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**Literature and the Christian
Imagination**

I **Biblical World View-
Vision of Man's Story**

Mind Games Survival Course Manual



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Literature and the Christian Imagination

What is literature, and what is its purpose?

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III. The Biblical World View; The Bible's Unifying Vision of Man's Story

A. *Paradise* The Bible begins in Paradise (Eden)

1. The beginning (Genesis 1--2)
 - a. Eternity ends; time begins
2. Ideal people (beautiful/young/perfect/healthy)
3. Ideal environment (Garden of Eden)
4. Marriage of ideal couple (Adam and Eve)
5. Complete human harmony--no loneliness, no estrangement or alienation
6. Access to the Tree of Life
7. A river flowed out of Eden (Gen. 2:10).
8. No curse on mankind, animals, or earth
9. No sin, war, or death

2. Note similarity to Romance in section II.A.

2. *The Fall--Paradise Lost (Gen. 3)*

1. The effects of the Fall

- a. Sin is loosed upon earth (Gen. 3:6--24).
 2. Curse falls upon mankind and earth (3:14--19).
 3. Alienation begins between human beings (3:12--17).
 4. Spiritual death (separation and alienation from God) occurs (Gen. 3: 6--24)
 5. Physical death comes to mankind--delayed but certain (Gen. 3:19; see also Gen. 2:17; 4:8).
 6. Loss of access to the Tree of Life (Gen. 3:22--24)
 7. Loss of ideal environment--forced out of Garden (Gen. 3:22--24)
 8. Serpent (Satan) temporarily triumphs.
 9. God promises the fallen couple that a redeemer will come (Gen. 3:15). *Without the Fall there is no need of a Savior/Redeemer.*
2. The meaning of the Fall
 - a. The natural, close spiritual relationship the first couple had with God was shattered by willful disobedience.
 2. Man is spiritually dead (separated from God) and can only be restored to spiritual life through faith (trust in or reliance upon) the God of the Bible. For people in the Christian era, that faith must be in Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, the Savior.
 3. Note similarity to Tragedy in Section II.B.

3. *The History of Sin--Earthly Life (Gen. 3--Rev. 18)*

1. From Genesis 3 to Revelation 18 the overall theme is one of God's reaching out to mankind. It is a time of missionary harvest--first, through the nation of Israel, and, later, through the Christian Church.
2. The goal of this period is to persuade as many people as possible to accept God's forgiveness through believing on His Son, Jesus Christ.
3. God has revealed Himself through Nature, through conscience, through the Bible (the written Word), and through Jesus Christ (the Living Word from God).
4. Nevertheless, many choose to ignore God though He has provided

His Son, Jesus Christ, for our redemption.

5. Human life without God is futile--life "under the sun" is hopeless (Ecclesiastes).
6. Those who reject God's offer of redemption, which provides access to Paradise (all that mankind has longed for), must accept their place in Hell (all that mankind has dreaded). The earthly realm is a picture of Hell--just as Paradise pictures Eden or Heaven.
7. Note similarity to Anti-Romance in section II.C.

4. Restoration/Redemption--Paradise Regained

1. The basis for restoration/redemption
 - a. The death of Christ was for the sins of the world.
 2. Christ's resurrection from the dead revealed that He was God in the flesh.
 3. Christ's payment for man's sin has provided access to God to all who believe on Him.
2. The means of redemption
 - a. Individually --A personal decision is required; i.e., personal faith in Jesus Christ.
 2. Corporately--*Nothing can stop God's plan from being carried out no matter what men do*; no individual action is required.
3. The effects of restoration
 - a. God will judge unbelievers, all the wicked, etc.
 2. Sin and evil will be defeated.
 3. The curse will be lifted from mankind and the earth (Rev. 22:3).
 4. Death will be defeated (Rev. 20:14).
 5. Access to Paradise for all whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life (Rev. 21:27)
 6. The Serpent (Satan) will be defeated (Rev. 20:1--3, 10).
 7. Human isolation, alienation, and suffering will be things of the

past (Rev. 21:4).

8. Note similarity to Comedy in section II.D.

5. *Paradise--Part Two (Rev. 19--22)*

1. Time ends; "eternity" returns (Rev. 21:1--22:5).
2. Ideal people are the redeemed in glorified bodies (Rev. 21--22).
3. Ideal environment--the New Jerusalem and a new (purified) heaven and earth; re-creation of the earth (Rev. 21:1--11)
4. Ideal couple--the Bride (the Church) and the Bridegroom (Jesus Christ); Christ is the Second Adam ("new Adam and Eve"). Brought together in marriage.
5. Marriage feast in heaven (Rev. 19:7--9)
6. Access to the Tree of Life (Rev. 22:2)
7. River reappears--from beneath the throne (Rev. 22:1).
8. Curse is lifted (Rev. 22:3).
9. No sin, war, or death (Rev. 20:14; 21:4)
10. All tears will be wiped away--all suffering will be over and will have been worthwhile (Rev. 21:4).
11. At this point in God's plan there will be no more Fall (or the literary idea of Tragedy) and no longer any need for Redemption/Restoration (or the literary idea of Comedy), for all these issues will have been settled.
12. There will, however, be Paradise (literary idea of Romance) and Hell/History of Sin (the literary idea of Anti-Romance).

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