

Book Review - 2023 SITS

The Chronicles of Narnia: Voyage of the Dawn Treader
C.S. Lewis

I have failed to every read the entire Chronicles of Narnia until this past fall. I had made the mistake of watching the movies and thought that was sufficient. I am ashamed of myself for not reading these earlier in my life, and then rereading them over and over again. Lewis is able to capture the imagination and retain you throughout the story of the individual books. The way Lewis crafted the creation of Narnia in the first book (*The Magician's Nephew*) was excellent. It was beautiful how he discussed the voice that spoke into existence this new fantasy land. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is a staple among many readers and does not need very much in introduction. The sacrifice of Aslan and his resurrection carries so much weight not only in the fictional story, but also in the reality of Jesus' own full self-sacrifice. Each book contains some episode with Aslan which convey major lessons on humanity and our desperate need to trust in our God.

The *Voyage of the Dawn Treader* was a horrible movie, but the book proved to be directly the opposite. The transformation of Eustace Scrubb is one of the highlights of the book. He was introduced to the reader as a nuisance and problem child, but at the end of the book his character had changed to the point that even his own family thought he was completely different. The great transformation of Eustace comes with his interaction with Aslan and essentially his "baptism" on Dragon island. If it has been awhile since you read those passages - I would recommend a good rereading because there is much to be said about the transformation.

Finally - the transition throughout the book is the voyage to the end of the world. Lewis' descriptions of this place and its eternal light and clean and clear waters gives so much hope to the reader. Again Lewis is putting into a fictional story what he may believe about the transition between earth/heaven, and we may disagree about much of his theology, but it does not detract from the beauty contained in these passages. Aslan telling the children that they must return to their own world and make the transition "across the river" is filled with biblical imagery. The entire Chronicles have been wonderful to read and capture all of the biblical images that Lewis used in telling this fictional story to children.

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