

Separating the Sheep From the Sheep? (Ezekiel 34:20-24)

A Commentary on the Literary Works of C.S.Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien

by Barbara L. Klika, MSW, Personal Life Coach

If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved, and to be steady on all the battlefield besides, is more flight and disgrace.

Martin Luther

Every age has its dominant theme and worldview. In a manner not precisely clear, it seems that there is a subtle influence on how people think that can pervade an entire society, or a continent or a time period. This was seen in the dark ages and in the age of enlightenment that followed and in the trends of literature and writings about what is acceptable or not at any given time. This is especially true in the area of faith. If we shout Truth but are not addressing a current issue, we may as well be silent for we have not helped to equip Believers to recognize the pitfalls.

Recently, two authors who have been beloved by Christians for several decades have come to the forefront of interest for Believers and non Believers alike. C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien were friends and encouraged one another in their writing. ***The Chronicles of Narnia*** and ***The Lord of the Rings*** have been put in center stage through the movie industry and all the accompanying merchandising that goes with it.

There has also been great interest in the books about ***Harry Potter*** by J. K. Rowling. Educators have especially promoted these books as they fall in the "high interest" category that can motivate children to read. Though this series is unabashedly teaching a worldview steeped in magik and the ability to affect other's behaviors through witchcraft, the high attraction to readers is given priority.

Many Christians have struggled with whether or not to allow their children, or themselves, to read these books or attend these movies. It is common to see a polarized response; that is a love-hate dichotomy. Some people will roundly denounce anything to do with any of these books and while others will defend them. Sometimes it appears to be a debate as to whether one likes or dislikes the authors, or even whether or not one is a discerning, mature Christian.

As mature Believers in *Yahshua ha Maschiach* we need to be alert and wary, identifying stumbling blocks as we equip others. As Martin Luther observed, we need to be aware of the current nature of the dilemmas confronting our age (though he himself was not a perfect example in his later years.) **It is my contention that these books, for different reasons, although greatly beloved and well written, represent a reason for concern that goes far beyond whether or not they are good literature or the authors liked or disliked. The concern for this age will be described with a brief history of my development of understanding, followed by specific reasons for concern in each of these books/movies.**

Personal History Related to the Current Concerns

I wasn't introduced to either Lewis or Tolkien until I was an adult. I was pleased with the excellent writing and storylines, as well as the characterizations. I was pleased with the apparent Christian themes that were present though vaguely uncomfortable with some of the fantasy aspects. Like many others, I concentrated on the aspects of the stories that were consistent with my faith and basically overlooked the rest. I thought then, that these characters and activities were products of imagination alone. While not savory, I did not see specific harm as it would be necessary to depict evil if one is going to depict the ongoing battle between good and evil, would it not?

I would continue to say that these writings are literature and should never under any circumstances be considered a source of sound teaching in Scriptural Truth or doctrine! As such, I have not been as concerned about them as I have been about the presence or absence of sound teaching within accepted church bodies. I am not at all certain that reading literature is in the same category as being a covenant member of a body of apparent Believers who do not teach the Whole Word, from Genesis to Revelation and honor *YHWH's* Name and His Commands. It DOES matter with whom one worships, with whom one prays and whom one accepts as a spiritual authority. Yet, it is also true that literature can and does have an impact on people's understanding of their faith. For instance, Dante's *Inferno* is more of the source of understanding of hell than Scripture for many people.

During the late 1980s I became aware of the problem of evil in a much more personal way than ever before. I had been studying and then speaking about my concerns about New Age thinking and how it was beginning to infiltrate Christian churches. Subsequently, though I never advertised these things, I began to find people coming out of occult lifestyles coming in to my clinical practice for help. I originally thought that New Age and Satanism represented two entirely different areas of concern. Imagine my surprise when it began to dawn on me that they were, in fact, one and the same. Satanic things just seemed to be more "upfront" in that they were what they were. People who got involved knew what they were coming into it seemed. On the other hand, New Age practices were, and are, far more subtle so they are more like a back door into the occult. This back door is often very attractive in its presentation as well.

In the early 1990s, my interest and training to come along side those coming out of satanic ritual abuse and Wiccan practices continued because I believe I am called to this kind of ministry. (It is nothing I would have chosen for myself, as my religious training had not even prepared me for the idea that demons are real in our day.) By the late 1990s, it became apparent through a number of avenues that the schemes of the enemy appeared to have progressed or moved on in some way. Where once the agenda included a sort of "head on" approach for those who were trying to get free of satanic influence, then it seemed to become more subtle, less overt. The same type of warnings and spiritual disciplines that had been appropriate only a few years before were now outdated and needed to be revised.

