Ghost, horribly thin and shaky, who seemed to be leading on a chain another Ghost no bigger than an organ-grinder's monkey. The taller Ghost wore a soft black hat..."<sup>206</sup> He reminded the narrator of a seedy actor of his old school. The tall ghost was the one who was led on chain by the small "dwarfish" Ghost.

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<sup>204</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 120.

<sup>205</sup> Bible (NIV), Matthew 6:19-21: „Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.“

<sup>206</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 120.



When the Lady meets with them, she starts to talk to the Dwarf Ghost and ignores the other one. The Lady kissed the Dwarf and addressed him as Frank. She asked for forgiveness for everything she has ever done wrong or not right in their relationship. In the moment the Lady in her goodness kissed her former husband, he became a bit bigger and visible. Now the narrator is able to have a better picture of his former appearance: “a little, oval, deckled face with a weak chin and tiny wisp of unsuccessful moustache.”<sup>207</sup> The Dwarf is not looking directly into her eyes, but he is watching the Tragedian, and the Tragedian is also the one who answered the Lady. He is only interested in the fact whether his former wife missed him. The fact she would be happy in Heaven without him drove him insane. They talk to each other as there would be one and they apparently create one person. The Dwarf was about to obey the Lady and let himself to be invited into full joy, but the Ghost keeps him in the resistance. They also open the topic of true love when the Lady tries to explain that up to now, she was never able to love truly. These things aren’t something the Dwarf and his accompanier want to hear. She also explains that there is no more suffering in Heaven and that she was not crying for him there. So the Dwarf gets his answer, she is happy and does not need him anymore. She explains how it is to be complete, loved and full of love now, strong and not weak anymore, and she invites him to be the same. The Lady says that he does not need to stay in the pity and “live miserable for misery’s sake”<sup>208</sup>. The Tragedian appearance differs and he is with his bullying tone manipulating the Dwarf. Because of the idea that she does not need him, he expresses to rather see her dead. The Lady tries to talk to Frank and suggests him to break the chain and leave the “ugly doll” and go away. In the moment the Dwarf looks at her, he is influenced by her love, but he is struggling hard without bigger success. But every closer look and attempt to fight is making him bigger. The narrator learns that Frank had already seen his wife lying dead.

The narrator watches a huge struggle of the Dwarf Ghost against the offered joy. In the time he was growing bigger, the Tragedian looked absurd. The light of her was changing Frank. But then the Tragedian starts his unhappy and pitiful speech and repeats the “not needed” thought. The Dwarf stops talking and grows smaller and smaller. The Lady tries to explain and keeps addressing the decreasing and almost invisible dwarf. The Tragedian keeps blaming the Lady of not being sensitive to his suffering. She begs him to drop the chain and to stop the Tragedian who is killing him, to stop “using pity, other people’s pity, in the wrong way”. She explains that pity was “meant to be a spur that drives joy to help misery”. But she warns from

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<sup>207</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 122.

<sup>208</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 125.

misusing it for blackmailing. She reveals that the Dwarf had done it since his childhood when he was emotionally blackmailing others to pity him. She explains the meaning of pure joy which is unshaken. "Our light can swallow up your darkness: but your darkness cannot now infect our light."<sup>209</sup>

When there is no Dwarf anymore, the Lady starts talking to the Tragedian, who was also difficult to be seen. He blames her for not loving him and she answers that he is only a lie, and she cannot love something that is not because she is in Love. The Tragedian disappears, and the Lady is leaving.

The narrator wonders, if there is one soul lost, the joy of the saved is a lie. The Teacher explains: "The demand of the loveless and the self-imprisoned that they should be allowed to blackmail the universe: that till they consent to be happy (on their own terms) no one else shall taste joy: that theirs should be the final power, that Hell should be able to veto Heaven."<sup>210</sup> There must be a day of the victory of Joy which will never be destroyed, or there will be a day of the miserable who will win and they will ruin the happiness of others because they refuse it themselves. MacDonald shows that there will always be a place for pity as an action but not for pity as a passion. And then he opens the topic of evil as the transparent and smallest thing which cannot be compared to the steel of the grass. It explains that the Lady would never fit in Hell and that it was the reason why the Dwarf was becoming smaller when he was believing the lies and evil. The only one who could go to Hell was Jesus dying on the cross.

