

CAN YOU FIND
JESUS
IN
THE LORD OF THE RINGS

By: John Macdonald

First printing: February 2007

Written by: John MacDonald
Cover design by: Ian Murray

Contact us: info@realsuperman.net
Telephone: (819) 682-8830

Visit our website: www.realsuperman.net

Biblical quotations are from the New International Version unless indicated otherwise.

John MacDonald resides in Quebec, Canada, with his wife and two daughters. He has been involved in youth ministry for many years. Presently, John and his family host weekly sports nights for local teens. John teaches a class at church on Sundays.

INTRODUCTION

The Lord of the Rings is a great story that reflects the greatest story of all time. There are spiritual comparisons in The Lord of the Rings that can be made with our world. The Elves are able to live forever just as angels do while the Orcs and other evil beings are like the demonic forces causing havoc on the earth. There are quotations that come from the Bible. The salvation that is brought to Middle Earth reflects the main features of the life and death of Jesus Christ.

The movies only represent the final days of the history of Middle Earth. They provide an exciting summary that helps us see the destruction of evil and the return of the king. J. R. R. Tolkien, the author of the story, was a Christian. He loved the true King and was waiting for the true King.

What King?

Jesus is the King.

Compared with the hope and salvation of Jesus, the world of the Elves is only a shadow. The end of the movie leaves mysteries and sadness. In contrast, the book of Revelation in the Bible tells us that the kingdom of Jesus will be eternally glorious because of the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. “There shall be nothing in the city which is evil; for the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him. And they shall see his face... the Lord God will be their light; and they shall reign forever and ever.” (Revelation 22:3-5)

The story of The Lord of the Rings is about a quest to find the Mountain of Doom. It is about a great search. Look closely, for it is possible to find Jesus if you search for him.

FIND THE CREATOR

Eru is the Creator-God of Middle Earth. His story is not found in The Lord of the Rings or in The Hobbit. In the history of Middle Earth we have to go back to The Silmarillion, a book that includes the beginning of Middle Earth. Did you ever wonder about those origins? For example, where did Sauron come from? Or, what power did the Elves have?

“There was Eru, the One, who in Arda is called Iluvatar; and he made first the Ainur, the Holy Ones, that were the children of his thought, and they were with him before anything else was made. And he spoke to them, teaching them themes of music; and they sang before him, and he was glad.” From: The Silmarillion

In The Silmarillion there are many events described from the early years of Middle Earth. It describes how Eru and the Ainur created the Earth and how the beauty was admired. However, evil also became evident during the creation time as well. Sauron and others began as members of the Ainur but they fell into

darkness through their arrogance and contempt. They had a desire for power and worship and they caused flaws and fights.

The existence of a Creator is implied throughout “The Lord of the Rings” movies. The beauty of the scenes of the movies, the longing for a perfect world and the spiritual thoughts of the characters indicate that there is something more than just the physical dimension. Even the advertisement for the Alliance-Atlantic film company before the movies begin shows soaring, snow-capped mountain peaks that only a mighty Creator could make. Such beautiful mountains set the tone for the movies since mountains are so important for the story.

One of the beauties of the Bible is the description of the creation of the universe. The opening words of the Bible are majestic: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). God’s eight words of command are simple, yet full of meaning. “Let there be” Each of the creation days provided new infinitely complex systems and life. Without the wisdom of God in coordinating all of life, there could be no life. God’s spirit was present throughout all of life, sustaining and breathing existence into it. “The morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy” (Job 38:7). God also assessed all he had made.

“God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.” (Genesis 1:31)

FIND THE DECEIVER

“It began with the forging of the great rings.
Three were given to the elves, immortal, wisest and fairest of all beings,
seven to the dwarf lords,
great miners and craftsmen of the mountain halls,
and nine,
nine rings were gifted to the race of men
who above all else desire power,
for within these rings was bound the strength and will
to govern each race
but they were all of them deceived

for another Ring was made
in the Land of Mordor, in the fires of Mount Doom
the Dark Lord Sauron forged in secret a Master Ring
to control all others
and into this Ring he poured his cruelty, his malice and his will to
dominate all life.

One Ring to rule them all, one Ring to find them,
one Ring to bring them all and in the darkness bind them.

In the land of Mordor where the shadows lie.”

These are the opening words from the first movie of the “The Lord of the Rings”, “The Fellowship of the Rings”. There was an enemy. His will was to dominate totally. He wanted to rule cruelly and bind all peoples in the darkness. He was evil.

Most of the peoples of Middle Earth were deceived by Sauron. Only after they had accepted his gifts did they realize that they were falling under his control. The Elves perceived their danger and took off their rings, but the other ring bearers became evil. The nine kings of men that received the rings became spirits, Wraiths, neither living nor dead, always under the power of Sauron and doing his will. They became his deadliest warriors. They terrorized every creature in Middle Earth.

An alliance of Men and Elves fought against Sauron and after much bloodshed, Isildur the son of the King of Gondor cut Sauron’s fingers off. The Master Ring fell to the ground and Sauron was turned into a weakened spirit. The blade that cut the hand was broken, but Sauron was defeated and his spirit fled the destruction of his kingdom.

In the Bible, the deceiver’s name is Satan and it is interestingly similar to the name Sauron. The first evidence of him in the Bible is in Genesis 3:1 “Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD GOD had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’”

Because Adam and Eve ate the fruit that was offered to them by Satan, all of the human race is now under the power of sin and Satan. We see the power of sin in arguments, sinful thoughts, sickness, pain and death. Eventually, if we remain in the power of sin, we will become like the Wraiths of Sauron, neither living nor dead, always under the control of the evil one. Satan wants to dominate us forever.

Satan tries to deceive us. He has inspired millions of lies that capture all of us to different degrees. One lie that we might have believed is that we don’t have a Creator. Another lie is that we don’t have to appear before the Creator some day. Satan lies to us when he convinces us that we shouldn’t try to find God or love God.

FIND BEAUTY

There was beauty in “The Lord of the Rings”. In the western part of Middle Earth was the land of the Shire, the land of the Hobbits. Here, all was green and healthy. Flowers bloomed, birds sang and rich farmland produced excellent crops. There was food and health, life and joy.

Gandalf rode into the Shire and marveled at the land and the Hobbits.

Frodo: “What news of the outside world? Tell me everything.”

Gandalf: “Life in the wide world goes on much as it has this past age, full of its own comings and goings. Scarcely aware of the existence of Hobbits for which I am very thankful.”

There is great beauty in our world as well. It is God's grace that allows plant life to start again in spring. He causes us to desire beauty and seek it. God is the greatest beauty and with wisdom we should praise the one who has the wisdom to make the flowers bloom, and who opens his hand to provide the climate that can grow the food that we need. God is the one who can "satisfy the desire of every living thing" (Psalm 145:16).

There is also a beautiful heaven after this world is over that God has prepared for those who love Him. We must ask for his permission to enter heaven. We must ask Jesus to forgive us for our sins and bring us into his family so that we can enter the beauty that he has prepared.

FIND THE MIRACLE WORKER

Who was this Gandalf? He hugged Frodo tightly. He laughed and listened. He had a friendly smile and shared his knowledge with great insight. However, he had been given a label, "A disturber of the peace", for causing others to wonder about things beyond the Shire.

Children were excited and ran after him calling his name. They cried for fireworks and Gandalf provided a creative display of sound and light. They clapped and shouted joyfully. Even stodgy old men smiled.

Gandalf provided live entertainment at the birthday party for Bilbo. The best fireworks that any had ever seen were given for everyone's enjoyment. A mystery of the past was revealed in the dragon firework. It caused fear, wonder and joy.

Jesus was the miracle worker of the Bible. Jesus described his purpose:

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." (Luke 5:18)

The first recorded miracle of Jesus occurred in the town of Cana at a wedding party. When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him:

"'They have no more wine.'

Jesus said to the servants, 'Fill the jars with water'; so they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, 'Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.'

They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He called the groom aside and said:

'...You have saved the best till now.'" (John 2:1-10)

The greatest celebration for Jesus was when he was entering Jerusalem the week before his crucifixion. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds

that went ahead of him and those that followed him began joyfully to praise God for the miracles they had seen:

“Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!”

“Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” (Luke 19:37-38)

FIND THE RING OF SIN

The Ring was the focal point of the story. The Ring was evil and a symbol for sin. Its characteristics and effects were elaborated on from time to time. The movie said that Sauron “poured his cruelty, his malice and his will to dominate all life” into the Ring. It became a source of Sauron’s power. The Ring was what controlled all the others. It would bring them all to Mordor and hold them in destructive torment forever.

Sauron was seeking to find his Ring. All his thought was bent upon it. If he could recover the Ring, his power would greatly increase and he would be so powerful that none would be able to conquer him.

The Ring had a will of its own. It could hear, think, make noises and cause things to happen to itself. After Isildur claimed the Ring for his own it made him not want to destroy it. Later, it betrayed Isildur and slipped off of his hand and Isildur was killed by Orcs. The Ring was able to leave Gollum when it decided to try to return to Sauron.

Even the wise and good forces of Middle Earth wanted to know where the Ring was. They didn’t want the strongest weapon of Sauron to appear again. They wanted to prevent the Ring’s evil influences.

