

The Theology of J. K. Rowling's

Harry Potter™

Mako A. Nagasawa

The Anástasis Center for Christian Education & Ministry

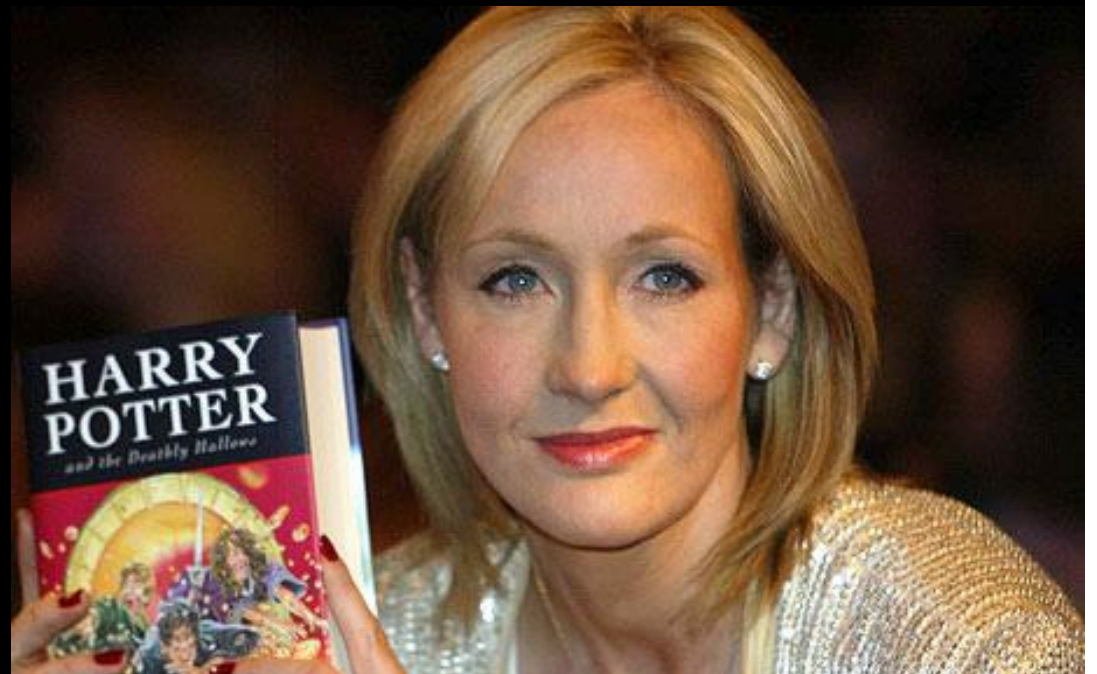


The Theology of J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter*

1. Introduction: J.K. Rowling
2. The Structure of the Seven Stories
 3. Blood and Love
4. From What Must We Be Cleansed?
5. Why Do We Struggle Between Good and Evil?
6. Is There a God in the Harry Potter World?

Joanne Rowling

- Academic interests: literature, Lewis, classics, Tolkien
- Church of Scotland, Anglican
- Her mother's death



Joanne Rowling

- Two explicit quotes from the New Testament in HP7:
 - **'For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also'**
 - Jesus, Matthew 6:19 on Arianna Dumbledore's tomb
 - **'The last enemy to be destroyed is death'**
 - Paul, 1 Corinthians 15:26 on James and Lily Potter's tomb

Joanne Rowling

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 - ‘For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also’
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Ms. Rowling said the books are “summed up” and “epitomized” by the scriptural passages Harry and Hermione read in the Godric Hollow graveyard on Christmas Eve. The stories are about Love’s victory over death and the importance of making the right choice about where to keep your treasure. (Shawn Adler, ‘Harry Potter’ Author J.K. Rowling Opens Up About Books’ Christian Imagery, Oct 17 2007)

- But is there more?

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Structure of the Seven Stories

Chiasm (inverted parallel): common in classical and biblical literature

1. Philosopher's Stone
2. Chamber of Secrets
3. Prisoner of Azkaban
4. Goblet of Fire
- 3'. Order of the Phoenix
- 2'. Half-Blood Prince
- 1'. Deathly Hallows

Homer's Iliad

Phoenix's speech is a chiasm; Lattimore's translation,
book 9, lines 437-445:

A. How then shall I, dear child, **be left in this place behind you** all alone? Peleus the aged horseman sent me forth with you on that day when he sent **you** from Phthia to Agamemnon **a mere child**, who knew nothing yet

B. of **the joining of battle** nor

C. of **debate**

D. where **men are made pre-eminent.**

Therefore he sent me along with you

to teach you of all these matters,

C'. to make you a **speaker of words** and

B'. one who is **accomplished in action.**

A'. Therefore apart from **you, dear child**, I would **not be willing to be left behind.**

