

Global Intelligence Disclosures On The Orwellian New World Order

# GLOBAL WATCH WEEKLY

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## The Lord Of The Rings

Discovering The Amazing Story Of Election,  
Corruption, Conversion And Salvation



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# GLOBAL WATCH WEEKLY

The Global Watch Weekly (GWW) is committed to providing disclosure on political, social, economic and technological events which are leading the world into a biblically prophesied Orwellian nightmare. It is a free online magazine, which goes out to thousands of members world-wide. There have been over 190+ GWW editions issued all justifying the Bible as an inspired authority on mapping out proof of a coming one world government agenda, which will ultimately be overthrown through the establishment of God's messianic kingdom.

The ultimate aim of the Global Watch Weekly is to show that despite some scathing attacks over the last few decades on the authenticity of the Christian faith, that the Bible still stands as a dominant inspired book which makes incredible and pinpoint prophecies about the end times which are being accurately fulfilled in our life time.

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# FAREWELL

## Dear Global Watch Weekly Member

After having served for seven years as the chief editor of the global watch weekly this edition will be my final task. Don't worry the global watch weekly will continue.

I was asked what theme would I like to choose for my final edition and I have decided to write about *The Lord of the Rings* which I have watched nearly eight times and in which I have read the book three times.

Yes I am a big fan of this story not just because of the genius of Tolkien the author but also because of the Christian elements I see written across the storyline.

It has been a pleasure serving you over the years. We have had some difficult moments but through it all we have preserved, mainly due to the support of members who continue to pray and financially support us by investing in our reports and various disclosures.

My prayer is that the report continues to grow from strength to strength in providing discernment and different perspectives to facilitate members in their ongoing pursuit for truth.

I will leave you with this final statement

"Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain." I Corinthians 15:58

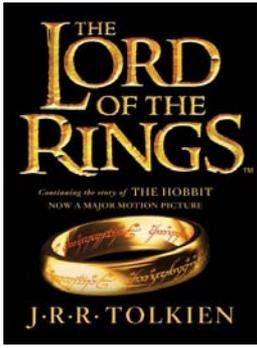
Blessings

Daniel Bailey

Chief Editor of the Global Watch Weekly

# THE LORD OF THE RINGS

## INTRODUCTION

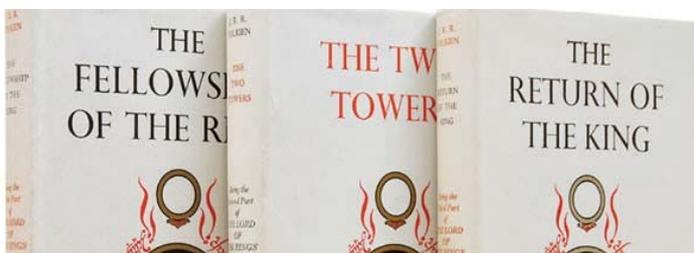


*The Lord of the Rings* is an epic high-fantasy novel written by English author J. R. R. Tolkien. The story began as a sequel to Tolkien's 1937 fantasy novel *The Hobbit*, but eventually developed into a much larger work. Written in stages between 1937 and

1949, *The Lord of the Rings* is one of the best-selling novels ever written, with over 150 million copies sold.

The title of the novel refers to the story's main antagonist, the Dark Lord Sauron, who had in an earlier age created the One Ring to rule the other Rings of Power as the ultimate weapon in his campaign to conquer and rule all of Middle-earth.

From quiet beginnings in the Shire, a hobbit land not unlike the English countryside, the story ranges across Middle-earth, following the course of the War of the Ring through the eyes of its characters, not only the hobbits Frodo Baggins, Samwise "Sam" Gamgee, Meriadoc "Merry" Brandybuck and Peregrin "Pippin" Took, but also the hobbits' chief allies and travelling companions: the Men Aragorn son of Arathorn, a Ranger of the North, and Boromir, a Captain of Gondor; Gimli son of Glóin, a Dwarf warrior; Legolas Greenleaf, an Elven prince; and Gandalf, a Wizard who is actually an angelic spirit in human form



Between 2001 and 2003 the novel was launched as a film series consisting of three high fantasy adventure films directed by Peter Jackson. The films are subtitled *The Fellowship of the Ring* (2001), *The Two Towers* (2002) and *The Return of the King* (2003) just as the 3 books which make up the story.