Bilbo had the Ring. He had found it in Gollum’s cave. He used it to disappear from his own birthday party. He laughed when he flipped it in the air and caught it. Gandalf heard him and said:

“There are many magic rings in this world, Bilbo Baggins, and none of them should be used lightly.”

Sin is a terrible thing in our world too and should not be thought of lightly. Sin is anything that we think, say or do that breaks God’s laws. This includes evil behaviour, greed, lust and hatred. “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

We don’t recognize how much danger we are in or how often we are tempted. In our world we fall into sin regularly. We face consequences from the ones responsible for us and we get natural consequences for our sins such as pain, injury and disease. The news gets worse because the ultimate consequence of our sin is death and judgment from God in hell (Romans 6:23). We need help to get out of the troubles that we cause, others cause and the troubles that are in our world because of sin.

Gollum is an excellent example of what sin will do to us. We regularly become infatuated with something sinful and if the cycle isn’t broken we are sucked down to destruction.

FIND FREEDOM

The quest of the movie was to find freedom from the power of the Ring and the Dark Lord. Ultimate freedom could only happen if the Ring could be destroyed. The Ring and the Dark Lord were one. If the Ring could be thrown into the mountain of fire, then Sauron would be destroyed. This was the one hope, the only chance that the free world had.

When Gandalf told Bilbo to give up the Ring he was explaining the solution to the problems of the world and life. He had to be free from sin.

Gandalf: "I think you've had that Ring quite long enough."

Bilbo: "You want the Ring for yourself."

Gandalf: "Don't take me for some conjurer of cheap tricks. I'm not trying to rob you. I'm trying to help you.

All your long years we've been friends.

Trust me as you once did. Let it go."

Bilbo: "You're right Gandalf, the Ring must go to Frodo."

Sin is deceptive and so was the Ring. Bilbo had his pack on his back and a walking stick in his hand. He would have walked out the door and kept the Ring without having given it up. He didn't even realize that he hadn't given it up. He had put it in his pocket as he always had.

Gandalf: "Bilbo. The Ring is still in your pocket."

Bilbo: "Oh, yes."

Bilbo was finally forced to give up the Ring. Bilbo and the audience looked at the Ring as he considered it. Slowly he dropped it. Immediately it seemed like a burden had fallen off his back. He gave a sigh of relief. He had an understanding of his future without the Ring:

"And he lived happily ever after till the end of his days."

In our world, in order for us to have happiness, our personal sin has to be destroyed. We should want to be free from the evils of sin such as greed and ungodly anger. The great quest of God and people is the establishing of a loving, peaceful and joyful world. We also want to live forever in youth and strength. The quest is how to bring our sin and the sin of the world to the place of destruction.

Just like Bilbo had to, God wants us to choose to turn away from our sins and live holy and blameless lives. "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:2). God wants us to be sorry for our sins and to ask him for forgiveness. He promises to pardon us from our sins. "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Like Bilbo, we also have a chance to walk out the door and keep the burden on us. Jesus wants us to let go of our burdens and let him carry them for us. The burden of sin will kill us. Maybe we can carry sin for a while, but eventually it will consume us. You have a chance to let Jesus forgive you. Take it. Ask him for forgiveness for he is full of mercy and abundant in compassion.

“If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.” (John 8:36)

“Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28)

FIND THE RING BEARER / SIN BEARER

For a Hobbit, Frodo was eager and curious. He loved the stories of the Elves and wondered at their beauty. He was young but thoughtful, wise in his own way. He was happy about the good that he could see.

The Ring passed to Frodo. He found the Ring where Bilbo had left it on the floor. He picked it up and was not affected by its evil power. Later he would be called the Ring bearer.

Frodo was innocent of the purposes of the Ring. He didn't want power or dominion. The Ring had little ability to change Frodo into evil. Gandalf told Frodo to “keep it safe and keep it secret. Never put it on.”

Jesus was innocent of sin as Frodo was. Jesus was called “the holy and righteous one” (Acts 3:14). Like Frodo, it was appointed that Jesus would be the one to carry the sins of the world. He was the sin bearer. “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29)!

Frodo learned that Sauron would be defeated if the Ring was destroyed. Jesus had infinite knowledge of the rewards of the successful destruction of sin: our salvation and the salvation of the universe from destruction.

“The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.” (Luke 24:7)

FIND TEMPTATION

Frodo did not want the responsibility of carrying the Ring. He said to Gandalf, “Here you take it.” Gandalf replied:

“Don't tempt me Frodo.

I dare not take it, not even to keep it safe.

Through me, it would wield a power too great and terrible to imagine.”

It would have brought destruction to Middle Earth if Gandalf had fallen into sin because of the temptation. Eventually, Gandalf would have become evil like Sauron.

The Ring tempted everything in Middle Earth. It tempted them to want it, reach for it, take it and to kill others for it. The Ring Wraiths were “drawn to it.” Bilbo was jealous for it and his face turned into a monstrous image. Bilbo called the Ring “my precious” and refused to give it up until Gandalf forced him to. Gandalf was tempted to pick up the Ring after Bilbo had left it on the ground. Gollum hated and loved the Ring at the same time. The Ring had to be destroyed.

Jesus was tempted by sin as well. Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the desert of Israel. For forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry. The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.” Jesus answered:

“It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” (Matthew 4:1-4)

Jesus resisted the devil and did not worship the devil. “When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until another time” (Luke 4:13).

Jesus remained blameless. Because of this, he could remain eligible to be the perfect sacrifice for our sins. This temptation in the desert can encourage us to resist temptation and sin. Jesus used the words from the Bible as his weapon against Satan. It worked for Jesus and it can work for us. Be sure to be armed and ready by reading and memorizing the Bible. Then recall the words when you are tempted.

The Bible says that Satan left Jesus until another time. We can imagine that Jesus was tempted many times. The Bible says that “Jesus was tempted in every way, just as we are-yet was without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). We can be thankful that he never sinned and can help us in our time of need to give us comfort and strength not to fall into sin. We can be sure that we will be tempted again and again. Jesus can help us each time.

It is very wise to avoid temptation in the first place. Don’t go where you know you will be tempted. Pray each day to be protected from evil.

“and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” (Matthew 6:13)

FIND ESCAPE

Gandalf brought the bad news to Frodo that Sauron had returned to the land of Mordor. The greatest evil in Middle Earth was now strong again. His Orcs had multiplied, his fortress was rebuilt and now he was searching for his Ring. His very life force was bound to the Ring and the Ring had heard its master’s call. He only needed to have the Ring in order to cover the world with total darkness. Gandalf explained:

“He is seeking it, seeking it. All his thought is bent on it.
The Ring yearns above all else to return to the hand of its master.

They are one, the Ring and the Dark Lord.
Frodo, he must never find it.”

Unfortunately, Gollum had revealed that Baggins from the Shire had the Ring. Sauron had already sent his nine Wraiths to search the Shire. They had left Mordor and crossed the land disguised as riders in black. Their horses were strong and fast. They were trampling and killing as they approached the Shire.

Frodo: “What must I do?”

Gandalf: “You must leave, and leave quickly. Make for the village of Bree.”

Frodo was warned of the many spies of the Dark Lord. Frodo left with Sam, his gardener friend, along with Merry and Pippin, two other Hobbits. They came to the edge of the Shire where the lands began to be wild.

Gandalf could not go with him. He had to seek counsel from Saruman, another of the wise wizards. Unfortunately, Gandalf was defeated and held prisoner in the tower of Saruman since Saruman had become evil and wanted the Ring too. All evil was converging on the Ring.

Terrifying fear came. The deadly riders found them. Screaming terror at the Hobbits, they tried to run down Frodo and grab him to kill him. The Hobbits ran and ran. They spent the night trying to escape. They jumped onto a raft and started to cross the river. The fastest rider nearly got Frodo but they escaped out onto the river. The riders started the 20 mile trip around to the nearest bridge. The Hobbits had a few hours before they would be attacked again. The next time it would be with swords.

Sauron and his Wraiths were fearful, but Satan is even more fearful. We can escape from a movie, but Satan is working in the real world even when we shut the movie off. Jesus said:

“I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after the killing of the body, has the power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him.” (Luke 12:5)

Fear is good for us. It is the feeling when danger is near. Fear makes us want to change our dangerous situation. We gain motivation, speed and sudden wisdom. The Bible says that “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Psalm 111:10). With fear we can plan for our future and gain many blessings. The important thing is to use the memory of fear while we have the opportunity to improve our chances of a positive life.

Our biggest need is that we escape from punishment for our sins. Jesus warned the crowds of this exact thing: “Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man (Jesus)” (Luke 21:36).

How much do you pray? Prayer is the way that we can talk to God. Prayer is sometimes the only way for us to escape a fearful crash or disease. Why don't you

try right now to talk to God? Ask him to help you escape the wrath to come by asking Jesus to be your saviour and take away your sins.

Ask God to help you escape from the problem that you are in right now. The Bible says that God can find a way of escape for you.

“God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13)

When we do sin, “if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

FIND THE EXILED KING

The Hobbits arrived in the town of Bree in the dark and rain. The world of men was an unsafe and unruly one. There was little comfort and little guarantee of safety. The Hobbits were being watched by a shadowy figure.

“A ranger, dangerous folk they are wandering the wilds. Around here he is known as Strider.” Frodo was dragged to a secret room by the ranger.