 **The Main Point!**

The Noah Story

- A. The genealogy of Adam to Noah, emphasizing corruption of humanity except Noah (5:1 – 6:8)
- B. Noah is righteous (6:9)
- C. Shem, Ham, and Japheth (6:10)
- D. God will bring an end to all flesh; God tells Noah to build ark for the flood (6:11 – 17)
- E. Covenant with Noah (6:18 – 20)
- F. Food in the ark (6:21)
- G. Command to enter the ark (7:1 – 3)
- H. 7 days waiting for flood (7:4 – 5)
- I. 7 days waiting for flood (7:6 – 10)
- J. Entry to ark (7:11 – 15)
- K. Yahweh shuts Noah in (7:16)
- L. 40 days flood (7:17a)
- M. Waters increase (7:17b – 18)
- N. Mountains covered (7:19 – 20)
- O. 150 days waters prevail (7:21 – 24)
- P. God remembers Noah (8:1)**
- O'. 150 days waters abate (8:2 – 3)
- N'. Mountains tops visible (8:4 – 5)
- M'. Waters abate (8:5)
- L'. 40 days (end of) (8:6a)
- K'. Noah opens window of ark (8:6b)
- J'. Raven and dove leave ark (8:7 – 9)
- I'. 7 days waiting for waters to subside (8:10 – 11)
- H'. 7 days waiting for waters to subside (8:12 – 13)
- G'. Command to leave the ark, family leaves ark (8:14 – 22)
- F'. Food outside the ark (9:1 – 4)
- E'. Covenant with all flesh (9:5 – 10)
- D'. God will not flood all flesh again; God makes rainbow (9:11 – 17)
- C'. Shem, Ham, and Japheth (9:18)
- B'. Noah repopulates the whole earth (9:19)
- A'. The sons of Noah, emphasizing corruption of Noah and his family (9:20 – 29)



The Main Point!

Examples of Chiasms in the Bible

- Noah story (Genesis 5:1 – 9:29)
- Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar story (Genesis 12 – 22)
- Jacob, Leah, and Rachel story (Genesis 25 – 35)
- Joseph and Judah story (Genesis 37 – 50)
- Israel's Wilderness Wandering (Numbers 1 – 36)
- *The entire Pentateuch* (Genesis 1 – Deuteronomy 34)
- *The entire Gospel of Matthew* (Matthew 1 – 28)
- Jesus' Nazareth sermon (Luke 4:14 – 30)
- Jesus' prodigal son story (2 chiasms, Luke 15:11 – 32)
- Paul in Romans 5:12 – 21; Ephesians 1:3 – 14 & 2:11 – 22
- Etc.

Structure of the Seven Stories

Book 1: PS

- Harry & Hagrid get to Privet Drive on the motorbike
- Dumbledore uses his deluminator
- Harry learns wand lore
- Harry receives one of the Hallows (Cloak)
- Harry meets Voldemort in the Forbidden Forest
- Harry sees his parents' images in the Mirror of Erised
- Harry's courage gains him access to the Philosopher's Stone
- Harry finds out he's wrong about Snape

Book 7: DH

- Harry & Hagrid leave Privet Drive on the motorbike
- Dumbledore gives his deluminator to Ron
- Harry learns more about wand lore
- Harry finds out about all three Deathly Hallows
- Harry meets Voldemort in the Forbidden Forest
- Harry sees his parents truly via the Resurrection Stone
- Harry's courage gains him access to the Resurrection Stone
- Harry finds out he's wrong about Snape

Structure of the Seven Stories

Book 2: CS

- Dobby visits Dursley's house
- Harry spies on Malfoys at Borgin & Burke's; vanishing cabinet
- Students being petrified; Harry suspects Draco
- Draco, innocent, but wants to harm
- Ginny wants Harry
- Harry finds dangerous old book that was Tom Riddle's
- Harry learns about a horcrux
- Tom Riddle emerges from horcrux

Book 6: HBP

- Dobby visits Dursley's house
- Harry spies on Malfoys at Borgin & Burke's; vanishing cabinet
- Students being injured; Harry suspects Draco
- Draco, guilty, but wants out
- Ginny wants Harry
- Harry finds dangerous old book that was Snape's
- Harry learns about all the horcruxes
- Tom Riddle's memories of making horcruxes

Structure of the Seven Stories

Book 3: PA

- Harry harms his aunt Marjorie, but the Minister of Magic doesn't care
- Fudge places dementors at Hogwarts
- Harry flies to save Sirius on a hippogriff
- Sirius Black escapes from prison

Book 5: OP

- Harry saves his cousin Dudley, and is almost expelled
- Fudge places Dolores Umbridge at Hogwarts
- Harry flies to save Sirius on a thestral
- Bellatrix Lestrange escapes from prison; kills Sirius Black

Structure of the Seven Stories

Book 4: GF


- The adult world of magic is fully introduced
- Cedric dies; 1st death
- Hogwarts no longer safe
- Harry sees his parents' images via *priori incantatem*
- Voldemort takes Harry's blood into himself and regains flesh
- Dumbledore's eyes flash with triumph
- The war resumes

“Book Four’s a very very VERY important book. Something very important happens in Book Four. But also, it’s literally a central book. It’s almost the heart of the series, and it’s pivotal.”