Considered to be one of the biggest and most ambitious film projects ever undertaken, with an

overall budget of over \$300 million the entire project took eight years, with the filming for all three films done simultaneously and entirely in New Zealand, Jackson's native country.

While the films follow the book's general storyline, they do omit some of the novel's plot elements and include some additions to and deviations from the source material.

Set in the fictional world of Middle-earth, the films follow the hobbit Frodo Baggins (Elijah Wood) as he and a Fellowship embark on a quest to destroy the One Ring, and thus ensure the destruction of its maker, the Dark Lord Sauron (Sala Baker). The Fellowship eventually splits up and Frodo continues the quest together with his loyal companion Sam (Sean Astin) and the treacherous Gollum (Andy Serkis). Meanwhile, Aragorn (Viggo Mortensen), heir in exile to the throne of Gondor, Legolas, Gimli, Merry, and Pippin, and the wizard Gandalf (Ian McKellen) unite to rally the Free Peoples of Middle-earth in the War of the Ring.

The series was a major financial success, with the films collectively being among the highest-grossing film series of all time. The films were critically acclaimed and heavily awarded, winning 17 out of 30 total Academy Award nominations. The final film in the series, *The Return of the King*, won all of its 11 Academy Award nominations including Best Picture, which also tied it with *Ben-Hur* and *Titanic* for most Academy Awards received for a film. The series received wide praise for its innovative special and visual effects.

One of key aspects to be addressed in this report is the significant undertone of Biblical themes and Catholic themes. This is not surprising given that Tolkien was a devout Catholic however it is clear that this Book was more than just another work of fantasy.

In this edition of the global watch weekly we examine the relationship between *Lord of the Rings* and specific elements of Christology to uncover some very interesting findings.

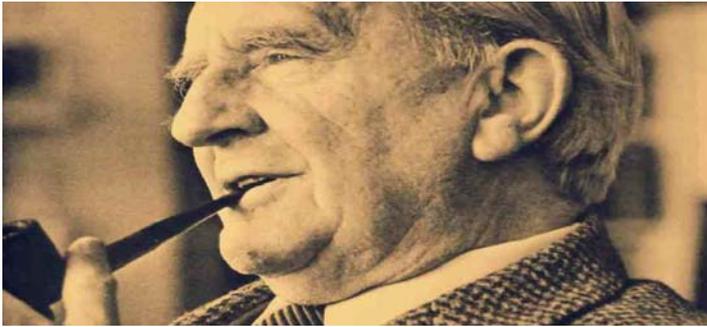
Be blessed and encouraged.

Daniel Bailey (Chief Editor)

# THE LORD OF THE RINGS

## TOLKIEN - THE MASTERMIND

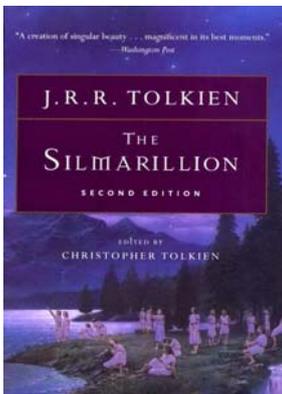
J. R. R. Tolkien once described his epic masterpiece *The Lord of the Rings* as "a fundamentally religious and Catholic work." Yet nowhere in its pages is there any mention of religion, let alone of the Catholic Church, Christ, or even God. Tolkien's hobbits have no religious practices or cult; of prayer, sacrifice, or corporate worship there is no sign.



To make matters more difficult, Tolkien was equally emphatic that *The Lord of the Rings* were not to be understood allegorically. In fact, Tolkien was famously hostile to allegory in general, disliking even the allegorical children's stories of his friend and fellow Christian C. S. Lewis, *The Chronicles of Narnia* yet we now uncover some specific themes in his story, themes which clearly echo a biblical world view.

## CREATION AND CORRUPTION

Part of the answer is found in Tolkien's other great chronicle of Middle-earth, *The Silmarillion*, which recounts the larger mythic context of Middle-earth, beginning with a magnificent allegorical retelling of the Creation and the Fall according to Genesis 1-3.