This was the most providential moment for the Hobbits. It became revealed that he was a friend of Gandalf. His true name was Aragorn and Gandalf’s letter revealed a prophecy about this man of the wild.

“All that is gold does not glitter,
not all those who wander are lost;
the old that is strong does not wither,
deep roots are not reached by the frost.
From the ashes a fire shall be woken,
a light from the shadows shall spring;
renewed shall be blade that was broken,
the crownless again shall be king.” (from the book)

Aragorn had traveled to many places fighting against dark forces such as Orcs and wicked men. He had traveled alone and also as the leader of the Du’nadan, a line of men that were descended from the ancient warriors of Gondor. He had defended lonely outposts from evil and fought in large battles for the good kingdoms of Middle Earth. He had won honour and distinction through many years.

During the night the black riders came. They entered quietly. They found the room of the Hobbits. They stabbed and destroyed and screamed. They screamed in anger. They had been fooled. Aragorn and the Hobbits watched from the secret room. They saw the black cloaks and the mighty horses. They heard the steel swords and the curses. They feared greatly.

Aragorn knew the danger they were in: “they will never stop hunting you.” But he also knew the way to lead the Hobbits to safety. He waited till daylight and led them away from the open road.

Frodo: "Where is he leading us?"

Aragorn: "Into the wild."

Merry: "How do we know this Strider is a friend of Gandalf?"

Frodo: "We have no choice but to trust him."

Sam: "But where is he leading us?"

Aragorn: "To Rivendell, master Gamgee. To the house of Elrond."

Sam: "Did you hear that? Rivendell. We're going to see the Elves."

Jesus also traveled from place to place. Jesus went to spread the good news of the love of God and how to know God in truth.

"I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent." (Luke 4:43)

Jesus became a hero wherever he went. News spread that he was coming and thousands of people came to him at numerous times.

Jesus also spent time away from the towns in lonely places (Luke 4:42). He spent much time in prayer and friendship with God. God encouraged him to come to these places and Jesus was blessed by following God's leading.

Jesus always remembered that he was on a mission. He had a holy purpose for being on earth, preparing and growing people in the knowledge of God. Jesus remembered that his kingdom was not of this world and he didn't allow himself to become trapped in it.

"Foxes have dens to live in, and birds have nests, but I, the Son of Man have no place to lay my head." (Luke 9:58)

Jesus had a perfect heart and showed his disciples how to trust in God. God was to become their provider and strength. They learned to trust in God to give them what they needed to live. It would help them later since they would be involved in trusting God to do public and inspirational miracles. Jesus taught and showed them how to

"Take nothing for the journey except a staff-no bread, no bag, no money in your belts." (Mark 6:8)

He was saying to take nothing but their faith. With God, they had everything; without God, they had nothing. When the disciples came back to him, they were filled with excitement about what God had done in providing for them (Luke 10:17).

The greatest secret of Aragorn was that he was descended from the kings. The prophecy indicated that he would become the king. Was there evidence of this? Perhaps there was. Time would tell if Aragorn could pass the tests and bring the prophecy to fulfillment.

Jesus had a royal lineage but few people knew it. He was considered only a

Nazarene, a man from Nazareth. It was said of him, “Nazareth! Can anything good come from there” (John 1:46)?

The lineage of Jesus is written out twice in the Bible. The first is in the book of Matthew where the first verse written by Matthew describes Jesus as “the Son of David” (the greatest king of Israel). Here, the family tree of Jesus is outlined from Joseph’s side (Matthew 1:2-16). This shows that legally Jesus had a claim to the throne of Israel since Joseph was a descendant of David and Joseph was his legal father.

In the book of Luke, the family line of Jesus is traced from Mary’s side. He was a blood relative of David through her family (Luke 3:31). This side of David’s family had an even purer ranking than Joseph’s side and it is through Mary that he had the spiritual authority to claim the throne.

Many mighty prophecies were written about the coming King of Israel. One of the most famous is from the prophet Isaiah who said:

“For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness.” (Isaiah 9:6-7)

This prophecy showed that there would be a child who would be able to claim the throne of David. This was the great hope for the religious Jew.

Jesus fit this description.

Elrond stated that Aragorn had “chosen exile” instead of being honoured. He spent his time in the wilds and in uncertainty about his future. Jesus had chosen exile in a more profound way than Aragorn had. The Bible says that Jesus left his home in heaven to become human.

“Being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. (Philippians 2:6-7)

God knew that the salvation of humans required a drastic salvage operation. The Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit had determined that a saviour would have to be sent to earth to save people out of their sins. Only an infinitely loving Redeemer-friend could do it. It was Jesus.

FIND THE WARRIOR

There was a lot of fear in the movie. It was constant action. How long could this go on, and could there ever be peace? The Hobbits were being followed, Gandalf was a prisoner. It was said that “against the forces of Mordor, there can be no victory.” It was even advised by Saruman that it was wise to join with Sauron.

One night, Aragorn gave the Hobbits some small daggers to defend themselves with while he went to have a look around. Then disaster happened. They were discovered by the black riders.

The Hobbits cowered back into a destroyed watchtower and waited. Dark music throbbed. Finally the Wraiths walked through the broken down walls. They unsheathed their swords and walked forward with deadly feet. The Hobbits were driven back and battered. The Wraiths called to the Ring. Frodo put it on because of the Ring's power over him. He entered the spirit world. They called to him and they were gaining control over his mind. Frodo resisted their will and he was stabbed in the shoulder. It was over.

Almost.

Into Frodo's vision leaped Aragorn. Wielding his sword and a torch of fire he attacked the Wraiths. They screamed in anger and turned to fight him. With all desperation he fought back and flashed fire at them. They had never seen an enemy like him. He was a fighting man beyond all others of Middle Earth. One by one he drove the Wraiths back and out of the watchtower. They could not defeat his might.

The people of Jesus' day were being defeated as well. They had no modern medicine. There were no conveniences of today. People were poor. The nation of Israel was not strong and they had to pay high taxes to the nation of Rome. Roman soldiers walked the streets and Roman gods were worshipped in their land.

Who could help them? Their history told of God's power to deliver and many were calling out to him for salvation. There were bands of outlaws who would raid the Romans from their wilderness hideouts but there was little hope of driving off the foreign domination.

Jesus came to do battle - in the spiritual realm. The miracles of Jesus brought enemies to him. They did not want him to free people from their influence. They set verbal traps for him to try to confuse him and make him contradict himself or God's laws. This would have discredited Jesus and allowed them to kill him using their legal authority. He answered them wisely and they appeared condemned before the laws of God. Sometimes he debated with them and proved that he understood things that they had no answer for. He accused them of their injustices and inconsistencies. They were always convicted by their guilt. Some of them realized that they were guilty and turned back to God. Others were amazed by his answers and asked him to tell them more and more.

Jesus made demons come out of mentally sick people. "In the town of Capernaum there was a man possessed by a demon, an evil spirit. He cried out at the top of his voice,

'What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us?
I know who you are - the Holy One of God!'
'Be quiet!' said Jesus sternly. 'Come out of him!'

The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek. The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, 'What is this? A new teaching - and with authority! He even gives orders to evil spirits and they obey him.' News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee" (Mark 1:24-28).

Jesus cared deeply for his followers. He chose twelve to be closest to him and to teach them all he could. He defended them and enabled none of them to be hurt or captured except for Judas (who was destined for destruction). Even when he was betrayed by Judas and captured by guards, he arranged that his followers were not attacked or arrested. He protected them from Satan's powers. He said to Peter, "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail" (Luke 22:31-32).

Sometimes we are beaten back and attacked in life. We can fight Satan's agents also. The Bible says to "resist the devil and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). Prayer is our greatest weapon. "Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" (James 5:16).

However, Jesus said that some evil spirits "do not come out except by prayer and fasting" (Mark 9:29). At times we have to be serious enough that we will go without our food in order for God's work to be done.

The Bible describes armour that can help us to fight. This includes the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit, the belt of truth, the helmet of salvation and the breastplate of righteousness (Ephesians 6:13-20).

FIND THE LIGHT

Frodo had been stabbed and a sliver of steel from the Wraith's blade was in him. He was dying. He slowly turned more deathlike and had visions of the spirit world. The Wraiths were calling him to come to them.

Later, a bright light appeared to him. An angelic being moved toward him. It called his name. But it called him back to the land of the living.

"Come back to the light."

It was Arwen, the daughter of Lord Elrond, a great leader of the Elves. She realized that she could not heal him but that it was time to flee to Elrond's house before the Wraiths found them. She said,

"I do not fear them."

Aragorn grudgingly agreed to let her take Frodo without his protection.

"Arwen, Ride hard. Don't look back."

It was a great chase. Nine black riders chasing one white Elf on her white horse. The chase led in and out of trees and through the open land. It would mean

death if Arwen were caught. All of Mordor's anger was in full pursuit. The manacled hands of the riders were reaching for Frodo and Arwen. Frodo saw death looking at him. Arwen called to her horse for all possible speed. The Wraiths pursued but could not capture them.

Finally from the far side of the Elf river they called to her.

Wraith: "Give up the Halfling, she Elf."

Arwen: "If you want him come and claim him."

They drew their swords and came. Their Lord was driving them.