—J. K. Rowling

Structure of the Seven Stories

Chiasm (inverted parallel)

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-  **The Main Point!**

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5. Why Do We Struggle Between Good and Evil?
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Blood and Love in *Harry Potter*

- What is blood? Three examples:
 - Dragon's blood
 - Unicorn blood
 - Human blood

Blood and Love in *Harry Potter*

- Dragon's blood
 - Dumbledore discovered 12 uses
 - Healing (Hagrid used it to help with his injuries from giants in *OP*)
 - An oven cleaner
 - **A spot remover** (Interview with *HP* movie screenwriter Steve Kloves, on Rowling's answer to his question of the 12 uses of dragon's blood)



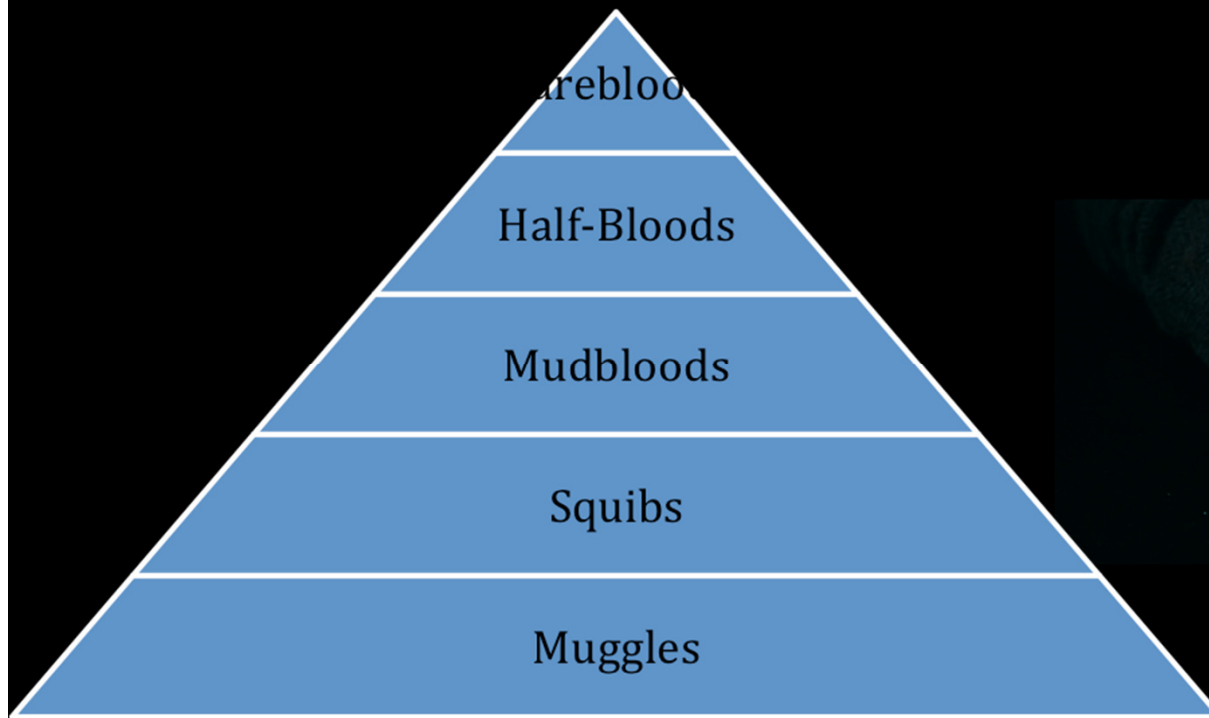
Blood and Love in *Harry Potter*

- Unicorn's blood
 - Life-giving: Keeps Voldemort alive



Blood and Love in *Harry Potter*

- Human blood (from the standpoint of evil)
 - Like the blood-theory of race
 - Grindelwald's defeat in 1945



Blood and Love in *Harry Potter*

- Human blood
 - Lily Potter's blood carries her love for Harry



Blood and Love in *Harry Potter*

- Human blood
 - Harry's blood tethers him to Voldemort
 - Harry's blood gives Voldemort one last chance to feel remorseful



Blood and Love in the Bible

- Human blood carries life (Lev.17:11)
- Human blood links us (Gen.4:1 – 15; Lev.18 - 20)
- Human blood (life) becomes corrupted – in two ways

(1) Internalizing into ourselves the defining of good and evil

(2) Harming another person

- Cain sheds Abel's blood on the land (Gen.4:1 – 15)
- Land is corrupted for Cain (but not anyone else)
- More precisely, *Cain corrupted himself*
- God diagnoses the condition: *human hearts are corrupt* (Gen.6:5 – 6)

Blood and Love in the Bible

- Human nature (the heart/blood) must be cleansed
 - Jealousy is internalized in Cain already in Genesis 4:1 - 15
 - Genesis 6:5 - 6; 8:21
 - Leviticus 26:41
 - Deuteronomy 29:4; 30:6
 - Psalm 51:9 - 10
 - Jeremiah 4:4; 17:1 - 10; 31:31 - 34
 - Ezekiel 11:18 - 20; 36:26 - 36
 - Jesus in Matthew 15:18 - 20, Mark 7:20 - 23
 - Paul in Romans 2:28 - 29, 7:14 - 25

Blood and Love in the Bible

- God acts like a dialysis machine
 - God takes in your impurity, gives back purity
- Animal blood is uncorrupted
 - Animal skins (Gen.3:21; 'kippur' = to cover, to atone)
 - Israel's sacrifices in Leviticus 1 – 10, 16
- Jesus' blood is a healing, cleansing agent – in what sense?

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From What Must We Be Cleansed?

- “King’s Cross Station” (death) reveals the truth about each person (Harry, Voldemort, Dumbledore)



From What Must We Be Cleansed?

- Killing another soul rips your own
 - Voldemort's unstable, 'maimed and diminished soul'
 - Your choices shape your soul



From What Must We Be Cleansed?

- Evil is a denial of reality (e.g. blood relations)
- Evil is a fragmentation of the self
 - ‘Horcrux’ = ‘outside soul’ (French), ‘warehouse essence’ (Latin), ‘dirt/evil impurity container’ (Old English)
- Evil is a distortion of what was intended
- Evil is an intrusion into you (e.g. silver hand, snake-like face)



From What Must We Be Cleansed?

