

Narnia part 2 12-11-05

The Chronicles of Narnia movie, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* was released last Friday. The previous Sunday, I shared the journey of the book's author, C.S. Lewis', journey from atheism to faith in Jesus Christ. As a Professor of English Literature, he believed that stories could get around the common defenses man sets up against the work of God's Spirit in their lives. He believed that the many stories of a son of god like figure rising from the dead were all to prepare the world for the actual event. He also believed that as Christians wrote and conversed in whatever their field or employment should be, the salt of their faith would permeate and flavor their work, making unbelievers thirsty for a relationship with the true God. (Matthew 5:13)

Though the Chronicles of Narnia are not a theological work, we can see the salt of Biblical ideas behind each story. Last week we journeyed through the wardrobe with Peter, Edmund, Susan, and Lucy to the world of Narnia, and in doing so, we took a look at the Biblical teaching that Lewis was presenting. We saw that we are surrounded by a world that is invisible to us, but one that some have entered into and told us about. We saw that, like Narnia, our own world is under a curse that it will eventually be liberated from. We also saw that the Prince of this fallen world, as evil as he is, can appear as an angel of light, just as the witch that reigns over Narnia is white.

Today we are going deeper into Narnia and deeper into the Biblical truths portrayed there. Lucy was the first person in the story to discover Narnia. While playing hide and seek, she hid in a wardrobe and discovered it opened into another world. When she went to show the other children the mysterious wardrobe, it appeared to be an ordinary closet. Edmund took particular delight in teasing Lucy about her fantasy world. One day he hid in the wardrobe and discovered that Lucy had been telling the truth. As he stepped into that world of snow and pines, a sleigh approached. An elf was driving two reindeer that pulled the sled, and sitting behind him was the white witch. She ordered the sleigh to stop and demanded to know if Edmund was a son of Adam.

The prophecies in Narnia had foretold of two sons of Adam and two daughters of Eve coming into Narnia to set things right and reign on the four thrones at Cair Paravel. That is why the white witch and her forces were always on the look out for humans.

We have prophecies as well. (Hebrews 1:1) There have been millenniums of prophetic words about a Messiah who would deliver us from our indebtedness to God. The fact that there are prophecies tells us that there is a world without time. Prophecies that come to pass in detail tell us that there is a God who inhabits that timeless realm and that reveals secrets to man. (Amos 3:7) In our world, the prophecies told us of one son of Eve that would come to set things right, the Messiah. This anointed One would come to set us free. (Genesis 3:15) Just as the white witch was watching for a child of Adam to enter that world, Satan was busy watching for Jesus to enter ours. Revelation chapter 4 tells us that he was waiting to devour the child as soon as He was born. (Revelation 12:4) I think God pulled one over on Satan when He had Jesus born in a manger. Satan knew the glory of God,

Commented [notes1]: 13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.
Matthew 5:13 (NIV)

Commented [notes2]: 1 In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways,
Hebrews 1:1 (NIV)

Commented [notes3]: 7 Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets.
Amos 3:7 (NIV)

Commented [notes4]: 15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."
Genesis 3:15 (NIV)

Commented [notes5]: 4 His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born.
Revelation 12:4 (NIV)

and I would guess that he had his demons watching every royal family and righteous priest for the coming of the Messiah. He wouldn't have given a poor couple giving birth in an animal stall a second glance. (Job 1:6) When the Magi came to worship Jesus, Satan discovered he had missed the Messiah's coming. Since he couldn't figure out which baby in Bethlehem was the Messiah, he incited Herod to kill them all. (Matthew 2:16)

Commented [notes6]: 6 One day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them.
Job 1:6 (NIV)

Commented [notes7]: 16 When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.
Matthew 2:16 (NIV)

In Narnia, we have a variation of that, something more like Satan tempting Jesus in the wilderness. (Matthew 4:8-9) The witch spoke very kindly to Edmund and talked of making him a king. She played on his animosity toward his brother and his desire to be superior. But to really seal the seduction, she offered him something to eat, Turkish Delight. *"Each piece was sweet and light to the very center and Edmund had never tasted anything more delicious. The more he ate the more he wanted to eat. He didn't know that this was enchanted Turkish Delight and that anyone who had once tasted it would want more and more of it, and would ever, if they were allowed, go on eating it till they killed themselves."* (Video clip) She was seducing him into the bondage of his own desires, desires that she could manipulate for her own purposes. (Romans 6:16) Once Edmund had eaten the first bite, he was craving more. There is pleasure in sin for a short time. (Hebrews 11:25)

Commented [notes8]: 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.
9 "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."
Matthew 4:8-9 (NIV)

The analogy is obvious. There is something like Turkish Delight for every one of us. We enjoy it, but we can never get enough of it. It is Satan's pleasure to give it to you, for through it he can manipulate your desires to serve his ends. Listen to the way the Apostle Paul describes it. *"Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality, so as to indulge in every kind of impurity with a continual lust for more."* Ephesians 4:19 (NIV)

