

WEEK 9: “All these came in at the door on Aslan’s right.” (#7-*The Last Battle*, LB, p. 751)

I. FINAL THOUGHTS

There’s a totally obvious “finding God” moment in LB that I’m sure none of us missed!!

However, let me raise another one that’s almost equally significant.

At the end of the age, night falls on Narnia. As with Talk #7, DT, the portion of LB that contains our talk’s title is so powerful that I must read it to you (almost) in its entirety.

And at last, out of the shadow of the trees, racing up the hill for dear life, by thousands and by millions, came all kinds of creatures ... But as they came right up to Aslan one or other of two things happened to each of them. They all looked straight in his face; I don't think they had any choice about that. And when some looked, the expression of their faces changed terribly—it was fear and hatred: except that, on the faces of Talking Beasts, the fear and hatred lasted only for a fraction of a second. You could see that they suddenly ceased to be *Talking* Beasts. They were just ordinary animals. And all the creatures who looked at Aslan in that way swerved to their right, his left, and disappeared into his huge black shadow, which (as you have heard) streamed away to the left of the doorway. The children never saw them again. I don't know what became of them. But the others looked in the face of Aslan and loved him, though some of them were very frightened at the same time. And all these came in at the Door, in on Aslan's right.

This judgement is also prophesied and expanded by Christ himself in Matthew 25. As we read there, the favored “sheep” will be set on the right hand of the heavenly Judge while the unfavored “goats” will be set on His left. The sheep, as we know, are favored because they took care of the needs of “the least of these,” and thus did so for Jesus. The phrase *the least of these* in this passage needs a bit o’ explanation. During the Tribulation two-thirds of the Jews will die, but God will save a remnant for Himself, “the least of these.” One-third of Jews will come to faith in the Messiah and will join the King in His millennial kingdom. Assisting these Jews will be those believes who will risk their lives for the chosen ones of God, providing food, clothing, shelter, and other necessities.

These “Tribulation saints” will help the biblical remnant of Israel because they believe God’s promise that He will bless those who bless Israel but curse those who curse her. (Shades of *Schindler’s List*, eh!!!!) Without even realizing what they were doing, they had helped the King Himself by helping His real brethren, the Jews. The lives of these believers will have been so transformed by their own encounters with the Messiah that it will become natural for them to help God’s chosen people. These blessed ones will inherit the Millennial kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world

In contrast to the acts of the sheep will be those of the goats, who also will be judged by how they treated the believing remnant of Israel. Just as the sheep did, the goats will also ask the King a question, yet not the same one. Upon receiving their command to “Depart from Me, cursed ones, into eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels,” the goats will ask the King when did they ignore His needs for food, clothing, and companionship. He will tell them that since they did not provide for the “least of these, My brethren,” they did not provide for Him.

Yes, the specific context of the phrase “Whatever you have done for the least of these, My brethren,” directly relates to the future sheep and goats judgement, we certainly can, I think, apply the underlying principle of this passage to our present ministry as believers. Just as in the parable of the Good Samaritan, it is incumbent upon us to show our faith by our works. Our faith should so transform our lives that it becomes natural for us to help others. One of the best examples of this was the Albanian nun Mother Teresa. Her heart had been so transformed by Jesus that she lived her life among the less (dare I say *least*) fortunate of Calcutta, India.

GO WE AND DO LIKEWISE!!!!

- II. Now let me broaden out even more and raise:
3 THEMES IN *THE LAST BATTLE*

1. Faith

More than any of the other *Chronicles of Narnia*, the theme of faith is present at literally every plot twist and event that occurs. Things in Narnia have gone awry because some of its peoples have started to lose faith in Aslan, for example, the dwarfs and also Shift the ape. Other things go horribly wrong because of a strength of faith, for example, the mice, and the bears, really don't want to do what the ape tells them and admit they would rebel outright if it wasn't for the fact that he had shown them Aslan and as unlikely as the orders sound they come from Aslan so they have to be obeyed. The ape, who has no faith in anything spiritual at all, also plays off the Narnians and the Calormenes by telling them their Gods are one and the same. At the end of the novel those who have strong faith and goodness of heart follow Aslan and receive eternal life in Heaven; those who follow Tash receive eternal damnation.

2. The Christian Religion

Christianity is allegorized in this novel especially with the introduction of Heaven and the fact that the children have died and therefore ended up there. The tenets of how to live a good Christian life are also part of this theme; the Unicorn is wildly happy once they get to Heaven as he states this is what he has been searching for all his life, showing that he has wanted to walk alongside Aslan. Similarly Aslan assures the Calormene who want to go with him that if they have done good in the name of Tash then it is a tribute in Aslan's name and if they have done wrong in Aslan's name they still belong to Tash. When the Pevensie children tell Tirian that Susan is not with them because she no longer believes in Narnia this is showing that if one does. It believe in Heaven one does not get to go there.

3. Political Strategy

Politicians are not shown in a good light in this novel and their strategy is one of the themes of the book. There are basically two types of politician in the novel; the ones who want to take over Narnia, and the others who want to see Narnia destroyed all together. Shift is an example of a politician who identifies the low information members of the community and simply forces his own will on them. He makes alliances with the enemy because he feels it is to his benefit. Ginger is far more Machiavellian and is friend to all sides and loyal to none. The novel shows how the politicians who want to get something for themselves are successful but the country suffers. The political dealings in the novel are complex and show the worst of people's natures.

NEXT WEEK: It's wrap! ... BUT the BEST is yet to come (so says Jack Lewis)!!!