Lewis through this character warned against the sin of imprisoning in the self-pity and manipulating others to feel miserable about it. There is a contrast of a woman who is fulfilled by the love and joy and her hopeless husband tied in chains of self-pity, unable to unbind himself by accepting the offered joy. Staying in the sin for so long can tie a man into such chain and it is very hard to step out of it and except through the offered Grace.

### **3.7 Analysis of literary devices**

C.S. Lewis in his allegorical narrative proves his highly developed artistic style. Using his fantastic literary style, he tells the stirring story and causes the reader to be engaged till the end of the story. For expressing his theological thoughts and underlining the imaginary setting in *The Great Divorce*, he richly uses literary devices. His descriptions of the fictional

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<sup>209</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 132.

<sup>210</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 135.

landscapes and creatures are unique. This paragraph will present some examples of literary figures of speech the author used in *The Great Divorce* to convey his unique style.

### 3.7.1 Allegory

Allegory as a means to express otherwise the under-the-surface meaning has a big tradition, and its origin is ancient. Also in the Bible many allegories and parables can be found. This device became one of the favourite devices for Lewis to utter his spiritual thoughts. He used an imaginative fiction that “spoke otherwise” and could be interpreted at two levels. The fictional level follows the plot and storyline but the second level is purely theological.

As an example of an allegory, a descriptive names of the Ghosts can be mentioned. Their names are revealing their appearance but further the readers learn that these characters show the difficulties and barriers that prevent people from excepting God and His grace.

Lewis and his *Great Divorce* are a great example of an allegory. As mentioned before, Lewis, being inspired by Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* or Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, continued in the tradition of an allegorical pilgrimage with an adventurous plot but mainly with uncovering theological truths.

### 3.7.2 Dream Vision

The dream Vision is “a form of literature extremely popular in the Middle Ages. By common convention the writer goes to sleep... He then beholds either real people or personified abstractions involved in various activities.”<sup>211</sup> *The Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* mentions examples as *Roman de la Rose*, *The Book of Duchess* by Chaucer or Langland’s vision of *Pier’s Plowman*.

Authors used dream Vision to describe heaven, hell or purgatory. C.S. Lewis used dream vision in *The Great Divorce*. Lewis used this genre among many to express his theological thoughts. In this dream the narrator makes a journey from Hell to Heaven. Such dream visions which was used as revelation of God’s word toward a man can be found in the Scriptures.

“Journeys into the spirit world are much closer to the genre known as ‘apocalypse’; the Book of Daniel and the Revelation of John are two examples of apocalyptic literature in the Bible... Some apocalypses, including the book

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<sup>211</sup> CUDDON, J.A. *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, p. 261.

of Revelation, also feature a Heavenly ‘tour,’ wherein the human is taken up into the spirit world and there sees many wonderful (and sometimes frightening) things. The human is led around by a ‘tour guide’; again, usually an angel, who can answer his questions about the meaning of what he sees.”<sup>212</sup>

### 3.7.3 Metaphor

As an example of a metaphor, a description from the ninth chapter can be quoted: “Here was an enthroned and shining god, whose ageless spirit weighed upon mine like a burden of solid gold: and yet, at the very same moment, here was an old weather-beaten man, one who might have been a shepherd...”<sup>213</sup> This description is given when the narrator firstly meets a Solid Being, concretely George MacDonald, in person. There, Lewis, uses an implicit comparison between his shining wise appearance and that of his appearance as an old man by using metaphor “an enthroned and shining god” as well as being “an old weather-beaten man”.

Another metaphor can be seen in the fifth chapter when the narrator observes “two velvet-footed lions”<sup>214</sup>. Their feet were not made of velvet but they were so soft and during the play claw-less that the narrator characterized them to be velvet-footed.

When the narrator firstly sees the fully transparent bodies of his co-passengers from Hell in the Heavenly Solid Land, he describes them: “They were in fact ghosts: man-shaped stains on the brightness of that air.”<sup>215</sup> The use of the metaphor “man-shaped stains” implicitly explains their transparent and badly visible characters.