But the power of the Elves stood against the black riders. Elrond caused the river to rise into a surging torrent as the riders were in mid stream and they were overthrown. The horses were drowned and the Wraiths were left scattered. They had no choice but to return to Mordor where they could regroup their power.

Satan is chasing all of the human race. His will is to destroy us all. He has stabbed us too. We have all been fatally wounded. This wound was the wound of Adam and Eve's that has passed down to us. Sin has control of our body, mind and soul. It will send us to hell. Unless the power of sin can be healed, we have no hope. It will never stop hunting us.

Jesus never fled in terror. He was never threatened before he chose to be. After he announced his purpose in Nazareth, his enemies were furious with him. "They drove him out of the town, and took him to the edge of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff. But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way" (Luke 4:29).

We can come to his light. Jesus said,

"I am the light of the world. He who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

"Walk while you have the light, before the darkness overtakes you. Put your trust in the light while you have it, so that you may become sons of light." (John 12:36)

In him there was no shadow of darkness. There was no sin at all.

If we remember his works and do what he would like us to do, then we are like him. We are sons and daughters of the light. He wants us to do good, help others and be friendly. If we let him, he will reenergize our batteries and enable us to keep shining. We can get reenergized by reading the stories of Jesus. If we see and understand his actions then we can do good things. He will also give the abilities to us to succeed.

However the Bible warns us to flee from a number of things. It says to flee from temptation, sexual immorality, youthful lusts and from the wrath that is to come. We should try to avoid being in places where we will be tempted to do evil and we should avoid being with people who will tempt us to do wrong. By

resisting temptation, we avoid problems and destruction for ourselves and the ones we love.

We should determine to fulfill our promises and care for the people that we are supposed to. Don't allow sinful behaviour to occur but instead find a way to strengthen the blessings that God has given us. We should remember the good that God has provided and find contentment with it.

His power can help us outdistance the enemy. The Bible says that "as far as the east is from the west, so far he has removed our sins from us" (Psalm 103:12). Another image of his saving help is that he will throw our sins into the depths of the sea so that they will never be remembered again (Micah 7:19).

FIND THE HEALER

Frodo was passing into the wraith world. He slumped down onto the ground beside the river after the Wraiths had been washed away. Arwen held him and tried to help him. She prayed for him.

"What grace is given me, let it pass to him. Let him be spared.
Save him."

As an Elf, she had some knowledge of and friendship with the God of Middle Earth. Her prayer preserved Frodo until Elrond could arrive and use his healing power. Frodo awoke with white light surrounding him. He was in the house of Elrond and Gandalf was sitting at his side. Gandalf had escaped. Gandalf assured him that Elrond's power had saved him.

What a marvellous kingdom was Elrond's land. There were beautiful waterfalls, forests and flowers. Elrond had a house of healing filled with wisdom and joy. Gradually Frodo and the others regained their strength.

Healing power is a sign of divinity. God is the giver of life and his processes bring health again after a cut or bruise is sustained. In The Lord of the Rings, the Elves had healing power because they were closely related to Eru, the God of Middle Earth. They knew the ancient stories of the formation of the world whereas most men and dwarves had not been told those stories. The power of the Elves served as a reminder to all that there was a God.

Aragorn was one man who had been told the stories of Eru. He had a royal heritage and his ancestors had seen the land of Valinor, the heavenly land, from across the sea. Aragorn had some power of healing and used medicine that had been taught to him. He used his medicine to slow the sickness of Frodo after he had been stabbed by the Wraith. One of the quotes from The Lord of the Rings book is:

"The hands of the king are the hands of a healer."

This was used to describe Aragorn when he treated some soldiers of Gondor. This was a sign to the people that Aragorn was the king.

Jesus was the prayerful, healing son of God. His healing powers were seen often. "One Sabbath Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, and a woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her,

'Woman, you are set free from your infirmity.'

Then he put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God" (Luke 13:10-13).

People had questions about Jesus. Even John the Baptist wanted a clear answer. He sent two of his friends to Jesus to ask:

"Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?"

"At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. So he replied to the messengers,

'Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. Blessed is the man who is not offended in me.'" (Luke 7:18-23)

The signs that Jesus was doing should have convinced the people that he was God. One of the names of God in the Old Testament was "Healer" (Exodus 15:26). Death was all too common and they needed their God to be a Healer. God did provide what they needed and they loved him.

The blood of Jesus is the ultimate healer. It can heal the sin sick soul. When Jesus died on the cross, he took the sins of the whole world on himself. The power of death was applied to him. When he rose from the dead, he showed that death had been conquered. The disease of sin could not cause him to remain in death. He is health. He is life. He is power. Disease is not in him at all.

Presently in this world, sickness, sadness, death and pain abound. God still is the healer and we have been blessed with the knowledge of many medicines. We can be thankful. Prayer can heal us using God's power.

We also should also be eagerly waiting for a saviour from heaven who will make a permanent healing. The future kingdom of Jesus will have no more death, pain or sadness because of the healing power of Jesus' blood (Revelation 21:4). This waiting is called faith. Jesus wants us to have faith in him. He wants us to have faith that he will return and solve the world's problems. Do you have that faith? Ask for it if you don't.

FIND HOPE

There was a discussion about who could ever fight against Sauron. He was so powerful and the strength of the peoples of Middle Earth was weak.

Elrond: "The enemy is moving. Gandalf, the Ring cannot stay here.

This peril belongs to all Middle Earth. They must decide now how to end it."

Gandalf: "It is in men that we must place our hope."

Elrond: "Men. Men are weak. They are scattered, leaderless.

It is because of men the Ring survived. I was there, Gandalf. I was there the day that the strength of men failed."

Gandalf: "There is one who could unite them. One who could reclaim the throne of Gondor."

Now it was clearly stated that the mysterious Ranger, Strider, actually was a descendant of the ancient kings of Gondor. His true name was Aragorn, the son of Arathorn. Although Elrond did not believe that Aragorn would have success, the words of Gandalf put hope into the movie. Aragorn might become the king and establish the kingdom by defeating Sauron.

Protected and honoured in Rivendell were the shards of Narsil. These were the broken pieces of the great sword of Isildur the King of Gondor that had cut the Ring from Sauron in the great battle against him. Aragorn often sat and thought about the past and his potential role in the future.

Arwen: "Why do you fear the past? You are Isildur's heir, not Isildur himself. You are not bound to his fate."

Aragorn: "The same blood flows in my veins. The same weakness."

Arwen: "Your time will come. You will face the same evil, and you will defeat it."

This was the time for the new man to come and destroy what the first man could not do. Narsil could be remade. Maybe Aragorn could use it.

Jesus is called "the desired of all nations" (Haggai 2:7). All people are looking for salvation from death. As Gandalf indicated, it is in a man we must place our hope. Since a man first destroyed the perfect paradise of God, God ordained that there would be a new man to come and win back what Adam had lost. He would try to face the same evil and this time to defeat it. Jesus was that man and he started as a baby.

There were many who did have hope that the Messiah would come. One such man was Simeon. God directed him to go to the temple in Jerusalem to look for the baby that eventually would become the man to save them. He received Jesus into his arms and praised God, and said:

"Now I can die content! For I have seen him as you promised me I would. I

have seen the Saviour you have given to the world. He is the light that will shine upon the nations, and he will be the glory of your people Israel.” (Luke 2:29-30) (The Living Bible)

For about 33 years Jesus faced Satan’s temptations and did not fall into sin as Adam did. This was the war that Jesus waged. There were many battles and skirmishes. The same blood flowed through the veins of Jesus as any of us. He was one of us. But unlike us, he defeated Satan’s power.

After the resurrection of Jesus, Peter explained the hope of King David that David had written about many years before.

“My heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.” (Acts 2:26-28)

The hope of the great King David was finally justified. It was true after all that the Holy One was not corrupted in death.

Now the crowd that had been listening to Peter wanted some of that hope as well. They asked Peter, “What shall we do?”

“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” (Acts 2:26-39)

Hope is still important for us since we will die too. Jesus has been resurrected but the kingdom has not been established yet and we still face our own death. Our hope that Jesus will resurrect us is our strength:

“We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf.” (Hebrews 6:18)

FIND THE FELLOWSHIP

A meeting was held with representatives of the peoples of Middle Earth to make a plan to fight Sauron. The Ring was revealed to them.

Elrond: “You will unite, or you will fall. Each race is bound to this fate, this one doom. Bring forth the Ring, Frodo.”

Boromir (a man): “It is a gift. Why not use this Ring. Give Gondor the weapon of the enemy. Let us use it against him.”

Aragorn: “You cannot wield it. The one Ring answers to Sauron alone.”

Boromir: “What would a ranger know about this matter?”

Legolas (an elf): "This is no mere ranger. He is Aragorn, son of Arathorn. You owe him your allegiance."

Boromir: "Aragorn. This is Isildur's heir?"

Legolas: "And heir to the throne of Gondor."

Boromir: "Gondor has no king, Gondor needs no king."

Elrond: "You have only one choice. The Ring must be destroyed."

Gimli (a dwarf): "Then what are we waiting for?" (smashing his axe on the ring, and falling back when his axe exploded)

Elrond: "The Ring cannot be destroyed by any craft that we here possess. The Ring was made in the fires of Mount Doom. Only there can it be unmade. One of you must do this."

