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“From the Bible to Harry Potter: Updating an ancient myth into modern fantasy”

This paper argues that *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* not only becomes an updated version of the Bible, but also completes the story of the Bible. As an updated Bible version, *Harry Potter* allows readers to explore spiritual questions that help them make sense of today’s world while also showing them how it all ends rather than only alluding to what will one day come.

The aim of my larger project is to investigate and identify the thematic and symbolic parallels between the seventh *Harry Potter* book and the New Testament (King James Version). Previous scholars have compared the two, but most research to date remains either too superficial or focuses too heavily on the controversy over the novels by Christian fundamentalists. In contrast to existing scholarship, I am interested in performing a literary critical analysis of the two texts that leaves religious controversy aside and focuses instead on the literary significance of the links between these two popular texts and the question of what modern, secular readers gain from a narrative with clear Christian Gospel echoes.

An example of a literary parallel is the theme of the battle between good and evil. In the seventh book, the final battle between Harry and Voldemort occurs, much like the expected final battle between Christ and Satan when “the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army” (Rev. 19:19). The two battles parallel one another, but they differ in that the Bible only prophesizes the final battle, whereas *Harry Potter* plays out the final battle at Hogwarts. Thus, *Harry Potter* completes the Bible’s narrative. This completion provides readers the imaginative space to explore complex and universal philosophical questions from a secular perspective.