Here Tolkien does name the creator-God of Middle-earth, Eru ("the One," also called Ilúvatar, "All-Father"), as well as the mighty spirit Melkor, who rebelled against Eru and went into darkness (mirroring Ezekiel 28:11-19). We also learn that Sauron, maker of the One Ring, is himself an

agent of this Melkor. Tolkien thus establishes a direct relationship between the theistic, even Judeo-Christian cosmology of *The Silmarillion*

and the war for the One Ring recounted in *The Lord of the Rings*.

In the latter work itself there is no mention of Eru, nor is there any explicitly religious component to the characters' behavior. Even so, Tolkien's worldview not only stands behind the saga of the Ring in its prehistory, but surrounds and suffuses it in its overarching themes and imaginative structures.

His faith is not the only aspect of Tolkien's inner life or personal experiences that bears upon the story. Other influences include Tolkien's love of languages, his early youth in a Shire-like pre-industrial Warwickshire, his love of trees and nature generally and corresponding dislike of engines and machines, and his experiences in World War I, where he encountered plain rural Englishmen performing everyday acts of great heroism.

But it was Tolkien's deeply held faith that most profoundly shaped his work. Though he rightly insisted *The Lord of the Rings* is not an allegorical work, the fact is that Tolkien thought, imagined, and wrote as a bible believer and his work bears the clear signs of his faith, as he fully intended it should.

The Judeo-Christian conception of creation and the fall, and of the pre-eminence of good over evil, is an important theme not only in *The Silmarillion* but also in *The Lord of the Rings*, where we find evil in Middle-earth depicted as a corruption and distortion of prior and fundamental goodness. In particular, just as Melkor and Sauron are fallen Ainur or angelic beings, the evil creatures and races of Middle-earth are always corrupted or distorted versions of the good ones.

For example, there are the trolls, "bred in mockery" of the tree-like Ents; the orcs, corrupted or misbred descendants of the Elves; and the fearsome Nazgûl or Black Riders, wraiths of human kings. Likewise, the evil wizard Saruman is a fallen Istari, and even Gollum is a withered hobbit. (we examine this fallen principle later).

The underlying principle is illuminated in a key exchange between Samwise Gamgee and Frodo Baggins, as they travel through the dark land of

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Mordor "where Shadows lie," on a mission to destroy the evil Ring. When Sam wonders if the evil orcs eat and drink food and water like ordinary creatures, or if perhaps they live on poison and foul air, Frodo replies:



"No, they eat and drink, Sam. The Shadow that bred them can only mock, it cannot make: not real new things of its own. I don't think it gave life to the orcs, it only ruined them and twisted them; and if they are to live at all, they have to live like other living creatures. Foul waters and foul meats they'll take, if they can get no better, but not poison."

There is no possibility here, as perhaps there is with the two sides of the Force in George Lucas's Star Wars films, of a dualistic interpretation of good and evil as equal and opposite forces, yin and yang, twin sides of one coin. In Tolkien's vision, goodness is primordial, evil derivative; and, whatever tragedies and horrors may be visited upon this world, they shall not have the final word.

This sense of eschatological hope becomes exceptionally clear in one memorable passage during the journey through Mordor, in which Sam has a kind of epiphany:

"The land seemed full of creaking and cracking and sly noises, but there was no sound of voice or of foot. Far above the Ephel Duath in the West the night-sky was still dim and pale. There, peeping among the cloud-wrack above a dark tor high up in the mountains, Sam saw a white star twinkle for a while. The beauty of it smote his heart, as he looked up out of the forsaken land, and hope returned to him. For like a shaft, clear and cold, the thought pierced him that in the end the Shadow was only a small and passing thing: there was a light and high beauty for ever beyond its reach. His song in the Tower had been defiance rather than hope; for then he was thinking of himself. Now, for a moment, his own fate, and even his master's, ceased to trouble him. He crawled back into the brambles and laid himself by Frodo's side, and putting away all fear he cast himself into a deep untroubled sleep."

Mere "defiance" of evil is a natural or pagan virtue (the evil giants will win in the end, said the

Norse warriors, but we go to die with the gods). But hope, in Christian thought, is a theological virtue, and it is this eschatological hope that fills Sam's heart.