Arguments and disagreements started. The Ring was happy.

Frodo: "I will take it! I will take it! I will take the Ring to Mordor. Though... I do not know the way."

The others promised to go with him. There were nine companions: Frodo, Gandalf, Aragorn, Legolas, Gimli, Boromir, Sam, Merry and Pippin. They were called "The Fellowship of the Ring".

Jesus had a fellowship. "One day Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles: Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor" (Luke 6:12-16).

It is interesting to study these men that Jesus called to follow him. They were very important to him. He loved them and led them to greater faith and strength. They loved him and saw God in him. They tried to support him in his efforts.

The fellowship provided a full life for Jesus and his followers. The fellowship involved talking with each other, observing the problems in the world, sharing amazement and thankfulness together, solving conflicts together and caring for each other. They were joined together in a common experience that had been expected for thousands of years, the coming of the Christ. Each day was a new wonder and revelation.

Sadness and grief were also felt. Jesus knew that he had to die before eternal happiness could be attained.

"I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God."
(Luke 22:15-16)

We are part of his fellowship too if we have asked Jesus to forgive us. Jesus supernaturally unites us to believers who have gone before us. We can feel how they felt and love them even though we have never met.

We are in a living fellowship too. Actually we can have more than one fellowship. We have friends who encourage us to know Jesus, our church and our family too. Jesus wants us to find blessings in our fellowships. He wants us to strengthen our fellowships and treasure each person. Each member of our fellowships is important and has a special part to play. We must stay united to each other or we will fall.

Jesus prayed for every Christian throughout all time:

“I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.” (John 17:20-21)

The Ring was happy when there was discord at the meeting when there were arguments. Likewise Satan is happy when there is discord in our fellowships. It is important for us to remember God’s directions during these times. We are called to love each other and consider the needs and feelings of others before our own. Living in a forgiving and tender hearted manner eases many conflicts.

Eventually we will be united inseparably when he returns for us. We will share eternity together in perfection. Let’s try to live like that now.

FIND THE WAY

Frodo: “I will take the ring to Mordor. Though I do not know the way.”

Pippin: “You need people of intelligence on this sort of mission...”

The Fellowship left Rivendell and headed east towards the range of the Misty Mountains. Mordor was far to the south on the other side of the mountains. Gandalf the miracle worker led them on their journey. He was the wisest of the companions and the others loved his friendship and guidance. The Fellowship encouraged and helped each other. They made suggestions about what was best.

The way was being watched by Saruman, and his forces were gathering to block the way. Spy birds flew overhead. Saruman sent a snowstorm to prevent the Fellowship from crossing the mountain pass over the mountains. There was only one road left to choose. It would lead through the Dwarf mines of Moria.

Moria had a sad history for the Dwarves. A fiery monster called a Balrog had been awoken in the deepest parts of the mines. Orcs had come into the mines and killed all of the Dwarves.

Many years had passed since the darkest days of Moria. Perhaps the Fellowship would be able to find a way through. This seemed like the only way. They started the search for the doors of Moria.

This part of the story can remind us of a lesson about Jesus.

Jesus said, “I am the way...” (John 14:6)

In order to get salvation for Middle Earth, Frodo had to find the way. Similarly,

for us we must take Jesus as the way to get to heaven. It also takes intelligence on this quest of ours to realize that Jesus was who he said he was. It takes intelligence to choose him.

Jesus said to Matthew the tax collector:

“Follow me.” (Matthew 9:9)

Jesus said to Peter, Andrew, James and John the fishermen:

“Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.” (Mark 1:17)

Jesus wanted to show the disciples that there was more to life than what they were doing. If they did not know God, it did not matter how much money they could earn or how many fish they could catch. The first priority was salvation. Jesus said,

“Narrow is the way that leads to life.” (Matthew 7:14)

After salvation, Jesus wanted them to continue to live like God wanted them to. Jesus wanted them to bless others. One time, after some of Jesus’ words were found to be too difficult for some people, he asked his disciples if they were going to leave him too. Simon Peter answered him:

“Who can we go to? You have the words of eternal life.” (John 6:68)

We should determine to continue to follow Jesus even if our friends tell us to go away from following Jesus. The way can be hard. There are sometimes attacks that are so powerful that even strong Christians can turn out of the way. However, Jesus still has the words of life. Pray for strength. Ask Jesus to be the friend that sticks closer than a brother.

Jesus can help us in our problems. He knows the way that we should take that is specific to us. He has not given us all the same abilities so we need to know how he has designed us so that we will be blessed. Jesus will show us the way but we have to ask him. Like Frodo needed to know the way and he needed someone to lead him to it, the Bible says that:

“The steps of good men are directed by the Lord.” (Psalm 37:23)

It takes intelligence to continue to choose Jesus as the best way, every day of our lives. Most of our intelligence comes from the Bible. Read it.

Satan’s spies are around us and he seeks to block the way to salvation. We must hold to our path as the Fellowship did. Gandalf said that they had to hold to their path for 40 days. This is a reference to a biblical period of time. Noah was in the ark for 40 days while the earth was flooded. Moses was with the people of Israel for 40 years in the desert after leaving Egypt. Jesus was in the desert for 40 days being tempted by Satan.

Jesus says to us today: “Follow me.” Do you know the way? Do you know Jesus? Do you know how he wants you to live?

The words of Jesus in the book of Matthew can act as advice. Possibly the most spiritual words of Jesus are in the book of John. Pray for guidance and step out to help those in need. Hold to that course. There will come turning places and places for discussion and counsel and a new decision. Pray again and let the sin bearer decide the way for you.

FIND THE DOOR

Aragorn had a warning to Gandalf:

“And I say to you: if you pass the doors of Moria, beware.”

Gandalf passed his hands to and fro on the rock. Then he stepped back.

“Look!” He said. “Can you see anything now?”

The moon now shone upon the grey face of the rock. Slowly on the surface, faint lines appeared, like slender veins of silver running in the stone. Steadily they grew broader and clearer, until their design could be guessed. The words said:

“The Doors of Durin, Lord of Moria. Speak, friend, and enter.”

Gandalf said all of the passwords he knew. They were unable to enter the doors since he did not know the correct password. Gandalf threw his staff on the ground, and sat down in silence. The sound of howling wolves could be heard. Finally, Frodo guessed and Gandalf spoke the answer.

“Mellon!” (which means “friend”)

There was a cracking sound and the doors opened widely in front of them. Just as they were entering, a long tentacle grabbed Frodo. It pulled him back to the pool of water outside the doors. The swords came out and they desperately fought to save Frodo. They did, but the monster pulled the doors shut and they were trapped in Moria.

The scenes of Moria are incredible in their similarities to the tenth chapter of the book of John in the New Testament. Jesus told a parable about sheep, thieves, a sheepfold, the door to the sheepfold and a good shepherd. We can see in an image how Jesus loved his people.

“Jesus said, ‘I am the door. Whoever enters through me will be saved.’
‘Truly, truly I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.’” (John 10:1, 7)

There is a door to heaven, to life and to our path. However, the door is shut.

We have to be a friend and have a friend to enter this door. It is Jesus who is the door and can open the door for us. We have to ask him to open it for us.

Some people look for a long time before they realize that Jesus is the door. Like Gandalf, some have to put their hand out and touch in order to make the door appear. This was the case for the disciple Thomas after the resurrection of Jesus. Jesus had appeared to the other disciples but Thomas had not been there. Jesus appeared to them again and said to him:

Jesus: "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

Jesus: "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."(John 20:27-29)

There are still wolves and monsters around. You may see the door. You may see the door opened, but like Frodo you might get dragged back to destruction. Be sure to enter the door. Step forward. Go in and find the blessings of being in the sheepfold. There is safety away from the wolves.

The sheepfold is a precious place to the sheep. The sheepfold is a symbol of heaven where we will have an eternal home. It is also a symbol of the church. The church is where we are protected and provided for before we get to heaven.

Jesus watches and cares for the sheep. He has given safety and security to the sheep. He provides for their needs. He can provide more as we depend on him and ask him for help.

You need a church. You need a place where you can worship God and learn more about God. The job of the church is to care for you. Find the help that you need in the church. Ask for healing there, ask for the satisfying of your needs there. No church is perfect but it will provide care for you. Maybe the church that you knew didn't match your needs. Visit a different church. Pray that God would direct you to a church that will fill your needs.

The church needs you. The church needs the help that you can give to the other sheep who are inside. You have special gifts and abilities that can make you a blessing to others there. Jesus loves you in a way that can encourage others. This is part of his will for you in following his way.

FIND THE THIEVES

Inside Moria, the Fellowship faced a long dark journey. There were passageways that led through the mountains. There was evidence of the slaughter of the Dwarves by the Orcs. They went quietly so that perhaps they might pass through unnoticed. Unfortunately, it was not meant to be. A little too much noise by Pippin caused the Orcs to be aroused.

The Orcs did not want to lose what was theirs. This was their kingdom now. The Orcs had not come through the doors. They had snuck in through cracks and

over walls. They had come in secretly as thieves to steal and to kill and to destroy. When the Orcs heard the noises in the upper passageway, they came up to repel the intruders. What a fight! It lasted many minutes and required bravery and action. Frodo was nearly killed. The Cave Troll and Orcs were finally destroyed.

