
*The Dunedain
Rings*

A Monthly Reflection on Tolkien's *Lords of the Rings*



Just three things this month: 1) We must be merciful because 2) we must see the big picture and 3) our heavenly Father is merciful. J.R.R. Tolkien says it much better than we.

'But this is terrible!' cried Frodo. . . . O Gandalf, best of friends, what am I to do? For now I am really afraid. What am I to do? What a pity that Bilbo did not stab that vile creature, when he had a chance!'

'Pity? It was Pity that stayed his hand. Pity, and mercy: not to strike without need. And he has been well rewarded, Frodo. Be sure that he took so little hurt from the evil, and escaped in the end, because he began the ownership of the Ring so. With Pity.'

'I am sorry,' said Frodo. "I am frightened; and I do not feel any pity for Gollum.'

'You have not seen him,' Gandalf broke in.

'No, and I don't want to,' said Frodo, '. . . He deserves death.'

'Deserves it! I daresay he does. Many that live deserve death. And some that die deserve life. Can you give it to them? Then do not be too eager to deal out death in judgment. For even the very wise cannot see all ends. I have not much hope that Gollum can be cured before he dies, but there is a chance of it. And he is bound up with the fate of the Ring. My heart tells me that he has some part to play yet, for good or ill, before the end; and when it comes, the pity of Bilbo may rule the fate of many – yours not least.'¹



¹ J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1994) 65-66.