

The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader

20th Century Fox | Starring Skandar Keynes,
Georgie Henley, Ben Barnes, Will Poulter



Perhaps the most anticipated film of the year for Christians worldwide, the third movie in The Chronicles of Narnia series finally makes a splash in theaters this weekend.

And make a splash it does. Set years after the events of the second film, *The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian*, *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* opens with the two younger Pevensies, Edmund (Skandar Keynes) and Lucy (Georgie Henley), being swallowed into a painting, transporting them back to Narnia along with their cousin Eustace Scrubb (Will Poulter). They join the new king of Narnia, Caspian (Ben Barnes) in his quest to find seven lost lords to save Narnia from a corrupting evil that resides on a dark island.

Dawn Treader more than holds its own to *Prince Caspian* and *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe* as a fast-paced adventure with special effects that tops its first two predecessors. The first in the movie series in 3D, *Dawn Treader* makes good use of the technology with edge-of-your-seat action, featuring swashbuckling sword fights, a fire-breathing dragon and stomach-churning choppy seas.

Having read *Dawn Treader* earlier this year to my three young boys—Alex, Andrew and Chase—I was curious to see if the screenplay stayed true to the book. Although there were several changes to the story, including eliminating some characters, the film adapted the book well thematically.

Especially spot on is the portrayal by Poulter as the whiny cousin Eustace, who is literally transformed into an unlikely hero as the danger heightens. His unusual hate-love relationship with braveheart mouse Reepicheep is funny and touching. Eustace nearly steals the movie like Ken (played by Michael Keaton) stole scenes in *Toy Story 3*.

Christians will be especially pleased that *Dawn Treader* does a better job of communicating the spiritual themes in Lewis' books than *Prince Caspian*—criticized by some for its overuse of epic battles ala The Lord of Ring film series.

Dawn Treader carries several biblical messages about being content, redemption and fighting temptation and redemption as a result of repentance as well as resisting envy, pride and greed. Mirroring a line from the book, the movie even has Aslan telling Edmund and Lucy that they will not return to Narnia, but the siblings should learn to know him by another name in their own world.

Rated PG, *Dawn Treader* does feature some frightening images and sequences of fantasy action.

Parents with young children will want to exercise caution with taking them to watch the movie, which has an intense climax that rivals strong action scenes from the Pirates of the Caribbean film series.

Overall, *Dawn Treader* may be the most enjoyable installment in the famed fantasy series. "Eustace was annoying, but funny," Alex, 9, points out. "*Dawn Treader* was nonstop action."

Andrew, 7, adds: "It was the most fun Narnia movie ever."

Amen to that. I'm hoping the film will rival the box-office power of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1*, and moviegoers will once again cry out "for Narnia!"