
The Dunadin
Rings

A Monthly Reflection on Tolkien's *Lord of the*

Samwise and Frodo have such a great, wonderful, heroic friendship! Notice how happy Sam is once Frodo is freed from the burden of the Ring! And notice how God-like mercy and forgiveness are. Indeed, to be merciful takes a great inner strength that can only come from God, whose greatest attribute is Mercy, as our Lord Jesus himself stated through Saint Faustina.

"Well, this is the end, Sam Gamgee," said a voice by his side. And there was Frodo, pale and worn, and yet himself again; and in his eyes there was peace now, neither strain of will, nor madness, nor any fear. His burden was taken away. There was the dear master of the sweet days in the Shire.

"Master!" cried Sam, and fell upon his knees. In all the ruin of the world for the moment he felt only joy, great joy. The burden was gone. His master had been saved; he was himself again, he was free. And then Sam caught sight of the maimed and bleeding hand.

"Your poor hand!" he said. "And I have nothing to bind it with, or comfort it. I would have spared him a whole hand of mine rather. But he's gone now beyond recall, gone forever."

"Yes," said Frodo. "But do you remember Gandalf's words: *Even Gollum may have something yet to do?* But for him, Sam, I could not have destroyed the Ring. The Quest would have been in vain, even at the bitter end. So let us forgive him! For the Quest is achieved, and now all is over. I am glad you are here with me. Here at the end of all things, Sam."*

If Bilbo and Frodo do not show mercy to Gollum, then the Quest fails even at its bitter end and all the world of Middle-earth falls into ruin. The valiant efforts of the Fellowship and the Men of the West are completely in vain! Think about it.

* J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Return of the King* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1994) 241.