What changes were seen? It became apparent for reasons that are too lengthy to describe fully here in the scope of this article that the evil one's agenda had moved as we near the end of the age from the more overt, blatant demonic power and control battle, to the more subtle use of disguise and deception. This is consistent with Scripture's presentation of the apostate and compromising church as well as the appearance of many false messiahs. (Matthew 24, II Corinthians 11, II Timothy 3)

Miriam Webster defines **duplicity** as: **1:** contradictory doubleness of thought, speech, or action; especially: the belying of one's true intentions by deceptive words or action **2:** the quality or state of being double or twofold **3:** the technically incorrect use of two or more distinct items (as claims, charges, or defenses) in a single legal action

The **duplicity** of appearing good but in fact, being evil is exactly the concern for this age. This is called a **Luciferian agenda**. This is not to say that previous efforts to deceive people no longer exist. They do! Yet, the primary focus has shifted. Now in this age of Luciferian schemes, it has become necessary to go back and re-evaluate many things, among them, these authors and their works. I will examine them in two areas: comparison of the content of their writings to Scriptural Truths and their connection with occult things.

Harry Potter is not apparently in the same category with the others.

J.K. Rowling's works belong in a separate category and can serve as a counterpoint to the concerns about duplicity. *Harry Potter* books and movies have been a source of concern for many of us for quite some time. **In these works, there is no apparent veneer of Christian belief and no apology for this.** The witchcraft practiced is similar in many ways to actual practice. It is presented as a way for Harry to get what he wants. These writings may be considered to be of a more demonic or satanic agenda, with the absence of subterfuge, though of course, Wiccans object to being cast in the same group with Satanists. As one can tell by their popularity, few people see a problem with this overt, occult worldview or its reading appeal for children. As George Barna, among others, has confirmed, we are a nation of mostly Biblically illiterate people. Even among churched people the knowledge base of Scripture is weak. Therefore, we are vulnerable to false teachings wherever they may be found. As many people do not realize that entertainment affects their worldview and understanding, they do not use spiritual discernment in their choices of entertainment. I have long thought that this was a clear and present danger and should be avoided by Believers, especially those who are not strong in faith and knowledge of the Word. Though these books/movies are not particularly covert or duplicitous: their worldview is quite obvious. The enticement of these stories could well function as a distraction from the pure and good things on which Scripture tells us to focus. (Philippians 4: 8, II Timothy 2: 22)

Concerns about Duplicity In Lewis' and Tolkien's works

Tolkien and Lewis appear in many respects to present Biblical themes; good vs evil, light vs dark, heroic quests, messianic figures, miraculous events, sacrificial atonement, etc. This was my initial focus years ago, and the focus of many today who will defend these works for this content. I do not believe this is wrong; themes that correspond to Biblical truth are presented.

“Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.” James 2:19.

Apparent overt Christian themes and stating that one believes in God is not enough to establish a personal faith. We must also examine the fruit of that one's life. It has come to my attention that both Lewis and Tolkien although widely accepted to have become Christians, did also belong to a group of writers, called the Inklings, who did pursue occult things. It appears that there may well be duplicity involved, intentionally or otherwise. (Although one may wish to argue whether or not it was intentional, the end result for the reader remains the same.) Click here to link to one scholarly website, describing the credentials of the writers that have deeply researched these matters.

[Click here](#) for a link which includes quotes from Lewis and friends as to their involvement in such secret practices as theosophy and Rosicrucianism.

There is also a strong suspicion, though not confirmed, that both were initiates of an occult organization. In the following link, you will find indications that a man whom Lewis considered: ['wisest and best of my unofficial teachers,'](#) was heavily involved in the exploration of Theosophy and reincarnation.

Through these and other sources, it has become apparent to me that symbols, objects, beings and names of characters appear NOT to have been solely imaginary, but to be based more closely on occult imagery and practice than I had previously noted. A comparison of the images used in the movies shows very strong resemblance to Masonic symbols and names. (True, Tolkien or Lewis did not have personal input on the use of images in the movies but it is true that producers would have researched his sources to comprehend how to represent them) These images were matched in many cases, to the sketches the authors included in their writings. Lewis was well versed in the ancient cultures, particularly Sumerian. These legends included many mythological beings Christians consider at least potentially demonic. It is well documented by many that interest in these things does lead one on into a greater curiosity about *magik*. This is a type of distraction from our focus on Scriptural truth.

[Click here](#) for further information regarding J. R. R. Tolkien, which is just as disturbing.