Commented [notes9]: 16 Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey--whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?
Romans 6:16 (NIV)

Commented [notes10]: 25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time.
Hebrews 11:25 (NIV)

The desire for more is what drove Edmund to betray his brother and sisters when he led them all into Narnia. The desire for sinful pleasure has the same affect on us. We will justify all kinds of treachery to obtain the thing we are lusting after. (Habakkuk 2:5)

Commented [notes11]: 5 indeed, wine betrays him; he is arrogant and never at rest. Because he is as greedy as the grave and like death is never satisfied, he gathers to himself all the nations and takes captive all the peoples.
Habakkuk 2:5 (NIV)

Once they were all in Narnia, they met a talking beaver. The animals with spirits speak, and the ones that do not have a spirit are referred to as dumb animals. The beavers hid the children from the witch and filled them in on what was happening in Narnia. During that conversation in the beavers' home, Edmund slipped out to find the witch. The beavers told the children that there was word that Aslan had returned to Narnia. At the sound of his name, each of the children felt a strange sensation, something unique to each of them, *"like the first sign of spring, like good news."* Hearing of the witch's power to turn creatures into stone, the children worried that Aslan might be turned into stone if he tried to rescue them. The beaver replied, *"Turn him into stone? If she can stand on her two feet and look him in the face it'll be the most she can do and more than I expect of her. No, no. He'll put all to rights as it says in the old rhyme in these parts:
Wrong will be right, when Aslan comes in sight,
At the sound of his roar, sorrows will be no more,
When he bares his teeth, winter meets its death,
And when he shakes his mane, we shall have spring again."* The beaver concluded, *"You'll understand when you see him."*

"Is – is he a man?" asked Lucy. "Aslan a man!" said Mr. Beaver sternly. "Certainly not. I tell you he is the king of the wood and son of the great Emperor-beyond-the-Sea. Don't you know who is the King of Beasts? Aslan is a lion—the Lion, the great Lion."

"Ooh!" said Susan. "I'd thought he was a man. Is he quite safe? I shall feel rather nervous about meeting a lion." "That you will dearie, and no mistake," said Mrs. Beaver; "if there's anyone who can appear before Aslan without their knees knocking, they're either braver than most or else just silly."

"Then he isn't safe?" said Lucy. "Safe?" said Mr. Beaver; "don't you hear what Mrs. Beaver tells you? Who said anything about safe? 'Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King, I tell you."

"I'm longing to see him," said Peter, "even if I do feel frightened when it comes to the point." Mr. Beaver said, "Once he's with us, then we can begin doing things."

I don't think I need to explain the analogy in that portion. Our King did become a man, but not just a man. (John 1:14) Certainly, he isn't safe, but He is good. (Psalm 143:10) The sound of His name has that affect on me, and I am sure it does on you as well. (Philippians 2:10-11) And if Satan can stand before Him and look Him in the eyes, I'll be amazed. (Psalm 5:5)

Commented [notes12]: 10 Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; may your good Spirit lead me on level ground.
Psalms 143:10 (NIV)

Commented [notes13]: 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
Philippians 2:10-11 (NIV)

Commented [notes14]: 5 The arrogant cannot stand in your presence; you hate all who do wrong.
Psalms 5:5 (NIV)

Edmund found out that once he had done the witch's bidding, she no longer needed him. There was no more Turkish Delight, and no more talk of being a king. In fact, she had his hands bound and treated him roughly. She took him along as a hostage while hunting down the other children.

The children had already made it safely to the place where they were to meet Aslan. He was every bit as wonderful as they imagined and more. They first met him at the stone table, which is a parallel to the cross. That is where we first meet our Savior, and He is every bit as wonderful as we imagined and more. (Job 36:26)

Commented [notes15]: 26 How great is God—beyond our understanding! The number of his years is past finding out.
Job 36:26 (NIV)

Once the witch discovered that the children had made it safely to Aslan, she decided to execute Edmund. A rescue party arrived just in time and snatched him out of her clutches, but later, the witch came to confront Aslan. "You know that every traitor belongs to me as my lawful prey and that for every treachery I have a right to a kill. That human creature is mine. His life is forfeit to me. His blood is my property."

The analogy is clear here as well. The wages of sin is death. (Romans 6:23) The traitor against God forfeits their life to the enemy of our soul. The one who commits sin is the servant of sin, and we must answer to our master. Our blood is our master's property whether of Satan unto death or Christ unto life. (Romans 5:21)

Commented [notes16]: 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Romans 6:23 (NIV)

Commented [notes17]: 21 so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Romans 5:21 (NIV)

Aslan and the witch took a walk to discuss this among themselves and came to an agreement. Aslan would give himself up if the witch would let Edmund live. In the story, only the girls discovered what was taking place. They followed Aslan to the great table that was the appointed place for his execution. The witch had brought all her minions, evil creatures of all sorts that stood at a fearful distance, but once

Aslan was shorn and bound they lost their fear and began to kick and spit, hit and jeer at him.