This sense of hope in Middle-earth is also rooted in an undefined but definite awareness of Providence. The name of Eru may not be spoken in *The Lord of the Rings*, but his will is evident from the outset, when Gandalf explains to Frodo the significance of the evil Ring being discovered by his uncle Bilbo, a humble hobbit. In that seemingly chance occurrence, Gandalf says,

"...there was something else at work, beyond any design of the Ring-maker. I can put it no plainer than by saying that Bilbo was meant to find the Ring, and not by its maker. In which case you also were meant to have it. And that may be an encouraging thought."



Gandalf can "put it no plainer," of course, because in this story Tolkien wishes to avoid explicit entanglement with religious doctrine. Nevertheless, the underlying idea is clear.

The hand of Providence is seen at various points throughout the drama of the story, but nowhere more clearly than in the climactic scene at Mount Doom, where two central characters struggling with evil both succumb, yet in the conflict of their evil wills not evil but good is served.

In the hands of another writer, such an ending might be seen as coincidental, ironic, absurdist, or even *deus ex machina*. As written by Tolkien, however, it is the inevitable result of the collision between the inexorable designs of Providence and the limitations of his fallen cast of characters.

It is here that Tolkien most emphatically rejects an allegorizing interpretation: Frodo may be a Christ-like figure in many ways, but he is not, like Lewis's lion Aslan, an allegorical representation

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of Christ himself. Where Christ triumphed, Frodo fails.



“Then Frodo spoke with a clear voice.....'I have come,' he said. But I do not choose now to do what I came to do. I will not do this deed. The Ring is mine!'.....But Gollum, dancing like a mad thing, held aloft the ring.....'Precious!' Gollum cried...and with that, even as his eyes were lifted up to gloat on his prize, he stepped too far, toppled, wavered for a moment on the brink, and then with a shriek he fell. Out of the depths came his last wail Precious, and he was gone.”

Yet the designs of Providence are still served. The ring is destroyed and the curse of darkness if vanquished.

Frodo's ultimate failure at Mount Doom is also important for another reason: It strikes, even on the brink of victory, a note of sorrow and loss that pervades these books.

For all its signs of Providence and eschatological hope, *The Lord of the Rings* is not just the story of ultimate victory of good over evil, but also of one important battle far in a mythical past.

Far from a Revelation-22-like epiphany of eternal glory in which every tear is wiped away, Tolkien's story resonates with elegiac sorrow and acute awareness of things lost never to be regained. Again and again we are made aware of all that once was and shall never be again (or never again till the world is renewed). The Ents never find their Ent-wives; Frodo never returns to Lothlórien; the Elves depart forever into the West.

All of this is shaped by the author's consciousness of the fallenness of the world and the inevitable sorrows of this life. "I am a

*Christian, and indeed a Roman Catholic,*" Tolkien once wrote to a friend, "so that I do not expect 'history' to be anything but a 'long defeat' — though it contains some samples or glimpses of final victory."

This is precisely the sensibility that Tolkien's own "legend" embodies. "Samples or glimpses of final victory" there certainly are, but also sorrow and tragedy and loss. Even in the very end, victory is tempered by signs of sorrow and loss: Frodo's failure at Mount Doom; the scouring of the Shire; the departure of the Elves.

Despite these climactic sorrowful elements, Tolkien's conclusion avoids the device of a climactic tragedy or heroic death, like the death of Thorin Oakenshield at the climax of *The Hobbit*, the prelude to *The Lord of the Rings*. In that story, Thorin redeemed himself from his obstinacy toward Bilbo by dying valiantly in the Battle of Five Armies.

In *The Lord of the Rings*, by contrast, no one is required to die in order to destroy the dark lord and his evil ring, or even to perish in the final struggle against him. Frodo and Sam, Aragorn and Faramir, Gandalf and Gimli and Legolas, Merry and Pippin — all survive the final conflict (one supporting character, aged Théoden, does die in battle with the Nazgûl).



Of course an important character (Gollum) does perish with the ring and its master, but in doing so he isn't sacrificing himself, but reaping judgment, being consumed by the evil of his own choosing. In the end, the only true horror is a soul that goes into the fire, and even that serves the designs of Providence.

That Tolkien avoided a climactic sacrificial death in *The Lord of the Rings* is not due to some failure on his part to appreciate the dramatic merits of such a device, but because in this

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ending he was doing something different.

Some victories come only at the cost of some final sacrifice or loss, but this, Tolkien believed, is not the deepest truth about the conflict of good and evil, and the "final victory" over evil of which legends can offer only "samples or glimpses" turns on no such loss.