- Harry killed something in himself that needed to die
- Harry had to retell Tom Riddle's story, but make the different choice
 - The hero labors under the conditions created by the villain



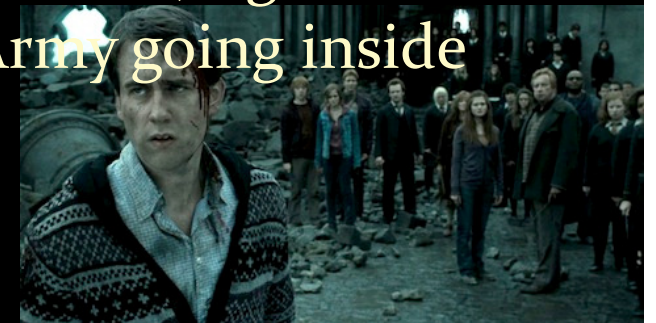
From What Must We Be Cleansed?

- Harry Potter **retells** Tom Marvolo Riddle's story
 - Mothers had loving qualities
 - Orphaned young – how to receive your name?
 - Grew up without love
 - Talented wizards
 - Father figures available, though imperfect
- But Harry makes all the choices Tom didn't
 - Love (friends)
 - Self-sacrifice
 - Death



From What Must We Be Cleansed?

- Neville Longbottom **retells** Peter Pettigrew's story
 - Outside a trio of friends
 - Pureblood but not respected by others
 - Overshadowed in talent
 - Entrusted with secrets
- But Neville makes all the choices Peter didn't
 - Self-sacrifice: stands up to his friends
 - Love: believes Harry when no one else does; fights alongside him; keeps Dumbledore's Army going inside Hogwarts
 - Death: stands up to Voldemort



From What Must We Be Cleansed?

- Other examples of **retelling** as redemption
 - The Lord of the Rings
 - Gandalf retells Saruman's story
 - Aragorn retells Isildur's story
 - Frodo almost retells Smeagol's story
 - Star Wars
 - Luke retells Anakin's story

From What Must We Be Cleansed?

- Jesus' identity: the divine cleansing the human
- Like Harry, Jesus killed something in himself that needed to die (e.g. Rom.8:3; 6:6; 2:28 – 29)
 - Not just 'paying the punishment' for bad human actions
 - Not just 'being an inspiration' for better human action
 - In himself, healed a corruption in human nature
 - In himself, reconciled human nature to divine nature
- Jesus labored under the conditions of Adam's fall



From What Must We Be Cleansed?

- Jesus **retold** Israel's story, which retold Adam's story
 - Passed through water and wilderness
 - Struggled against the corruption in human nature
 - Encountered God on mountains
 - Persecuted by Gentiles
- But Jesus made all the choices we didn't
 - Love from the Father, the Father's love for others
 - Self-sacrifice
 - Death

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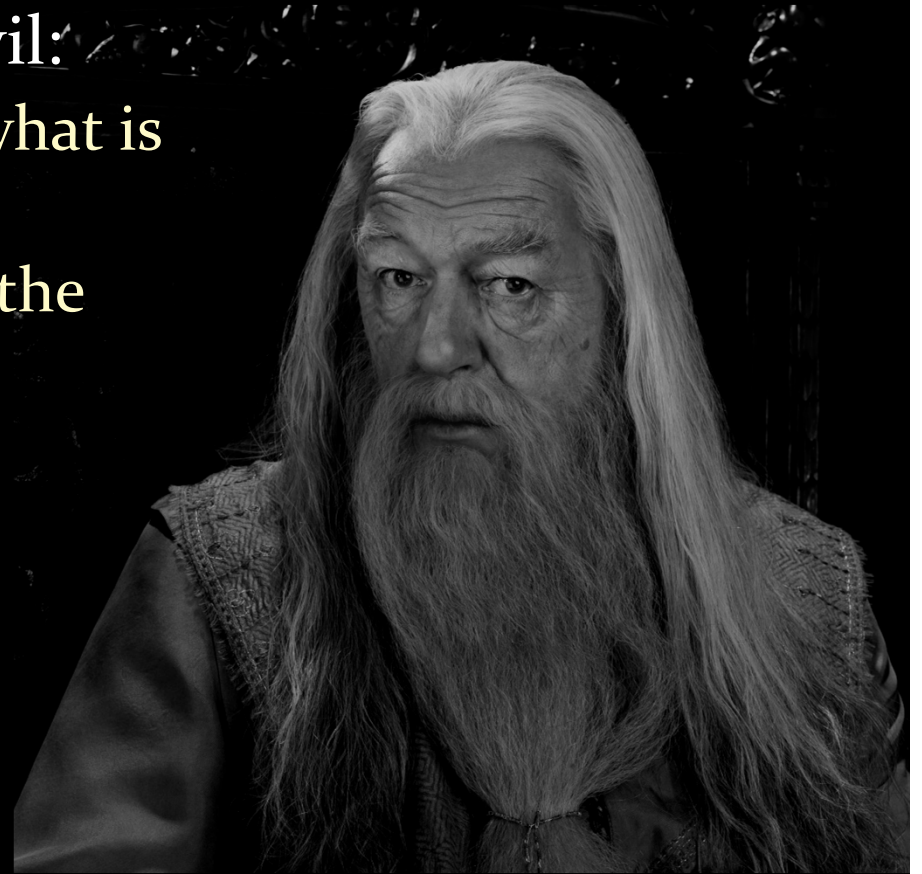
Are Good and Evil Even Real?