Gandalf led them out of the battle chamber. He led them through passages while they were being chased.

There is a great comparison to be made of the Orcs to the demonic forces that fight against God in our world. Jesus talks about evil forces:

“He who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. The thief does not come except to steal and to kill and to destroy.” (John 10:1, 10)

Satan and his demons don't want to give up what they have. Satan is called the prince of this world. Demons are slaves to his will. Satan stole the authority of the earth when he cheated Adam out of it. Satan's influence is everywhere in the world and in every person's heart and mind. Jesus came to fight the forces of evil. He came to seek and to save the lost. He came to save those who were in the power of darkness.

There are strongholds of evil in our world. There are places that Satan and his demons control. When a Christian is in such a place, a disagreement can occur. There are spiritual battles that occur. Through prayer, angels can defeat demonic beings.

The Christian's weapons are not physical weapons but abilities to change thoughts and actions that rise up against the ideas of God. It is important that every thought and action is pleasing to God (2 Corinthians 10:4-5). It is the Christian's duty to try to change the ideas and behaviors that are against God. The Bible is called the sword of the Spirit and gives strength to our ideas. If God said it, he can cause its wisdom to change the hearts, minds and actions of anyone. Pray for the Holy Spirit's help.

FIND THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Gandalf led them from Rivendell, he led them to Moria, he led them through the door, he led them to the Bridge of Khazad-dum.

Gandalf stood in the middle of the bridge, leaning on the staff in his left hand, but in the other hand his sword gleamed, cold and white.

The Balrog, his enemy halted, facing him, and the shadow about it reached out like two great wings. It raised its whip, and the thongs whined and cracked. Fire came from its nostrils. It stepped forward slowly on to the bridge, and suddenly it rose up to a great height, and its wings were spread from wall to wall; but still Gandalf could be seen, shining in the dark. Gandalf stood firm.

“You cannot pass!

I am a servant of the Secret Fire, wielder of the flame of Anor. The dark fire will not avail you, flame of Udun. ”

From out of the shadow a red sword leaped flaming. Gandalf's sword glittered white in answer. There was a ringing clash and a flash of white light. The Balrog fell back and its sword blew up in pieces. The wizard swayed on the bridge, stepped back a pace, and then again stood still.

“Go back to the shadow!”

The Balrog leaped upon the bridge. Its whip whirled and hissed.

“You shall not pass!”

At that moment Gandalf lifted his staff, and crying aloud he struck the bridge before him. The staff broke in pieces and fell from his hand. A blinding sheet of white flame sprang up. The bridge cracked. Right at the Balrog's feet it broke, and the stone upon which it stood crashed into the gulf.

With a terrible cry the Balrog fell forward, and its shadow plunged down and vanished. But even as it fell it swung its whip, and the thongs lashed and curled about the wizard's knees, dragging him to the edge. He staggered and fell, grabbing at the stone.

“Fly, you fools!” he cried, and was gone.

The Fellowship was shocked at the loss of Gandalf but they were urged out of the doorway of Moria. They ran down the hillside.

At the Bridge of Kazad-dum we see an image of Jesus in what happens to Gandalf. Gandalf stood as a shepherd with a staff before the wolf. In the Bible, Jesus is called the good shepherd. Jesus said:

“The man who enters by the door is the shepherd of his sheep. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.” (John 10:2, 11)

Satan wants to pull us all down into the fire of hell. We can imagine that he has a sword to fight us with. He would punish us with a whip if he could. He is powerful and he is deadly. He is a monster.

Jesus stood on the bridge for you and me. The cross is called “the bridge to life”. Jesus went to the cross for us and he suffered punishment for us. He can send us over the bridge to salvation on the other side.

In the second movie of “The Lord of the Rings”, “The Two Towers”, the story of the fall of Gandalf continues.

For a long time Gandalf and the Balrog fell down together. The Balrog was grabbing for Gandalf and Gandalf was chopping at him. The fire was all around and Gandalf was burned. Then they plunged into deep water and all was dark. They came to the bottom and the Balrog was a thing of slime, stronger than a strangling snake. They fought far under the earth until at last the Balrog fled up

the dark tunnels and Gandalf pursued him. From the lowest dungeon to the highest peak they climbed until they came out on the peak of the mountain. Again they fought. The Balrog burst into new flame and a great smoke rose between them. Finally Gandalf killed the Balrog, but he himself fell into death as well. The mountain top was rock and ice and seemed to look like a skull when the movie showed the mountain from a distance. Gandalf lay dead.

The fall of Gandalf is an image of Jesus suffering punishment on the cross to pay for our sins. Finally, Gandalf's death is an image of Jesus since the cross of Jesus stood on a hill shaped like a skull (Mark 15:22).

Gandalf was made alive again. He was "sent back". This is one of the greatest comparisons to Jesus that can be made. Gandalf appeared first to Pippin, Merry and Treebeard. He appeared in shining white clothing.

Jesus gave many proofs of his resurrection for forty days. He talked to Mary, showed his wounds to the disciples and met a crowd of more than five hundred at the same time (1 Corinthians 15:6). He is alive now.

FIND PEACE

The Fellowship was in despair but was driven to action by Aragorn. They were outside of Moria but Aragorn knew that the Orcs would come soon to hunt them. The Fellowship needed peace and strength. Aragorn led them to the forest kingdom of the Elves named Lorien. They entered the forest and soon were met by Elf warriors. The Elves knew their purpose and need. They were brought to the center of the forest where they met the Lord and Lady of the forest.

The Lady Galadriel was able to see the hearts of each of the members of the Fellowship. She gave advice to them:

"The quest stands on the edge of a knife. Stray but a little and it will fail to the ruin of all. Yet hope remains while the company is true. Do not let your hearts be troubled, go now and rest. For you are weary with sorrow."

The Fellowship stayed in Lorien for a number of days. They were protected and they recovered strength. They grieved the loss of Gandalf for these days along with all of the Elves. Gradually they started to consider the future and what their plans should be.

The most touching words of the Lady are actually a quotation of Jesus:

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." (John 14:1-4)

These words were spoken before his crucifixion and were intended to give the disciples a hope for the future before anything sad happened. The memory of these words should have had special meaning to the disciples of Jesus after his

crucifixion. At that time they were hiding inside with the doors locked because of fear that they might be killed (John 20:19-20).

Peace is a very important concept in the Bible. The Bible teaches that we are in problems that are similar to a war. Sinful behaviour causes all kinds of problems and behaviours that are warlike. Sometimes we wilfully sin and sometimes even curse God. The Bible teaches us that unless we repent and seek forgiveness, we will spend eternity in hell because of our condition.

The Bible says that “Jesus is our peace” (Ephesians 2:14). “We can have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1). He made peace possible when he took the punishment for sin when he died on the cross (Colossians 1:20). Our job is to ask him to forgive us and give us peace with him. Have you done that? Why not ask him now?

Peace from God is a beautiful thing. This peace can be a protection from punishment, the supplying of a blessing, or a feeling of safety. Peace from God can keep us in happiness. The peace of God comes to us when we know that Jesus has forgiven our sins. Peace comes from the Holy Spirit and gives us strength to continue without despairing.

There are many verses in the Bible that are prayers for peace from God. The angels prayed for peace on earth on the night when Jesus was born.

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests.” (Luke 2:14)

The Bible predicted that Jesus would be called “Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end” (Isaiah 9:6-7).

Where is this peace? This seems to be a contradiction since no lasting physical peace came when Jesus arrived. In fact there was great strife when Jesus was alive and also after his resurrection. Jesus himself said:

“Do you think that I have come to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you. I have come to separate people.” (Luke 12:51- NIRV)

Unfortunately, we will always have problems while we are on the earth. Sin in this world is against God and against us and it will never stop until Jesus returns to bring an eternal peace in his kingdom. Jesus came to separate us from the evil of this world and to pull us out of the destruction that people cause because of their evil nature. Satan and his demons are also at work in people and wanting to destroy God’s beauty on earth.

God wants us to live in peace and to pray for peace. The first step is “to let peace rule in our hearts” (Colossians 3:15). If we practice being calm and remember to “turn the other cheek” as Jesus did, we can bring peace:

“Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.” (Hebrews 12:14)

God promises that “the peace of God that passes all understanding will guard

your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7).

FIND THE ARGONATH **(THE KINGS OF OLD)**

The Fellowship left Lorien and started their trip down the Great River, Anduin, by boat towards Gondor and Mordor. Galadrial gave Frodo a vial containing the light of Earendil, their most beloved star.

“May it be a light for you in dark places when all other lights go out.”

The lights would go out soon since the Fellowship was being hunted ferociously by a group of fighting Uruk-hai. They were sent by Saruman to get the Ring from Frodo. The instructions were:

“Hunt them down.
Do not stop until they are found.
You do not know pain.
You do not know fear.
You will taste Man-flesh!
One of the Halflings carries something of great value.
Bring them to me alive and unspoiled.
Kill the others.”

The Fellowship traveled down the Anduin for many days. At the border to the kingdom of Gondor they came to the Argonath. The Argonath were two mighty statues of the kings of men. They stood upon great pedestals placed in the deep waters. They frowned toward the north with stern faces. The left hand of each was raised palm outwards in a gesture of warning. In each right hand there was an axe; upon each head there was a crumbling crown.