The elements of sorrow and fallenness in Tolkien's ending forbid an allegorical-eschatological interpretation, yet in the absence of a climactic tragedy and the survival of all the companions it's possible to see "samples or glimpses of final victory."

Indeed, the element of hope is so strong that Samwise can even wonder aloud, "*Is everything sad going to come untrue?*" To which the answer is: Yes, but not here, alas, not now. Here in Middle-earth there is still hard work to be done, future shadows to be fought, and, somewhere in the unspecified future, redemption still to be accomplished by the one whose saving work is only remotely echoed in the great deeds of Frodo and Gandalf and Aragorn.

## PRIEST PROPHET AND KING

Frodo Baggins, Gandalf the Grey, and Aragorn each in a remote way embody one of the three aspects of Christ's ministry as priest, prophet, and king. Each also undergoes a kind of sacrificial "death" and rebirth.

The priestly role belongs to Frodo, who bears a burden of terrible evil on behalf of the whole



world, like Christ carrying his cross. Frodo's *via dolorosa* or way of sorrows is at the very heart of Tolkien's story, just as the crucifixion narratives are at the heart of the gospels accounts. As

Christ descended into the grave, Frodo journeys into Mordor, the Land of Death, and there suffers a deathlike state in the lair of the giant spider Shelob before awakening to complete his task. And, as Christ ascended into heaven, Frodo's life in Middle-earth comes to an end when he departs over the sea into the mythical West with the Elves, which is as much to say, into paradise.



Gandalf is the prophet, revealing hidden knowledge, working wonders, teaching others the way. Evoking the saving death and resurrection of Christ, Gandalf does battle with the powers of hell (his defeat of the Balrog) to save his friends, sacrificing himself and descending into the nether regions before being triumphantly reborn in greater power and glory as Gandalf the White. As with Frodo, Gandalf's sojourn in Middle-earth ends with his final voyage over the sea into the West.



Finally, there is Aragorn, the crownless destined to be king. Besides being a messianic king of prophecy, Aragorn also dimly reflects the saving work of Christ by walking the Paths of the Dead and offering peace to the spirits there imprisoned, anticipating the way that Christ on his death went to Hell. Also of note is Aragorn's humility just as when Christ came the first time he came as a humble lamb. One who

## MARIAN AND CATHOLIC INFLUENCES



As a Catholic at some point you would expect Tolkien to plant some connection with teachings that are strictly Catholic which are rejected by mainstream Christianity. The place of Mary in Catholic

faith and piety is reflected in another key figure of Middle-earth: Galadriel, the elven Queen of Lothlórien. Tolkien himself explicitly acknowledged this connection, observing in a letter to a friend, "*I think it is true that I owe much of this character to Christian and Catholic teaching and imagination about Mary.*" In another letter he remarked that it is upon our Lady that "*all my own small perception of beauty both in majesty and simplicity is founded.*"

In imagining a glorious and immortal Queen of a paradisiacal realm, and in depicting the devotion of others to her, Tolkien could hardly help drawing on the actual devotion in his religious tradition to a glorified Queen of a divine realm.

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Indeed, in being drawn to create such a character in the first place, Tolkien's imagination was informed and fired by his faith and piety. Had he been, for instance, a Southern Baptist, or evangelical, doubtless Galadriel either would never have existed at all, or would at any rate have been an entirely different *figure*.

*There is one point in the movie "The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug" where Galadriel dramatically confronts Sauron in a state of "power" and "authority" and is able to push him back. This type of scene is consistent with Catholics who believe that Mary is able to war against Satan on our behalf.*

Obviously we reject such a belief since the Bible says it is through Christ that we have power over the works of the enemy not his earthly mother.



Galadriel is not the only elven Queen with Marian associations. The elvish hymns sung in praise of Elbereth (one of the female Gods of the valar who created the elves) resonate with Marian hymnody;

A number of writers have observed similarities between the following lines of Tolkien's poetry and a well-known Marian hymn Tolkien would have known from childhood.

Snow-white! Snow-white! O Lady clear!

O Queen beyond the Western seas!

O light to us that wander here

Amid the world of woven trees!...

O Elbereth! Gilthoniel!

We still remember, we who dwell

In this far land beneath the trees,

Thy starlight on the Western seas.