- Quirrell and Voldemort on good and evil:
 - ‘There is no good and evil, only power, and those too weak to use it’
 - *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*, p.291



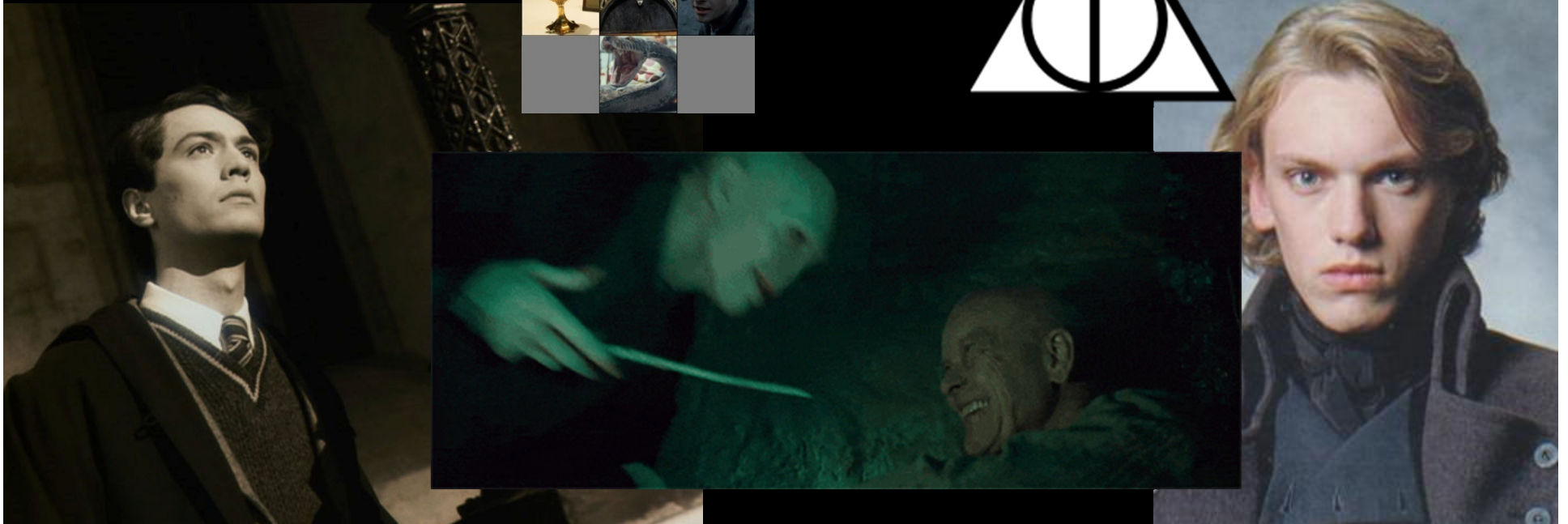
Are Good and Evil Even Real?

- Dumbledore on good and evil:
 - 'We must choose between what is right and what is easy'
 - 'I know a boy who made all the wrong choices'



Why Do We Struggle Between Good and Evil?

- Fear of death leads to self-centeredness
 - Gellert Grindelwald wanted the Deathly Hallows
 - Tom Marvolo Riddle wanted Horcruxes



Why Do We Struggle Between Good and Evil?

- Do we recognize limits?
 - Dumbledore made choices to limit himself
 - Ministry of Magic
 - Sexuality
 - Hermione's jealousy
 - Ron's anger at Harry
 - Voldemort's fear of death

'Death is our destiny and we should face up to it. All that we have done in life had the intention of avoiding death.'
(Rowling, accio-quote.org)

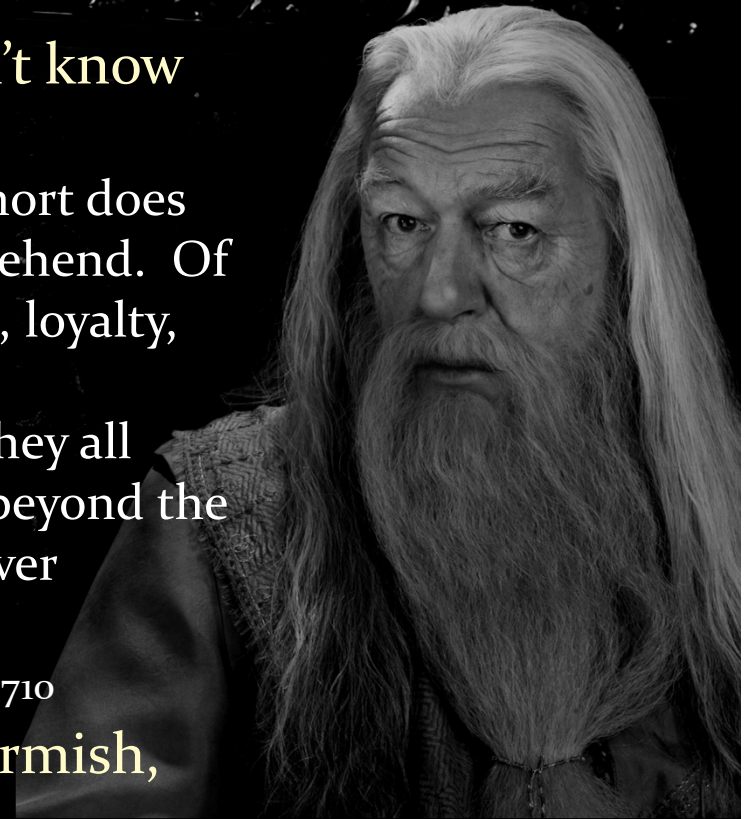
Why Do We Struggle Between Good and Evil?

