

Is God in *The Lord of the Rings*? This is no ordinary question! The Editor of the *Dunadin* could attempt to answer it, but philosophy professor Peter Kreeft will do a better job than he.

God is in *The Silmarillion* explicitly, right from sentence one, as the single Creator, Iluvatar (All-Father). But how is He in *The Lord of the Rings*? Not as a named character, but as the sun is in sunlight. Those with eyes to see can detect His presence everywhere.¹

Tolkien does not portray God in *The Lord of the Rings*, as he does in the *Silmarillion*; he writes of times long before the Incarnation, so there is no portrayal of Christ. But there are Christ figures . . . In fact, there are Christ figures everywhere in literature and life. This should not surprise us. For Christ was not an emergency afterthought . . . but the central point of the whole human story from the beginning in the Mind of its Author. In fact, Christ is the Mind of the author, the inner Word of God, the Logos.²

While we are talking about the existence of God, let us not ignore what seems to be the next logical topic in the discussion: Divine Providence. On Divine Providence, Kreeft and Tolkien have this to say:

Two different ways God can act in earthly history are miracles and providence. There are no miracles in *The Lord of the Rings* . . . But there is the pervasive presence of providence.³

God prefers to act by providence rather than miracles, because He loves the natures of all the things He created and wants to perfect them rather than bypass them. He is like a wise, unselfish King who exalts and empowers His servants, rather than distrusting them and micro-managing His kingdom. "Grace perfects nature." It is Sauron who is in love with blatant brute force.⁴

Could we ever love a god who forced us to love him—a god who reduced us to mere robots? To put the question another way, could we ever love Sauron?

¹ Peter J. Kreeft, *The Philosophy of Tolkien* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005) page 51.

² Peter J. Kreeft, *The Philosophy of Tolkien* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005) page 54.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*