Awe and fear fell upon Frodo, and he shut his eyes and didn't dare to look up as the boat drew near. Even Boromir bowed his head as the boats whirled by. But Aragorn gained strength from seeing them. His hood was pulled back, and his dark hair was blowing in the wind, a light was in his eyes. He was like a king returning from exile to his own land.

“Fear not! Long have I desired to look upon the kings of old, my kin.”

The statues showed a glory of the past. However, it was a broken past, the crowns had crumbled. The glory had faded. Other ruins had been seen in the movie already such as the broken down watchtower of Amon Sul where Frodo had been stabbed. Boromir had referred to the hopelessness of the Kingdom of Gondor. Mordor had become too great and the kingdom of Gondor had become too weak.

Aragorn showed the nobility of his family line. He gained strength and his hope

of restoring the glory of the past grew. The river was bringing him closer to the royal city, Minis Tirith, where his forefathers had been kings before him. How he longed to see the glory restored. Minis Tirith was the only surviving city of the once powerful and noble kingdom. Minis Tirith had little strength to fight back against raiding parties sent out by Mordor. Soon it would be besieged.

Jesus had a great love for his holy city as well. Jerusalem was the place where the temple of the Jews was and where they loved to worship God. However, Jesus cried over Jerusalem because of the ruin that he foresaw. The city was ruined because it did not recognize him as its saviour.

“As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, ‘If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace-but now it is hidden from your sight. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.’” (Luke 19:41-44)

In this statement Jesus showed his ability as a prophet. These words came true in 70 A.D. when the Roman army under General Titus destroyed the city and the temple. Not one stone of the temple remained on each other as the soldiers searched for the gold that had gone down into the cracks between the rocks.

The nation of Israel should have known even the day that Jesus appeared to them. In the ninth chapter of the Book of Daniel the coming of the Messiah was foretold exactly, but it also predicted that he would die.

The ruins of the glory of Jerusalem exist today. Many people travel to Israel to visit these sites and gain strength for their faith. These places serve as evidence of the truth of the past and also hold hope for the future. There are prophecies that Jerusalem will be raised again.

“In the last days the mountain of the Lord’s temple will be established. It will be raised above the hills and all nations will stream to it” (Isaiah 2:2)

FIND THE SUFFERING SERVANT

The travelers landed on the west side of the Anduin river. They stopped to rest for the night. They were in disagreement about what to do next. The best path towards Mordor was uncertain.

After some time they discovered that Frodo and Boromir were gone. Frodo had tried to leave the others and travel to Mordor alone, and Boromir had followed him.

Boromir: “None of us should wander alone, you least of all. I know why you seek solitude. You suffer. I see it day-by-day.

You sure you do not suffer needlessly? There are other ways,

Frodo. Other paths that we might take.”

Frodo: “I know what you would say, and it would seem like wisdom, but for the warning in my heart.”

Boromir: “Warning? Against what? We’re all afraid, Frodo, but to let that fear drive us to destroy what hope we have - don’t you see that is madness?”

Frodo: “There is no other way.”

Boromir recognized that Frodo was suffering. The responsibilities of being the Ring bearer was causing him to feel pressure. His burden was putting his friends in danger. He didn’t have much hope for finding the way to Mordor, and even less about making it home again alive.

Yet, Frodo had committed himself to going all the way to the fires of Mordor and finding a way to destroy the Ring. He had promised to serve the living beings of Middle Earth and his friends in this way. His doom was certain.

Unfortunately this was just the beginning of Frodo’s suffering. It was nothing compared to the sufferings that he had later. Frodo was learning more and more about the role of a servant. He had to serve even though he didn’t enjoy it.

Jesus was the greatest servant of all. He served us, the people of Earth. His first act of service was to come to Earth. He left heaven’s glory and his own powerful position to carry our burdens for us.

“Christ Jesus who, though he was God, did not demand and cling to his rights as God, but laid aside his mighty power and glory, taking the disguise of a servant and becoming like men. And he humbled himself even further, going so far as actually to die a criminal’s death on a cross. (Philippians 2:5-8) (The Living Bible)

Jesus also served people daily while he was with them. He healed people when he was on his travels. He went to their houses to heal. He also healed those who came to where he was. There was little privacy or time off for Jesus.

Jesus is called the “suffering servant”. God spoke about Jesus through the prophet Isaiah in the Old Testament:

“After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by what he experiences my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. Therefore I will give him the honours of one who is mighty and great, because he has poured out his soul unto death.” (Isaiah 53:11-12)

Jesus went through every kind of suffering so we can have a friend who understands our every pain. His life can give us comfort when we see that he was able to endure suffering and has overcome it in his resurrection. We have a friend who can encourage us in our worst struggles with an understanding that is infinite. He can give us strength when we pray.

The greatest burden that we have to carry is the burden of our sins. Jesus was

the servant to carry them for us so that we don't have to. We can enter through the door to heaven without any burden on us.

He encouraged his disciples not to try to be perceived as being great or important. Rather, he taught them to serve others and to take the lowest positions. He gave this example to them by serving them.

“I am among you as one who serves.” (Luke 22:27)

Jesus wants us to be servants too. We are to be servants to our families, friends and bosses. This takes humility, wisdom and kindness.

“The greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.” (Luke 22:26)

When we act like Jesus did then we become his hands and feet to our world. Jesus lives through us. He gives us the rewards of his presence and joy. We can enjoy our life of service knowing that he is working with us.

FIND THE GUARANTEE

Frodo escaped Boromir by putting on the Ring. He ran. He climbed a tower. He had a vision of the power of Sauron in his tower of Barad-dur. Sauron turned to him and saw him. Frodo nearly came under his power.

Boromir realized that he had nearly been overcome by the power of the Ring and he called out to Frodo to forgive him. But Frodo was gone.

Aragorn found Frodo. Aragorn saw the Ring in Frodo's hand and it called him to take it. Aragorn rejected the Ring's temptation and told Frodo to go to Mordor without him. Aragorn had work to do in his role as warrior-king. The Uruk-hai had arrived.

The band of Uruk-hai approached and Aragorn stepped forward to attack them. Alone.

Aragorn killed many of the Uruk-hai. He maneuvered himself into different places where his attacks would be most effective. He was successful but outnumbered.

Then Gimli and Legolas arrived and they all fought side by side. They were decreasing the number of the enemy until they heard a horn sounding. It was the Horn of Gondor. It was Boromir calling for help.

All of the Uruk-hai changed their plans and ran to find the horn blower. This seemed to be a greater challenge and they were driven to the battle.

Boromir was defending Merry and Pippin from attack by the Uruk-hai. The Uruk-hai had orders to capture the Halflings and take them to Saruman. They were his desired prize.

Boromir was attacked again and again. He showed strength, valour and determination. He was shot three times with arrows but he still fought on. Finally he could fight no more. The Uruk-hai grabbed Merry and Pippin and carried them away.

Boromir was just about to be killed by the greatest fighter of the Uruk-hai when Aragorn jumped him and knocked him away. They fought a great battle. Aragorn used all of his might to fight the hateful creature and finally cut him down.

Aragorn cared for Boromir and calmed his fears and frustrations. Aragorn saw death coming to this man of Gondor and pressed thoughts of confidence and honour into him.

Boromir: "Forgive me I did not see. I have failed you all."

Aragorn: "No Boromir, you fought bravely you have kept your honour."

Boromir: "The world of men will fall and all will come to darkness and my city to ruin."

Aragorn: "I do not know what strength is in my blood but I swear to you I will not let the white city fall nor our people fail."

Boromir: "Our people."

Aragorn: "Our people."

(Aragorn placed Boromir's sword into his hand again.)

Boromir: (with new strength) "I would have followed you my brother..., my captain..., my king..." (and Boromir died)

(Aragorn blessed Boromir)

Aragorn: "Be at peace son of Gondor."

Aragorn, the exiled king, promised that he would not let the white city fall. Boromir took this oath into his heart. Aragorn became his king. Boromir loved his king. Boromir loved his certainty and guarantee. Boromir finally needed his king to save him.

When Jesus was facing his battle, he took on strong determination. He was always sure of his purpose and he himself was the guarantee of success. He set in motion the steps of his crucifixion.

"As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem." (Luke 9:51)

Jesus arranged for a traitor to be in his closest circle of friends to fulfill the scriptures of the Messiah being betrayed by a friend. Jesus told Judas to do what he had planned to do on the night of the betrayal. Jesus was in control of what happened to him in the final hours of his life.

Jesus also promised that he would not let his church fall or fail. Even with all of the disunity that there is and the seeming defeats for the church.

"I will build my church; and all the powers of hell shall not prevail against it."
(Matthew 16:18) (The Living Bible)

Jesus is watching over the church today and calling even more into it. There are many who are finding that they need a king who can save them.

Jesus became the guarantee of salvation by God's promise. Jesus became a

priest that could offer eternal forgiveness from sins:

“The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: ‘You are a priest forever.’ Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.” (Hebrews 7:21-22)

FIND THE SAVIOUR

All of the Fellowship was scattered and running to find Frodo. Sam stopped to think about Frodo and what he would do. Sam knew that Frodo would try to travel alone to Mordor. Sam realized that Frodo would need to use a boat to cross the river to get to the eastern shore. He turned and scrambled back to the boats.