Note the themes common to these lines and those that follow (the singer as wanderer in a remote land; the far-off Queen as a source of

light and guidance; the repeated association of the Queen with starlight and the sea):

Hail, Queen of Heaven, the ocean star,

Guide of the wand'rer here below:

Thrown on life's surge, we claim thy care -

Save us from peril and from woe.

Mother of Christ, star of the sea,

Pray for the wanderer, pray for me.

These ethereal queens aren't the books' only elvish element with specifically Catholic resonance. The "waybread" or lembas of the Elves, given to the members of the Fellowship in Lothlórien, has clear eucharistic overtones. "Wafers" (Tolkien's word) of this extraordinary food, we read

"had a virtue without which [Frodo and Sam] would long ago have lain down to die. It did not satisfy desire, and at times Sam's mind was filled with the memories of food, and the longing for simple bread and meats. And yet this waybread of the Elves had a potency that increased as travellers relied on it alone and did not mingle it with other foods. It fed the will, and it gave strength to endure, and to master sinew and limb beyond the measure of mortal kind."

## CORRUPTION AND CONVERSION

Although Tolkien never explains just how the wearer of the One Ring, at least if he is a titan like Sauron or Gandalf, takes advantage of its power to dominate others, another aspect of the Ring's power is vividly realized throughout the books: its seductive power over the one who carries it. Gollum was consumed by it, Bilbo begins to suffer its deleterious effects, Gandalf and Galadriel refuse even to touch it, Boromir succumbs to its attraction, and even Frodo battles its allure all the way to Mount Doom before finally falling under its spell. Frodo may be a type of Christ, but only a type, and all types ultimately fall short of the reality.

Side by side with this depiction of the allure of evil is an acknowledgment of the possibility of conversion and redemption. Even Gollum, after years of enslavement and degeneration, seems to respond to Frodo's mercy by rising almost to the brink of redemption, struggling between good and evil before falling back into darkness and ultimately his doom.

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Boromir, on the other hand, genuinely repents of his moment of weakness, and is redeemed, not only by an act of reparation that costs him his life, but also by making confession of his wrongdoing to another.

As for Frodo, he is finally saved not by last-minute repentance, but by a pre-emptive providence, a strange grace that uses Gollum's concupiscence to give Frodo another chance. Thus, Frodo's own mercy to Gollum becomes a factor in his deliverance from the consequences of his ultimate failure.

## THE ELECTION OF FRODO



Why does Frodo eventually succumb to the power of the Ring? A more revealing question might be why he endures against it as long as he does. To put it a third way, why do the great powers of Middle-earth, wizards and rulers of Elves, elect to entrust this most dangerous of artifacts to the keeping of a defenseless hobbit, a creature of comfort and humble domesticity?

Why not trust to the strength and cunning of Aragorn, the power of Galadriel, the art of Gandalf? In part, the answer lies in the element of surprise. A special council (The Council at Rivendell) gambles on sending the Ring straight into Mordor in the keeping of an insignificant

creature partly because this is the one move the Enemy would not anticipate.

But there's more to it. There's a reason Gandalf finds it encouraging that the mysterious ways of fate brought the Ring into the possession of a hobbit rather than a warrior or wizard or elf, and why, of the mixed fellowship that departs Rivendell for Mordor, Frodo and no other is the Ring-bearer. Frodo's very lack of power, either physical or mystical, is itself seen as a sign of hope. The powerless can be less likely to trust to themselves, less likely to fall prey to hubris and presumption, more available as instruments of grace or divine action. Tolkien's unlikely heroes reflect the paradoxes of the apostle Paul:

"When I am weak, then am I strong" and "God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise."

## FURTHER CHRISTOLOGICAL RESONANCE

With all three films of Peter Jackson's epic it is clear that Jackson and his collaborators have been quite candid that, while not sharing Tolkien's religious beliefs, they brought to the project an awareness of Tolkien's faith, and a desire to honor his themes and to avoid imposing their own "baggage" onto the films.

Of course, some of the books' religiously themed elements are so central that it would be impossible to avoid them altogether without gutting the books. Even so, the filmmakers' openness to these themes was undoubtedly a helpful factor, and indeed in some cases it seems they have actually gone beyond the text in introducing religiously evocative elements that resonate with and reinforce the story's existing religious themes.