The Big Man Ghost uses a special comparison to the mercy he does not want to ask for. “If they choose to let in a bloody murderer only because he makes a poor mouth at the last moment.”<sup>216</sup> By “a poor mouth at the last moment”, the Ghost means the act of repentance happening before dying. This kind of metaphor is influenced by his negative personal feeling toward this act.

After the encounter of the Brightly Shining Spirit of Sarah Smith, the procession starts to worship her by singing a song where a few metaphors are also used. “She is the bird that evades every net: the wild deer that leaps every pitfall.”<sup>217</sup> Through this metaphor, they want

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<sup>212</sup> CLARK, David. *C.S. Lewis Goes to Heaven: A Reader's Guide to The Great Divorce*, Location: 399-404.

<sup>213</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 65.

<sup>214</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 33.

<sup>215</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 20.

<sup>216</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 28.

<sup>217</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 134.

to express the sovereignty of God in Sarah's life and the love, joy and protection she finds in Him

Metaphor is an impressive literary device, that is common and very often used in theological literature and Bible itself. It serves as a mean of explaining and describing theological thoughts or biblical characters by using implicit terms.

### 3.7.4 Simile

C.S. Lewis through his protagonist uses a lot of such explicate comparisons in *The Great Divorce*. There is a visible use of helping words as "like" or "as".

When the narrator gets off the bus in Heaven, he describes and compares his surrounding. "The light and coolness that drenched me were like those of summer morning..." is his comparison of the weather. He also tries to bring sense of the solid matter of Heaven, so he uses the simile to enhance the understanding of it. A little leaf is described to be "heavier than a sack of coal". "The little flower was hard, not like wood or even like iron, but like diamond."<sup>108</sup> In another place when the narrator observes the procession of people giving honour to Solid Being named Sarah Smith, he is wondering about the flowers they are throwing around. His comparison is to made to the ghost-world where falling of such little flower would cause a big earthquake. "First came bright Spirits, not the Spirits of men, who danced and scattered flowers-soundlessly falling, lightly drifting flowers, though by the standards of the ghost-world each petal would have weighed a hundred-weight and their fall would have been like the crashing of boulders."<sup>218</sup> The procession also worshiped her glory through simile in the song: "Like the mother to its chickens or a shield to the arm'd knight: so is the Lord to her mind, in His unchanging lucidity."<sup>110</sup>

Another simile is used when describing the bus driver. "The Driver himself seemed full of light and he used only one hand to drive with. The other he waved before his face as if to fan away the greasy steam of the rain."<sup>219</sup> The move of his hand is explained by fanning away the rain. Also the passengers are being compared by using simile to the fighting hens. "My fellow passenger fought like hens to get on board"<sup>220</sup>

In the place the narrator observes the lions another explicate observation was made. "Their manes looked as if they had been just dipped in the river..."<sup>10</sup> The narrator describes the

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<sup>218</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 117.

<sup>219</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 4.

<sup>220</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 33.

explicate appearance of lions' wet manes and gives possible explanation that it was caused by their swimming in the river. The river itself is full of secrets, and at its first appearance, the narrator describes by following words of simile: "It was as smooth as Thames but flowed swiftly like a mountain stream."<sup>107</sup> The narrator, exploring the nature, meets something that he cannot find words to describe – the giant waterfall. For bringing the reader closer to understanding of its size he uses the simile: "The noise, though gigantic, was like giant's laughter: like the revelry of a whole college of giants together laughing, dancing, singing, roaring at their high works."<sup>221</sup>

Another expressed simile is made by the Big Man Ghost who compares living in Hell to "a place like a pigstye".<sup>222</sup> He also compares the conversation with his Bright Man to the bad treatment of the dog master toward his dog. "I'll go home, I didn't come here to be treated like a dog."<sup>223</sup>

The Author used simile to underline the indescribability of the imaginative worlds. The narrator is hardly finding words to explain and describe what he sees. It all had a purpose to show how small the human knows about the immensity and wonder of Heaven and how the Earth and narrator's earthly comparisons are only a reflection of what is to come in Heaven.

### 3.7.5 Personification

By using the personification, the objects or animas are given the characteristics or attributes of humans. Such an embodiment is used quite often in Lewis' imaginary world.

