

## BOOK BONES

### The Voyage of the Dawn Treader by C.S. Lewis

#### Key Insights

- The planetary influence for Voyage is Sol (Sun), who influences the Earth to produce gold, and men to grow wise and liberal. The two purposes of the Dawn Treader's voyage is 1) to find the seven missing Telmarine lords (Caspian's purpose), and 2) to explore the uncharted eastern sea and hopefully come to Aslan's Country (Reepicheep's purpose).
- In the first four chapters of this book, Aslan/Sol exerts his influence as Apollo Chrysocomes (Apollo the Golden-headed), especially through the actions of the golden-haired King Caspian. In the middle ages, the Sun made men liberal, a type of generosity that uses one's resources to set others free. Caspian demonstrates this liberality when he uses his brilliantly armored men to help end slavery on the Lone Islands. This type of liberality is also demonstrated in the difference between the liberal education of Reepicheep (emphasizing virtue, courage, philosophy, etc.) and that of Eustace (all pragmatic subjects and emphasis on grades).
- In the next four chapters (chs. 5-8), Aslan/Sol exerts his influence more directly as Apollo Sauroctonus (Apollo the Dragon-slayer). Several dragons appear in these chapters: the old dragon, Eustace as dragon, the Sea Serpent, and Caspian's dragonish and greedy heart on Deathwater Island. Each of these dragons is destroyed through an appearance of the sun (the old dragon), and appearance of Aslan (Eustace and Caspian), or through the solar influence working on the crew (the Sea Serpent). More dragons appear in later chapters: Lucy's greedy lust for immortal beauty, and Caspian's attempt to seize the golden wave of Aslan's Country.
- Eustace's transformation from a dragon into a boy symbolizes his conversion through faith in Aslan. When Aslan first appears and tells Eustace to get into the fountain, Eustace vainly tries to rip off his dragon skin, but his claws can't go deep enough (he can't change his own heart or character). Finally, Aslan rips off the dragon skin, and the first rip feels like it goes straight to Eustace's heart (because it does). The water of the fountain (a symbol for baptism) changes Eustace back into a boy. He is changed from this point on, though he still has relapses into his old self.
- In the next four chapters (chs. 9-12), Aslan/Sol demonstrates how he gives the light of wisdom to others. The Dufflepuds are painfully ignorant and have no knowledge of Aslan. They are ruled by the star Coriakin and must learn obedience to him before they are ready to learn about obedience to Aslan (Coriakin's "starlight" prepares them for Aslan's "sunlight"). On the Dark Island there is no light and therefore no hope; false dreams and visions overwhelm reason and wisdom until Aslan's light pierces the darkness.
- Aslan appears seven times in Voyage, and each appearance has more gravity and solemnity. He appears in moonlight to Eustace, in sunlight on Deathwater Island, as a growling face in Lucy's book, as himself in the magician's house, as the albatross at Dark Island, in the golden image in Caspian's cabin, and finally, as a brilliantly white Lamb to the children just before they leave Narnia.
- The final four chapters (chs. 13-16) bring together the themes of Aslan/Sol giving freedom, slaying dragons, and imparting wisdom. The characters eat and drink food and drink from the sun: they eat of Aslan's Table, a feast that comes from the Sun; and they drink the "drinkable light" from the Silver Sea. The result is that they are made stronger (liberality), more virtuous (dragon-slaying), and capable of seeing more light of the Sun (wisdom). The imagery in these chapters is very dense, providing a feast for the reader. All of the imagery of food points to the Biblical themes of feasting on Christ (Lord's Supper) and his words (Scripture, esp. the NT).
- In the final pages of the book, Aslan appears to the three children as a Lamb to help them realize the name by which he is known on Earth. He tells them this because Edmund and Lucy will not be able to come back to Narnia: it is time for them to start loving and caring for their own world more. Aslan explains that they must learn to know him by a different name on Earth, and then follow him on a long path that will lead them to Aslan's Country. He also explains that the reason they were brought to Narnia for a while is so that their love for Narnia and Aslan would help them love Jesus and their world even more. This is hopefully true also of everyone who reads the Narniad.

## Important Quotes

- “There was a boy called Eustace Clarence Scrubb, and he almost deserved it” (3).
- “It was a picture of a ship—a ship sailing straight toward you. Her prow was gilded and shaped like the head of a dragon with wide-open mouth” (6).
- “[A]nd their armor shone (for it was a sunny morning) so that one could hardly look at it steadily” (52).
- “Sleeping on a dragon’s hoard with greedy, dragonish thoughts in his heart, he had become a dragon himself” (91).
- “The pleasure (quite new to him) of being liked and, still more, of liking other people, was what kept Eustace from despair” (102).
- “The very first tear he made was so deep that I thought it had gone right into my heart” (109).
- “It was heather that he dipped; what he drew out was a perfect model of heather made of the purest gold, heavy and soft as lead” (127).
- “[A]nd ever since that day what Lucy means by a good story is a story which reminds her of the forgotten story in the Magician’s Book” (157).
- “Sometimes, perhaps, I am a little impatient, waiting for the day when they can be governed by wisdom instead of this rough magic” (161).
- “Use, Captain? If by use you mean filling our bellies or our purses, I confess it will be no use at all” (179).
- “Lucy looked along the beam and presently saw something in it. At first it looked like a cross, then it looked like an aeroplane, then it looked like a kite, and at last with a whirring of wings it was right overhead and was an albatross” (187).
- “As Edmund said afterward, ‘Though lots of things happened on that trip which sound more exciting, that moment was really the most exciting.’” (205).
- “They felt almost too well and strong to bear it; and presently they began to notice another result...Now, the light grew no less—if anything, it increased—but they could bear it. They could look straight up at the sun without blinking. They could see more light than they had ever seen before” (230).
- “It brought both a smell and a sound, a musical sound. Edmund and Eustace would never talk about it afterward. Lucy could only say, ‘It would break your heart.’ ‘Why,’ said I, ‘was it so sad?’ ‘Sad!! No,’ said Lucy” (243).
- “This was the very reason why you were brought to Narnia, that by knowing me here for a little, you may know me better there” (247).