One obvious example of an apparently deliberate appropriation by the filmmakers of the Christian resonances of the books is the death and return of Gandalf in *The Fellowship of the Ring* and *The Two Towers*. Gandalf's self-sacrifice and descent into the nether world in the Mines of Moria during the battle with the demonic Balrog is the dramatic center and major set piece of the first film.

The Balrog itself is as hellish as Jackson's conceptual artists and the effects people could make it: a demonic thing of smoke and flame

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The Christological echoes are even more distinct in *The Two Towers*. Shining like a painting of the risen Christ, or like the ascended Jesus appearing to St. Paul on the Damascus road, Gandalf the White appears to his followers, Aragorn, Legolas, and Gimli, who like the disciples are at first unable to recognize him. In fact, like Mary Magdalene, they initially suppose him to be someone else. Then, when they do recognize him, Legolas, overcome with joy and awe, drops to his knees.



The descent of Gandalf to turn the tide of the war in the battle for Helms Deep in *The Two Towers* is completely resonant of the second coming of Christ when he comes to fight the Battle of Armageddon surrounded by thousands upon thousands of the saints at a time when Jerusalem is encompassed by armies.



As Gandalf rides down the hill on a white horse to face the enemy a bright light emerges which blinds the thousands of orcs waiting to oppose him. Its simply one of the most amazing scenes

which mirrors Revelation 19:11-15,19-21

"I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter."

He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and his army. But the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who had performed the signs on its behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. The rest were killed with the sword coming out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh."

The Christological story-arcs of Frodo and Aragorn are also in evidence in the films. Frodo walks his *via dolorosa* or "way of sorrows" to Mount Doom like Jesus making his way to Calvary. As Jesus bore the sins of mankind, Frodo bears a great burden of evil on behalf of the world, and as he approaches the Cracks of Doom the Ring becomes as much a crushing weight as the wood of the cross.

In *The Return of the King* Jackson gives us Frodo's death and rebirth, descending into the depths of Shelob's lair, wrapped in a shroud of spider silk, placed in the "sepulchre" of Cirith Ungol.

However, the films invent for Aragorn a death-and-rebirth story-arc not found in the books. In a skirmish with orcs and Wargs, Aragorn falls off a cliff and is borne away by a river, not re-joining his friends until Helm's Deep.

While this whole sequence wasn't written by Tolkien, and fans may debate the merits of introducing it in the film, on a thematic level the motif of death and rebirth is certainly present in Tolkien, and Aragorn's status as a Christlike king is reinforced by the expansion.

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## ANGELS AND FALLEN ANGELS

The moral order of Tolkien's world is also reflected in the films' explicit acknowledgment of the derivation of evil races and creatures from good ones: In the first book the *Fellowship of the Ring*, Saruman states that the orcs "were once elves."

In the story Orcs are a corrupted mutation of elves resulting in some very unsightly images compared to the non fallen elves



Much of this seems to fit the biblical theme of how angels were created and how there was a time in angelic history when one third of the angels fell through corruption as seen in Jude and II Peter.

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Jude 1:6

In J. R. R. Tolkien's legendarium, Elves are one of the races that inhabit a fictional Earth, often called Middle-earth, and set in the remote past. They appear in *The Hobbit* and in *The Lord of the Rings*, but their complex history is described more fully in *The Silmarillion*.

However their origin is first mentioned in *The Book of Lost Tales* where Tolkien develops a theme that the diminutive fairy-like race of Elves had once been a great and mighty people, and that as Men took over the world, these Elves had "diminished" in their association and visibility in the world of men.

Some Christian scholars especially those who believe in the Genesis "gap theory" may see a relationship here where they believe that before the time of Adam and Eve there was an undefined period of time in which angels were the

custodians of this planet before it having to be re-created as a result of the fall of Lucifer.

According to the earliest accounts of Tolkien, the first Elves are awakened by Eru Ilúvatar near the bay of Cuiviénen during the Years of the Trees in the First Age. They awake under the starlit sky, as the Sun and Moon have yet to be created.

"Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" Job 38:6-7

## EVIL AND REDEMPTION

This theme reaches its dramatic apex at the critical moment in *The Return of the King* when Frodo's Christological resonances give way to mortal weakness and failure. At the same time, there is also the providential grace that rewards him for his mercy and heroic sacrifice by sparing him the consequences of his actions and giving him the opportunity to repent.