When Sam arrived, Frodo was already out in the middle of the river on one of the boats. Sam waded into the water and tried to swim to the boat. Unfortunately, Sam couldn't swim and he sank down into the water while struggling to swim up. Eventually he stopped struggling and he hung there in the water as if he were dead. His hand was raised up to the light at the surface.

A hand reached down and grasped Sam by the wrist. After an instant, Sam grabbed back. Frodo pulled him up into the boat and Sam stated his promise to always stay with Frodo.

Sam: “I made a promise, Mr. Frodo. A promise. ‘Don't you leave him, Samwise Gamage.’ And I don't mean to. I don't mean to.”

It is the hand of Jesus that can save us. We are all dependant on someone above us to help us. It has been like that since our birth when we reached up to our parents.

The word hand is used more than one thousand times in the Bible. The hand is used to do something of purpose. It can help or it can destroy. We all need God's hand in our life guiding us and lifting us to new steps. Peter experienced the hand of Jesus one day when the disciples were crossing the Sea of Galilee.

“The boat was already a great distance from land, being beaten by the waves because the wind was against it. About four o'clock in the morning Jesus went to them, walking on the water. When the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified. “It's a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear.

But Jesus immediately said to them:

“Take courage! I AM! Don't be afraid.”

“Lord, if it's you,” Peter said, “tell me to come to you on the water.”

“Come,” Jesus said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him.

"You of little faith," he said, "Why did you doubt?"

And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshipped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."
(Matthew 14:24-33)

This passage shows that Jesus is God. Only God can control nature like Jesus did. God can go wherever he wants in his creation and enjoy it all. There is another amazing reference to God walking in the sea.

"Your path led through the sea, your way through the mighty waters, though your footprints were not seen." (Psalm 77:19)

The actual words that Jesus used to speak to Peter were "I AM." These words are words that indicate that Jesus exists independently from any help from anything else. These words also show that Jesus is God. They are the same words which God used when speaking to Moses in the desert.

Moses: "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?"

God: "I AM who I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" (Exodus 3:13-14)

Another beautiful lesson from this passage is that Jesus said

"Don't be afraid."

Jesus knows our every weakness. He knows what we need even better than we do ourselves. He knows where our future will be. He knows what is best for us. It is important for us not to fight him or his will for us but to let him keep us in his protection. We should remember that we are one of his sheep and he will protect us if we stay close to him. King David was a shepherd in his younger days and he wrote about the love of God.

"The Lord is my shepherd. He gives me everything I need. He lets me lie down in fields of green grass. He leads me beside quiet waters. He gives me new strength. He guides me in the right paths for the honor of his name. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid. You are with me. Your shepherd's rod and staff comfort me." (Psalm 23:1-4) (New International Reader's Version)

We should lift up our hands to God. Lifting our hands is a beautiful demonstration that we want him in our lives. God gives us help when we ask him humbly. God gives comfort to our heart and can give joy.

“I cried out to God for help. I cried out to God to hear me. When I was in trouble, I looked to the Lord. During the night I lifted up my hands in prayer. But I refused to be comforted. Then I thought, ‘this is what I will make my appeal to. For many years the Most High God showed how powerful his right hand is.’ Lord, I will remember what you did. Yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago. I will spend time thinking about everything you have done. I will consider all of your mighty acts.” (Psalm 77:1-2, 10-12) (New International Reader’s Version)

God also wants us to praise him by lifting our hands up. God wants us to look up to heaven. He is watching for our happy faces to turn up in love to him. We can praise him for his wonderful creation. The stars and heavenly creation are some of the best things he has made. We can hold our hand up in praise and acknowledgment that he is good to us. This will help us feel our acceptance and joy as a child of God. God will be reaching down to us in love and friendship.

In the movie, Sam was dead. It was Frodo that gave him life. Likewise, we are dead apart from God. Unless we are born again in God, we will only experience death. We can be thankful that

“God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)

Remember to keep your hand up. Don’t you leave him.

FIND THE FUTURE

At the end of the movie, “The Fellowship of the Ring”, the Fellowship was broken. Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli decided that they could not leave Merry and Pippin in the hands of the Uruk-hai and they set off in pursuit of them toward the north. Frodo and Sam left together to find the way into Mordor.

Even though the Fellowship had not achieved its final goal of destroying the ring, Aragorn stated that the Fellowship had not failed.

Gimli: “Then it has all been in vain. The Fellowship has failed.”

Aragorn: “Not if we hold true to each other. We will not abandon

Merry and Pippin to torment and death. Not while we have strength left. Leave all that can be spared behind. We travel

light. Let us hunt some Orc.”

Not everything was lost. As long as they had breath they could bring strength and justice to the world. They would press on and find their destiny. They all took

courage and joy from their clear purpose.

The final scene of the movie shows the land of Mordor from a distance as a picture of where the future of Middle Earth would be determined. A great fight would occur between Mordor and the free world. However, Frodo and Sam stepped forward with hope and a light in their eyes.

This world is also in a fight. Much of the shadow of the world is centered in the Middle East. Many of the world's problems have a connection with what happens in Jerusalem and the land of Israel. With God there is hope that peace will return with the coming of Jesus.

Our fellowship has not failed either. The church may have not been the best or achieved what we wanted from it. However, the church will one day be victorious because of the great captain and king who leads it.

Jesus is the future. He is the one who holds the keys of death and hell. He is the one who will bring in his kingdom.

“Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him.”
(Revelation 1:7)

Why does it say that all the peoples of the Earth will mourn because of him? It is because they will not be looking for him or wanting him. Some people are trying to erase him from the history books. They will not be happy to see him return. Are you ready for him? Jesus said,

“Be prepared - all dressed and ready - like men ready for their Master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he himself will seat them and put on a waiter's uniform and serve them as they sit and eat! You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.” (Luke 12:35-40)

DID YOU FIND JESUS?

I hope that you have enjoyed reading this analysis of The Lord of the Rings. I have always loved The Lord of the Rings and the movies were such an amazing adventure. I appreciated the story even more when I started to notice the spiritual nature of the story and the connections to the Bible and Jesus. This story grew with the telling and I am amazed at what is contained in Tolkien's book and Peter Jackson's movies.

This version of my analysis only finishes at the end of the first part of the entire story. There is so much more to write about finding Jesus in the story and I can only add a few concluding details.

The most important part of the story of Jesus is his death on the cross. It happened on the mountain of Jerusalem. In the “Lord of the Rings”, it was also to

a mountain that Frodo brought the Ring of sin. In the end, Frodo couldn't destroy the Ring and Gollum helped cause the destruction. Jesus was greater than Frodo since Jesus didn't fail in the end as Frodo did. He suffered deliberately for us and he didn't try to escape punishment or come down from the cross. Jesus threw our sins into the fire of hell and we can be forgiven from our sins if we trust in him to forgive us

There are always more levels of discovery that can be made in anything and I would like to tell you about something that is particularly special to me. What I discovered was that Jesus is represented by three different characters in The Lord of the Rings. He is represented by Frodo, Gandalf and Aragorn. It seems that the person of Jesus is so complex that he could not be represented sufficiently enough by only one character.

In studying the life of Jesus, theologians have discovered that Jesus has three different roles. He is a prophet and a priest and a king. Jesus is a prophet because he spoke authoritatively for God and he could tell the future. He could also do miracles. Jesus was a priest because he was holy before God and he could carry the sins of the world to have them destroyed. Jesus is a king because he was called the "King of the Jews" by the people and he is going to come as the "King of Kings" at the end of history when he establishes his kingdom for eternity. Amazingly these three features are present in the characters representing Jesus.

Gandalf is a representation of Jesus because he was like a prophet of God. Gandalf had been sent from the land over the sea to Middle Earth to be a teacher and leader for the wars against the enemy. Gandalf was able to do powerful things like Jesus could. He knew secret knowledge and even some of the future. Gandalf carried a staff just a prophet from the Old Testament did and he was an old man with a beard like a prophet.

Frodo is a representation of Jesus because he was like a priest of God. He was a humble servant that accepted and carried the Ring. He carried it to Mount Doom where it was thrown into the fire. He was like a priest of the Old Testament who could take an offering from the people and bring it into the temple and offer it to God as a sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins.

Aragorn is a representation of Jesus because he was the king in exile and then returned to defeat the forces of Mordor. He could even raise the dead and bring the army of the dead into battle. This is what is foretold about the coming of Jesus at the end of the age.

Amazingly, Jesus is present in The Lord of the Rings. He is the fullness of the Father's glory, "full of grace and truth." Through Jesus, God will make everything perfect the way he originally planned it to be.

Jesus is the head of the fellowship made up of his people – that is, his church. This fellowship includes all who have ever believed in him. Jesus will have his fellowship with him in his eternal kingdom. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more crying, pain or death (Revelation 21:4). I'm looking forward to that! I hope that you are too!

Jesus wants to have you in his Fellowship.

Saying this prayer will join you up:

“Thank you Jesus for dying on the cross for my sins. Please forgive my sins and give me eternal life. I open the door of my life and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Please make me the kind of person you want me to be.”

Please contact us at info@realsuperman.net.
Please visit our website at www.realsuperma