When the narrator observes the light coming from the procession, he is amazed. He describes that the light 'was dancing'. "All down one long aisle of the forest the under-sides of the leafy branches had begun to tremble with dancing light..."<sup>111</sup>

Another place where the narrator describes some acting by using the personification is when the Big Man Ghost is talking to his Human Friend Mirth. Mirth is explaining the truths of Big Man's life and also points out that it is not true that he used to be living only a righteous life. The narrator observes that "Mirth danced in his eyes as he said it"<sup>224</sup>

Another thing, or character, that was embodied and given voice to talk is the waterfall. Its appearance is bringing the narrator to awe but it is also able to talk. "'Fool. Put it down,'

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<sup>221</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 46.

<sup>222</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 26.

<sup>223</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 31.

<sup>224</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 29.

said a great voice suddenly. It was a thunderous yet liquid voice. With an appalling certainty I knew that the waterfall itself was speaking...<sup>225</sup>

In the conversation between the Shining Spirit of Sarah Smith and her former earthly husband there can be found another personification. Firstly, the narrator describes her outstanding beauty to be brightening. “Her beauty brightened so that I could hardly see anything else...<sup>226</sup> Sarah Smith in her power and beautiful appearance is suppose to prove that the fame and beauty in Heaven is something else than the fame and beauty on Earth. She was found beautiful because of the love that shined through her during her life on Earth and so in Heaven. Further on, when she leads the conversation with her former husband (or his Dwarf) she tells him the sentence which also uses the personification: “Our light can swallow up your darkness: but your darkness cannot now infect our light.”<sup>227</sup> This usage of personification only underlines author’s thoughts of God’s light which has superior power over darkness and can even change the darkness into light.

### 3.7.6 Symbol

C.S. Lewis uses a lot of symbols in *The Great Divorce*. Each character symbolizes an obstacle or a sin which hinders the character to accept grace and God’s love. All parts of the setting, plot or characters are developed in the symbolic way, so the symbolism became the main literary device used for expressing Lewis’ theological thoughts and truths.

The two following examples can be mentioned as the most important examples of symbolism used in *The Great Divorce*. Both, the Twilight and the Night are symbolizing the time before the Great Judgement. Same as “the arrival of the Morning, which catches the narrator by surprise at the climax of the story, symbolizes the Second Coming of Christ, after which no more decisions are possible.”<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 49.

<sup>226</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 122.

<sup>227</sup> LEWIS, C.S. *The Great Divorce*, p. 132.

<sup>228</sup> Study Guide to Great Divorce by C.S.Lewis, [online].

## Conclusion

C.S. Lewis in his literary works of *Screwtape Letters* and *The Great Divorce* proves his unique style. The thesis tried to analyse the theological and fictional points of view on the two chosen titles. In both of them, Lewis uses a spectacular variety of literary devices to broaden the reader's understanding of his fictional lands, stories and characters but also his theological understanding.

*The Screwtape letters* with the choice of the narrator shows the story from upturned reality. This fact brings the reader to unusual contemplation. Between the rich usage of literary devices, the reader can see also the irony. All devices Lewis used are underlining Screwtape's narration and help the reader to understand the described themes. From the analysis of significant theological themes Lewis wanted to touch upon through *Screwtape*, it is obvious that Lewis based his theology on biblical truth and his own observations and experience. His themes touch every reader and their actuality is timeless. Lewis tried to present the spiritual warfare behind every Christian or even every human being. He is emphasizing the sovereignty and almighty power of God and His armies over all evil powers. The human in the presence of God is therefore untouchable from demons. God is presented as the creator that has no opposite, Satan is put on the level of angels. Lewis accents that evil powers are unable to create; they are only misusing the good of God's intention.

Lewis in *The Great Divorce* uses a fictional plot, characters, descriptions and many literary devices to expound and enclose his theological experience and understanding. The work through its fictional characters warns against sins and spiritual chains that bind humans and discourage them from being united with almighty God. Lewis opens many spiritual themes and topics in a gentle and fictional way through the exciting story.

By using rich and thoughtful language, C.S. Lewis popularized the religion he believed in. His works have high literary quality as same as spiritual. Both analysed works are specific in the usage of allegory, metaphors, symbols and similes that help the reader to understand the thoughts Lewis wanted to share. Lewis in both of his books presented topical themes that many readers can relate to, and they made his works very readable and gripping.



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