The theme of conversion and redemption is also touchingly realized in Boromir's final moments in *The Fellowship of the Ring*, in which the spiritual significance of Boromir's confession to Aragorn that he tried to take the ring is enhanced by another extra-textual gloss: a ritual gesture of blessing from Aragorn.

The films also explicitly refers to life after death. In *The Return of the King*, in the siege on Minas Tirith, Gandalf tells Pippin that death is not the end, and goes on to speak in evocative imagery of the afterlife.

Another religiously significant addition is the elf princess Arwen's intercessory prayer for "grace" to be given to Frodo. In *The Fellowship of The Ring*, seeking to save Frodo from poison, Arwen prays, like the apostle Paul expressing their willingness to be accursed for the sake of God's people, that any "grace" given to her should instead pass to Frodo.

There are other examples which could be quoted but hopefully this is enough for you to see how profound the stamp of Christian symbolism is within the movie.

# THE LORD OF THE RINGS

## FINAL THOUGHTS AND SUMMARY

Even though *The Lord of the Rings* is not an allegory of the Gospels, we can find numerous parallels to the Gospels in *The Lord of the Rings*, since the Person at the center of the Gospels is omnipresent in hidden ways, not only in His eternal, universal nature as Truth, Goodness, and Beauty, but even in his particular historical manifestation, his Incarnation.

For instance, Frodo's journey up Mount Doom is strikingly similar to Christ's Way of the Cross. Sam is his Simon of Cyrene, but he carries the cross bearer as well as the cross.

There is no one complete, concrete, visible Christ figure in *The Lord of the Rings*, but Christ is really, though invisibly, present in the whole of *The Lord of the Rings*.

He is more clearly present in Gandalf, Frodo, and Aragorn, the three Christ figures. First of all, all three undergo different forms of death and resurrection

Second, all three are saviors: through their self-sacrifice they help save all of Middle-earth from the demonic sway of Sauron.

Third, they exemplify the Old Testament threefold Messianic symbolism of prophet (Gandalf), priest (Frodo), and king (Aragorn).

It's also interesting how Tolkien makes the symbol of the film (*The One Ring*) a complete opposite in characteristic and influence to the most fundamental Christian symbol which is the Cross.

The Cross gives life; the Ring takes it. The Cross gives you death, not power; the Ring gives you power even over death. The Ring squeezes everything into its inner emptiness; the Cross expands in all four directions, gives itself to the emptiness, filling it with its blood, its life. The Ring is Dracula's tooth. The Cross is God's sword, held at the hilt by the hand of Heaven and plunged into the world not to take our blood but to give us His. The Cross is Christ's hypodermic; the Ring is Dracula's bite. The Cross saves other wills; the Ring dominates other wills. The Cross liberates; the Ring enslaves.

The Cross works only freely, by the vulnerability of love. Love is vulnerable to rejection, and thus apparent failure. Frodo offers Gollum free kindness, but he fails to win Gollum's trust and fails himself, at the Crack of Doom, to complete his task. But his philosophy does not fail.

He could have used the philosophy of Sauron, of the Ring. He could have used force and compelled Gollum, or even justly killed him. But no one can make another person good by controlling his will, not even God. Frodo nearly won Gollum by his kindness, but Gollum chose not to trust and lost both his body and his soul.

There is no room for failure in the philosophy of the dark lord Sauron. Yet there is room for failure in the philosophy of Tolkien, for the philosophy of Tolkien is simply Christianity. And according to Christianity, the most revealing thing that ever happened in history happened at another Crack of Doom, when Christ "failed", lost, died but through what was perceived to be failure, he overcame death and hell.

That was how the meek little Lamb defeated the great dragon beast by His blood. Frodo did what Christ did, and it "worked"

"Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil." Hebrews 2:14

*The Lord of the Rings* film trilogy is an extraordinary cinematic tribute to a great work of imagination. While not equalling the religious vision of the books, the films honor that vision in a way that Christian viewers can appreciate, and that for non-Christians, may represent a rare encounter with a vision of good and evil and the ultimate prevailing of divine providence without feeling preached at. In the landscape of modern Hollywood, *The Lord of the Rings* is a rare beacon of light.