- Contrast: Luna Lovegood not afraid of death
 - She can hear the voices beyond the veil in the Department of Mysteries



How Can We Know Good and Evil?

- How to Know: Love Appropriately
 - Voldemort didn't love, therefore didn't know
 - 'And his knowledge remained woefully incomplete, Harry! That which Voldemort does not value, he takes no trouble to comprehend. Of house-elves and children's tales, of love, loyalty, and innocence, Voldemort knows and understands nothing. Nothing. That they all have a power beyond his own, a power beyond the reach of any magic, is a truth he has never grasped.'
 - *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, p.709 – 710
 - By contrast, Dumbledore learned mermish, etc.



How Can We Know Good and Evil?

- How to Know: Love Appropriately
 - Voldemort even forgot what he once knew
 - ‘His mother left upon him the traces of her sacrifice... This is old magic, I should have remembered it, I was foolish to overlook it... but no matter. I can touch him now.’
 - *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*



How Can We Know Good and Evil?

- Your ethics shape your epistemology (what you choose to know and how)
- Rowling is working with formal epistemology
 - Enlightenment epistemology: We know things neutrally, regardless of our posture
 - Christian epistemology: We know things based on our posture towards them

How Can We Know Good and Evil?

- A parallel: “Evil, that is, has every advantage but one – it is inferior in imagination. Good can imagine the possibility of becoming evil – hence the refusal of Gandalf and Aragorn to use the Ring – but Evil, defiantly chosen, can no longer imagine anything but itself.”
 - W.H. Auden, *The New York Review of Books* (Jan 22, 1956)



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 - Christian epistemology: We know things based on our posture towards them
- *Are we open to reality telling us something that we didn't expect or want?*

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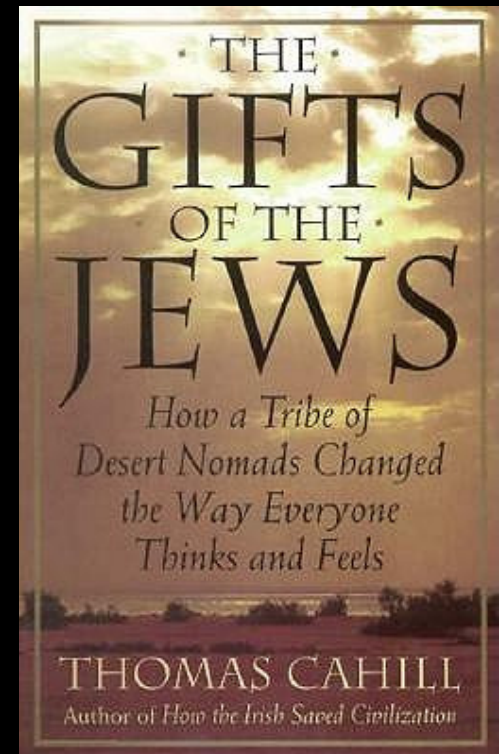
Is There a God in the Harry Potter World?

- A non-coercive intelligence, as with HP prophecy
 - “The prophecy is significant only because you and Voldemort choose to make it so” (*HBP*)
 - Two possible interpretations: Neville and Harry
 - (Where did the prophecy come from?)
- Human belief and choice are always important



The Portrayal of God in the Bible

- God acts by speaking: 'let there be light'
 - Unbroken pattern in the Hebrew Scriptures
 - Amos 3:7
- God loves, makes promises
 - Calls forth belief/faith from people
 - Creates a community of hope (Israel)
 - Human choice central



Is There a God in the Harry Potter World?

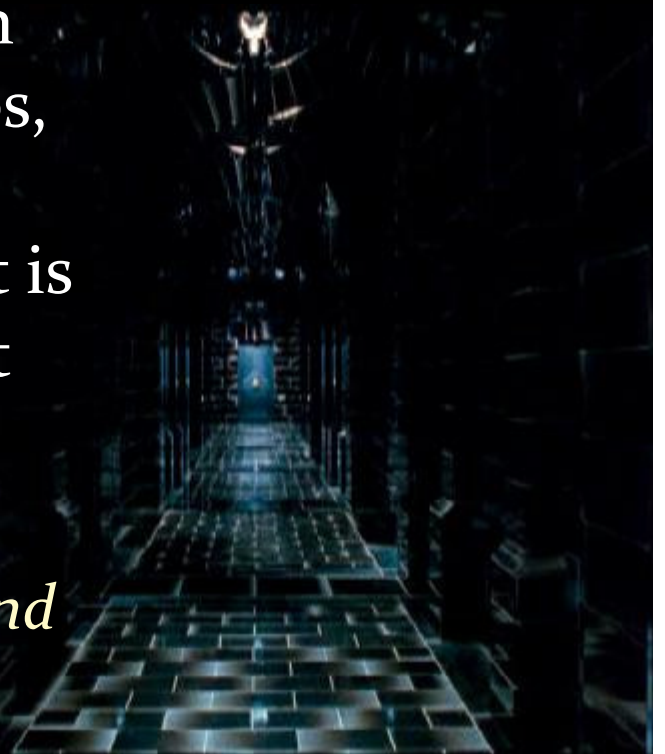
- All the characters are flawed, especially the male characters
- What about 'Love'?