In this portion we have a picture of the horror that Christ faced in the three hours of darkness. (Matthew 27:45-46) Hell vented its fury on Jesus as hung there alone. What followed in Narnia, is the same description as what followed in Scripture. The women wept at his tomb, not understanding what was about to transpire. Hope seemed lost. Hell seemed to have won. The future looked as dark as it could possibly be. (Matthew 28:1)

In Narnia, mice began to nibble the ropes that held Aslan's lifeless body to the stone table. The girls thought they were eating him, but looking closer they saw that they were chewing on the ropes that bound him. They thought the mice didn't understand that he was dead. As they looked to the rising sun, they heard a thunderous crack. Turning around they saw the stone altar had cracked in half. Aslan was not on it. In this earth, life began to fill the lifeless corpse in the tomb. In both worlds He rose victorious, more alive than ever, the victor over death! (1 Corinthians 15:54)

In Narnia, Aslan explained, *"It means that though the witch knew the Deep Magic, there is a magic deeper still which she did not know. Her knowledge goes back only to the dawn of time. But if she could have looked a little further back, into the stillness and the darkness before Time dawned, she would have read there a different incantation. She would have known that when a willing victim who had committed no treachery was killed in a traitor's stead, the Table would crack and Death itself would start working backwards."*

In our world, the Apostle Paul wrote, ⁷ *Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die.* ⁸ *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.* ⁹ *Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!* ¹⁰ *For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!* Romans 5:7-10 (NIV)
"Death has been swallowed up in victory." ⁵⁵ *"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"* ⁵⁶ *The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.* ⁵⁷ *But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* 1 Corinthians 15:54-57 (NIV)

What followed in Narnia was a joyous celebratory romp as the girls chased Aslan and him them that is described as something like playing with a thunderstorm. Well what happened here on earth was not much different. For the disciples knew that death was defeated, their Master was alive, and things would never be the same. Soon that same feeling of playing with a thunderstorm would come over them at the Feast of Pentecost. (Acts 2:15)

It was all over except for the final battle, and it is the same for us. The work is done, now there is only the mopping up. In Narnia, the first thing that Aslan did was to take the girls with him to save the creatures that had been turned into stone by

Commented [notes18]: 45 From the sixth hour until the ninth hour darkness came over all the land.
46 About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?"--which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"
Matthew 27:45-46 (NIV)

Commented [notes19]: 1 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.
Matthew 28:1 (NIV)

Commented [notes20]: 54 When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."
1 Corinthians 15:54 (NIV)

Commented [notes21]: 15 These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning!
Acts 2:15 (NIV)

the witch. Those that the witch had struck with her wand needed the Lion's breath to restore them. As he breathed on each one, the girls described the stone turning into living creatures. They were all restored for the battle that lay ahead.

And hasn't the breath of God done the same with you? He breathed on you and your heart of stone turned into a heart of flesh just as Ezekiel the prophet had written. (Ezekiel 11:19) And why has He breathed on you? There is a great battle before us. It is the battle for the souls of men. Just as the children used their special gifts, so we use our gifts to rescue souls from darkness, bringing them from the power of darkness to the power of God. (1 Peter 2:9) The King directs us as we enter the fray. What a mighty battle it is! There are casualties on all sides, but we know who will prevail. His roar will still the dark forces and send them running for cover. He could fight the battle alone, but He invites us to fight with Him at His direction. As Martin Luther concluded His song, A Mighty Fortress is Our God, "and He will win the battle!"

The story is not quite over, for the prophecies in Narnia foretold the sons of Adam and the daughters of Eve reigning on the four thrones at Cair Paravel. Even this part of the story mirrors what Jesus has in store for those who place their faith in Him. The Apostle Paul tells us that we are seated with Christ in the heavenly realms. (Ephesians 2:6) John the Beloved wrote, "*Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.*" Revelation 20:6 (NIV)

The story tells us of the power of besetting sins to cause us to be traitors to God and our brothers and sisters. It tells of Jesus dying in our place to set us free from that power. It tells of His resurrection in victory over death and of the great battle that is before us for the souls of men. Last of all, it tells us of the glorious hope of ruling and reigning with Christ. Quite a story! That is because it is based on the greatest story ever told, the story of God's love for you. *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* helps us look again at what we may have become too familiar with. It helps us consider in a fresh way the love that God displayed toward us in the life of Jesus our Savior. May I suggest taking an unsaved friend and plan on going out to dinner or desert after the movie? Then you can ask them what parts were most meaningful to them and watch how the Spirit of God will open doors to share what Christ has done for you.

Commented [notes22]: 19 I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh.
Ezekiel 11:19 (NIV)

Commented [notes23]: 9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.
1 Peter 2:9 (NIV)

Commented [notes24]: 6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,
Ephesians 2:6 (NIV)