

**One ring to rule them all  
 One ring to find them  
 One ring to bring them all  
 And in the darkness, bind them**

This is the inscription on the ring of power in the *Lord of the Rings*. What was J. R. R. Tolkien saying? What strange thing did the ring of power symbolize?

Tolkien, like his acquaintance and fellow writer C. S. Lewis, was a Christian scholar and thus was writing generally from a Christian perspective. So, the answer to the mystery of the many rings and the one ring that rules them all is sure to be found in the pages of the sacred Scriptures, the Holy Bible.

Before the message can be understood, the relationship of the ring of power to its master and to all others must be characterized. In *Lord of the Rings*, many rings of power were fashioned and given to the inhabitants of the earth. But secretly in the in the Mountain of Fire in the Land of Shadow, one master ring was forged to control them all. Into it was poured all the cruelty and malice of its master, and that one ring recognizes only one master.



When the ring of power finds itself in the hands of anyone else, it seeks to work its will. Though it has no mind and is not a person, the one ring persuades, lures, and tempts everyone who even approaches it. Anyone who holds it cradles it and cannot help but to say, "It's my *precious* ring." Everyone who has the one ring holds it tightly and wishes not to depart with it. Its power is deeply desired, and yet only its one master

can use it. The one ring makes men believe they have power, but it only deceives them.

This relationship between the one ring and its master and between the one ring and all the people of the earth is Tolkien's clever depiction of the bond between sin and Satan and between sin and humanity. Sin is like a talisman on the hand of the prince of darkness by which he has ruled the people of the earth in his age and in his kingdom.

The many rings are symbols of power and authority, whatever kind of a power it might be, which is granted as a gift. Now, it is written:

*There is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.*  
 -Romans 13:1b

It is true; all power comes from God. Even Satan is not at liberty to do as he pleases. When he comes before God, he bows to his Lord! (See *Job 1 & 2*)

But over the corrupt world and its lost inhabitants, Satan sits as the lord of a kingdom that has been appointed him. And he too has power; he has his one ring. It is written:

*The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.*  
 -I Corinthians 15:56

*The devil is he who had the power of death.*  
 -Hebrews 2:14b

*People are dead in trespasses and sins, walking according to the course of this age, according to the prince of the power of the surroundings, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, who conduct themselves in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and are by nature children appointed to wrath.*

-Ephesians 2:1-3

**But how does the power of this one ring of sin work?**

Sin means to miss the mark, to fall short of the standard, or to infringe upon the appointed boundaries. God set forth the law; it is His moral policy that demands absolute adherence continually. But by the power of the one ring of sin, Satan and his servants tempt people to violate the law. The things that humans do that break the law (sins) are very pleasing

to the evil in our flesh. Sins are a man's 'precious things.'

But when the temptation of the one ring of sin is complete, the law, which was meant to be a foundation for us, becomes a weapon against us. The law becomes a sword that pierces and tears apart our weak flesh. The power of the one ring of sin is complete death, death in its fullest sense—a total separation from all that is good and from God Himself. It is written:

*What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet." But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead. I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me. Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.*  
 -Romans 7:7-12

All humans were born into this death by their very blood, and when they are old enough to choose between good and evil, they go astray personally.

*For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.*

-Romans 7:14-19

So what does the inscription on the ring of power really mean?



**One ring to rule them all**  
(Ephesians 2:1-3; Revelation 13:4)

By one token of authority and power (sin), Satan rules over every wicked human through the measures of power and authority that they have been given.

**One ring to find them**  
(Luke 22:31; II Corinthians 4:3-4)

The one ring of sin on Satan's finger is the tool by which humanity, one by one, becomes lost to God and found to evil, which wants to keep them for its own.

**One ring to bring them all**  
(Revelation 16:13-14; 20:7-9)

Through the power of death, which is the one ring of sin, Satan is gathering all people around himself to bring them with him into his ultimate fate.

**And in the darkness, bind them**  
(Matthew 7:23; 25:41; Mark 9:43-48)

When Satan, through sin, has finished his secret campaign against humanity, he will have taken with him and his minions everyone he possibly can into the darkness of the Lake of Fire where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.

**However!!**

The one ring of sin is not all-powerful. Just like the ring of power in *Lord of the Rings* can only be destroyed one way, the ring of sin has one weakness. There is one and only one means of destroying the power of death on the devil's finger. The shed blood of Jesus Christ has the strength to dissolve the power of death. He Himself has conquered death for us, so that we might be partakers of a new life. Through His blood, there is forgiveness of sins and the hope of a life to come. It is written:

*For God made Christ who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

-II Corinthians 2:5

*Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those*

*who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

-Hebrews 2:14-15

*For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

-Galatians 2:19-20

*Thus says the Lord God: I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O Death, I will be your plagues! O Grave, I will be your destruction! Pity is hidden from My eyes.*

-Hosea 13:14

To the one who believes upon Jesus Christ and the death that He died in our place, to him sin and death have no power to carry a soul to hell forever. And with that genuine faith comes an even greater measure of grace and favor from God. He grants to all who believe the ability to resist the attempts of sin, which try to ensnare people once again.

**Maranatha Christian Fellowship**

315 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE  
Minneapolis, MN 55414  
Email: mcf@tc.umn.edu  
www.spiritformed.com  
612-378-2299

The Gospel of...

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OF  
LORDS

Revealed in  
Tolkien's...

the  
LORD  
OF THE  
RINGS

by Aaron Siber