'If there is one thing Voldemort cannot understand, it is love. He didn't realize that love as powerful as your mother's for you leaves its own mark. Not a scar, no not a visible sign ... to have been loved so deeply, even though the person who loved us is gone, will give us some protection forever.'

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone, p.209

Is There a God in the Harry Potter World?

- ‘There is a room in the Department of Mysteries that is kept locked at all times. It contains a force that is at once more wonderful and more terrible than death, than human intelligence, than the forces of nature. It is also, perhaps, the most mysterious of the many subjects for study that reside there. It is the power held within that room that you possess in such quantities and which Voldemort has not at all.’
 - Dumbledore on Love, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*



Is There a God in the Harry Potter World?

- What about 'Love'?
 - Protects
 - Somehow connected to human blood (life)
 - Honors relational ties
 - Experienced by us as either self-sacrifice or self-fulfillment, depending on our posture
 - Is the foundation for defining good and evil

Is There a God in the Harry Potter World?

- Love as self-sacrificial actions in some people
 - James and Lily Potter
 - Sirius Black
 - Ron Weasley
 - Harry Potter
 - March to the Forbidden Forest
 - 'I would choose the Stone,' not the Wand
 - Remus Lupin
 - Albus Dumbledore
 - Dobby
 - Severus Snape



Can Love Defeat Evil in a Loving Way?

- A loving God becomes *incarnate in a person* to defeat evil in each person
 - The new humanity of Jesus = judging sin, healing us
 - Healing power of love
 - Enables remorse: 'Show some remorse... I've seen what you'll be otherwise'
 - Receiving Jesus = becoming more human
 - Rejecting Jesus = keeping the disease, addiction, corruption

Can Love Defeat Evil in a Loving Way?

- The Sword of Godric Griffindor
 - ‘...like a great silver cross...’ (*DH*, ‘The Silver Doe’)
 - ‘Godric’: ‘power of God’
 - ‘Griffin’: a union of two natures
 - Slays serpents: Slytherin’s basilisk, Voldemort’s Nagini
 - Absorbed basilisk venom, destroys horcruxes
 - Drawn from the Sorting Hat twice: Harry, Neville
- Imagery of Scripture
 - A baptismal pool
 - Jesus had two natures, absorbed venom
 - God’s Word/word as ‘sword’ against Satan (serpent)

Can Love Defeat Evil in a Loving Way?



- ‘King’s Cross Station’
 - People rejecting Jesus at the cross: self-negation
 - Jesus comes out of a garden: ‘I am’ (John 18:5, 6, 8)
 - Simon Peter: ‘I am not’ (18:17, 25, 27)
 - Pontius Pilate: ‘What is truth?’ (18:38)
 - Jewish leaders: ‘We have no king but Caesar’ (19:15)
 - Jesus rises to new life in a garden (19:41 ff.), a new Adam
 - Jesus at the cross: truly human
 - Revealed our corrupted human nature
 - Finished defeating the corruption in himself
 - ‘Behold the man’ (Jn.19:5)
 - ‘Behold your king’ (Jn.19:14 – 22)

Can Love Defeat Evil in a Loving Way?

- God works within 'limits' (from our perspective) of love, retells and restores the original story, the intended story
- Evil places itself outside it, hence rejecting Jesus is ultimately self-defeating
 - Hell is an addiction treatment center, for those who resist the treatment

'The last enemy to be destroyed is death'
— Paul's first letter to the Corinthians 15:26

Can Love Defeat Evil in a Loving Way?

- Evil ultimately defeats itself
 - Peter Pettigrew's betrayals – people pleasing
 - Lord Voldemort's triggering the prophecy – fear
 - Lord Voldemort's use of Harry's blood – vengeance
 - Lord Voldemort's refusal to show remorse – pride



Great Questions HP Leaves Us With

- Is 'Love' real? Is God love personified?
- Are 'good and evil' objective, or just our opinion?
- Can Love defeat evil in a loving way?
- Can we personally participate in Love? Are we open to it?
- Is our story beautiful and coherent?

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Which theology?

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Which Theology?

Lutheran-Calvinist

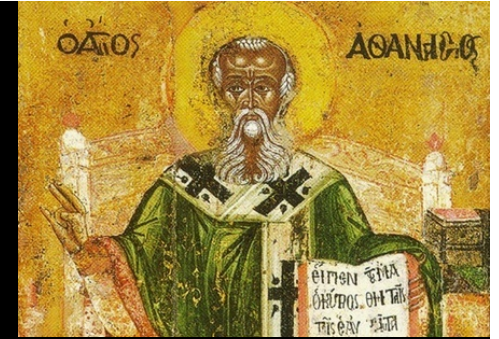
- Framework: legal
- Problem: guilt and legal standing
- Human free will is debated
- Retributive justice
- Hell is God's retributive wrath, like a prison or solitary confinement

The logo for the Harry Potter franchise, featuring the name "Harry Potter" in a stylized, golden, gothic font. The letters are three-dimensional and appear to be made of a metallic material, with a small trademark symbol (TM) at the end.

