

As you read the following excerpt from — *The Chronicles of Narnia, The Last Battle* — pages 747, 748 by C. S. Lewis, consider with your partner(s) the following: why do the dwarfs not see the feast before them, and why do they begin to fight among themselves? What does Aslan mean when he says, “[t]hey have chosen cunning instead of belief.” What does he mean by “[t]heir prison is only in their own minds...” What is the relevance of the passage to society today? What is the relevance of the passage to each of us personally? **Avoid** just summarizing the text.

“Aslan,” said Lucy through her tears, “could you – will you – do something for these poor Dwarfs?”

“Dearest,” said Aslan, “I will show you both what I can, and what I cannot, do.” He came close to the Dwarfs and gave a low growl: low, but it set all the air shaking. But the Dwarfs said to one another, “Hear that? That’s the gang at the other end of the stable. Trying to frighten us. They do it with a machine of some kind. Don’t take any notice. They won’t take us in again!”

Aslan raised his head and shook his mane. Instantly a glorious feast appeared on the Dwarfs knees: pies and tongues and pigeons and trifles and ices, and each Dwarf had a goblet of good wine in his right hand. But it wasn’t much use. They began eating and drinking eagerly enough, but it was clear that they couldn’t taste it properly. They thought they were eating and drinking only the sort of things you might find in a stable. One said he was trying to eat hay and another said he had got a bit of an old turnip and a third said he’d found a raw cabbage leaf. And they raised golden goblets of rich red wine to their lips and said “Ugh! Fancy drinking dirty water out of a trough that a donkey’s been at! Never thought we’d come to this.”

But very soon every Dwarf began suspecting that every other Dwarf had found something nicer than he had, and they started grabbing and snatching, and went on to quarrelling, till in a few minutes there was a free fight, and all the good food was smeared on their faces and clothes or trodden under foot.

But when at last they sat down to nurse their black eyes and their bleeding noses, they all said: “Well at any rate there’s no Humbug here. We haven’t let anyone take us in. The Dwarfs are for the Dwarfs.”

“You see,” said Aslan. “They will not let us help them. They have chosen cunning instead of belief. Their prison is only in their own minds, yet they are in that prison; and so afraid of being taken in that they cannot be taken out. But come, children. I have other work to do.””