Classical

- Framework: medical
- Problem: diseased human nature
- Human free will is unanimously affirmed
- Restorative justice
- Hell is God's love, like an addiction treatment center

A God of Love Defeats Evil in a Loving Way



Man, who had **sin in himself**... was liable to death. [So] it behooved Him who was to destroy sin, and redeem man under the power of death, that He should Himself be made that very same thing which he was, that is, man; who had been drawn by sin into bondage, but was held by death, so **that sin should be destroyed by man**, and man should go forth from death... Thus, then, was the Word of God made man... God recapitulated in Himself the ancient formation of man, **that He might kill sin**, deprive death of its power, and vivify man; and therefore His works are true.

Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, book 3, chapter 18, paragraph 7

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Which Theology?

- For more information on classical Christian theology, please contact
 - Anastasiscenter.org for lots of resources
- See especially:
 - 'Big Questions About God: Contrasting Early Christian Theology and High Federal Calvinist Theology'
 - Other resources and papers on the Atonement:
<https://www.anastasiscenter.org/atonement>



Appendix A:
More Discussion Questions

Discussion Questions

1. Voldemort chose isolation vs. friendship, and using people vs. loving people. Would you want to be part of a spiritual community seeking transformation together?
2. The Hero retells the Villain's story, but makes all the right choices instead. If you're a follower of Jesus, how has Jesus been retelling / reshaping your story? Or, if you're not, to the extent that you know about Jesus, what parts of your story do you think he might want to reshape?

Appendix B:
Expansion on Nicene Atonement Theology
and Its Implications

Which Theology?

Lutheran-Calvinist

- Framework: legal
- Problem: guilt and legal standing
- Human free will is debated
- Retributive justice
- Hell is God's retributive wrath, like a prison or solitary confinement

The logo for the Harry Potter franchise, featuring the name "Harry Potter" in a stylized, gothic font with a lightning bolt integrated into the letter 'P'.

Classical

- Framework: medical
- **Problem: Voldemort's soul fragment in Harry**
- **Human free will is unanimously affirmed**
- **Retelling, restoration**
- **Evil ultimately self-defeating**
addiction treatment center

Which Theology?

- In the **legal framework**, the problem is guilt
- Whose guilt did Jesus absorb?
 - Calvinists: some, determined by God (no free will)
 - Arminians: some, determined by people (free will), then God
 - Universalists: for all (free will irrelevant; everyone 'rationally' chooses God in eternity)

Which Theology?

- In the **legal framework**, is God healing and undoing all human evil?
 - Calvinists: no, only some
 - Arminians: no, only some
 - Universalists: does *carte blanche* forgiveness take evil now seriously? The petulant child problem? Is there any need for repentance now? Why is he taking so long?
- Is God, then, partly evil?
- Might you want social justice more than God?
- Want to heal human brokenness more than God?

Which Theology?

- In the **legal framework**, what is our motivation for following Jesus?
 - Debt-obligation?
 - Gratitude?
- And what is our motivation for sharing Jesus?
 - To save people from ... God?

Which Theology?

- In the **medical framework**, is God healing and undoing all human evil and brokenness?
 - Yes, in each and every human person, through the new humanity of Jesus
 - Yes, by preserving our fragile will and working with us

Which Theology?

- In the **medical framework**, is God partly evil?
 - No, God is 100% good!
 - He is always opposed to human evil at its very source in each of us

Which Theology?

- In the **medical framework**, what is our motivation?
 - Admiring Jesus
 - Restoring your true self, your new identity in Jesus
 - Sharing in God's love
- Our motivation for sharing Jesus?
 - Helping restore others' true selves
 - To speak of a God who is 100% good, not just the 'good side of God'
 - God's first step in restorative social justice is bringing people to Jesus, heal the root problem

Which Theology?

Lutheran-Calvinist

- Framework: legal
- Problem: guilt and legal standing
- Human free will is debated
- Retributive justice
- Hell is God's retributive wrath, like a prison or solitary confinement

The logo for the Harry Potter franchise, featuring the name "Harry Potter" in a stylized, golden, gothic font. The letters are three-dimensional and appear to be made of a metallic material, with a small trademark symbol (TM) at the end.

Classical

- Framework: medical
- Problem: diseased human nature
- Human free will is unanimously affirmed
- Restorative justice
- Hell is God's love, like an addiction treatment center

Which Theology?

- Is human nature damaged?
 - Judaism
 - Where does 'the evil inclination' come from? God?
 - The human heart needs God's healing (Gen.6:5 – 6; Dt.30:6; Ps.51:10; Jer.4:4; 17:1 – 10; 31:31 – 34; Ezk.11:18; 36:26 – 36)
 - Islam
 - Mohammed's heart needed to be cleansed (Qur'an Surah 94; Hadiths Sahih Muslim and Sahih al-Bukhari)
 - Consistency?
 - Atheism
 - Can human evil be taken seriously any other way?
 - Is there a normative human nature in Jesus?

Which Theology?

- How do you want to be mentored and encouraged?
- Can you say that God:
 - Loves you, and will *always* love you
 - Loves each of your friends more than you do
 - Wants social justice more than you do
 - Works in a restorative (not retributive) way to undo human evil
 - Is 100% good

Which Theology?

- How do you want to be mentored and encouraged?
- Can you say that God:
 - Loves you, and will *always* love you
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 - Wants social justice more than you do
 - Works in a restorative (not retributive) way to undo human evil
 - Is 100% good
- Join us, grow with us, engage others with us