The man and his message. John Ronald Reuel Tolkien (1892-1973) was a man of many contradictions. For example:

- Back in 1969, he wrote a letter affirming that "the chief purpose of life, for any one of us, is to increase according to our capacity our knowledge of God by all the means we have, and to be moved by it to praise and thanks." [4] Yet the primary focus of his life was his mythical Middle-earth, headed by a distant and impersonal "God" who might confuse rather than clarify the nature of the Biblical God.
- In his personal letters (many are included in a book titled *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien*); he expressed caution toward occult practices. But he equipped his team of mythical heroes -- the fellowship of the Ring -- with the pagan powers that God forbids. For example, "Gandalf [a helpful wizard] is able to wield potent magic... To do battle with the forces of darkness, Gandalf the Grey can call upon not only his spellcraft, but also his staff of power and the Elven sword Glamdring." [5]
- A staunch Roman Catholic, he affirmed his faith in the One God who created the universe. But his **mythical God stopped creating before the work was finished, then turned the rest over to a group of lesser gods or "sub-creators."** In other words, Tolkien invented a hierarchy of deities that defied the Biblical God's wise warnings concerning both real and imagined idolatry. [6]

Here is yet another in depth observation on the concerns represented above, particularly for C.S. Lewis. I can't put it any more succinctly so will quote one portion of what is presented from the [Keepers of the Faith](#) materials:

Mere Christianity is focused upon who or what a Christian is. This idea is based on the premise, or, more correctly put, supposition of what a Christian is according to C. S. Lewis. His arguments are also based on another premise, or false assumption, that anyone, of any faith willing to be called Christian, is a Christian. This is the real basis of his mere or no-frills Christianity under which everyone ought to be herded into one corral. In Chapter 4 of **What Christians Believe**, book two of *Mere Christianity*, he shows which corral that is, as he includes even such churches as the Church of England of which he was a member, and the Church of Rome, both of which oppose Scripture as the final authority on spiritual truth. Any doctrine that conflicts with this doctrine of unity, he dismisses as unimportant theories of men. However, we must remind ourselves that his theories are based on dogmas that do not concur with Scripture, especially his theories about becoming a Christian. Chapter 5 of *What Christians Believe*, the second book in *Mere Christianity*, states, "There are three things that spread the Christ life to us: baptism, belief, and that mysterious action which different Christians call by different names — Holy Communion, the Mass, the Lord's Supper." Notice again his personal view of Christianity which was primarily based upon the dogmas of the Church of Rome — baptism and transubstantiation. Matthew warned us about such doctrinal views when he wrote, "Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Matt 16:12. Later, in Chapter 10 of *Beyond Personality*, book three of *Mere Christianity*, Lewis takes the "all under one roof" idea even further, as he writes, "There are people who do not accept the full Christian doctrine about Christ but who are so strongly attracted by Him that they are His in a much deeper sense than they themselves understand. There are people in other religions who are being led by God's secret influence to concentrate on those parts of their religion which are in agreement with Christianity, and who thus belong to Christ without knowing it. For example, a Buddhist of good will may be led to concentrate more and more on the Buddhist teaching about mercy and to leave in the background (though he might still say he believed) the Buddhist teaching on certain other points." Scripture entertains no concept of belonging to Jesus without knowing Him or knowing of Him. This is strictly "Lewisology".

Those sounding this alarm have pointed out that Lewis speaks intellectually of faith, never mentioning repentance and personal relationship with our Messiah. For them, this disqualifies his work immediately. For me, I am aware that many people's faith began as an intellectual acceptance that later matured into a personal faith. Lewis's work in *Mere Christianity* and *The Screwtape Letters* does describe quite well how the evil one may work in our lives to subvert our faith in the one true and living *YHWH*. Yet it is true, that like his Roman Catholic cohorts, mention of personal submission to our Messiah is never made while he supports concepts that are more Catholic dogma than scriptural. If one can separate these factors and use what is helpful without falling into the deception perhaps it may be acceptable. If not, these writings may well lead one into a *Luciferian* understanding; i.e. the appearance of belief without substance, in this case, another form of **duplicity**.

An example of unscriptural practice shown in Tolkien's work, *Lord of the Rings* includes the King Aragorn calling up the dead as an army. At first glance, this may seem prophetic of our Messiah returning with His army yet Aragorn's army was of spirit—dead men, while our Messiah will come bodily and His army members will be given their new body. Aragorn's practice is called necromancy in Scripture and is strictly forbidden. King Saul was guilty of this same practice when he contacted the witch of Endor to speak with Samuel. This is an example of a **distortion** of a Biblical theme, and one that has been able to "sneak under the radar" of many Believers.

For those of you who are familiar with Set Apart Ministries, you will know that part of our way of moving toward maturity in all ways is that we participate in a twice monthly group using the principles of spiritual, emotional, developmental and cognitive maturity in our local *Life Model* group. In our group, we have spoken often about the spiritual dangers that we recognize in our personal lives as well as in our corporate life together. We have come to call them The Terrible D's: **duplicity, distortion, despair, depression, distraction, deceit, division**. In the previous pages, various examples of **duplicity, distortion**, and **distraction** have been noted. I will now further note that the discovery of these agendas has led to **despair** and **depression** as one begins to realize the **deceit** that has been practiced.

We must now be even more on our guard against this subtle undermining of Scriptural Truth as the anti-messiah attempts to divert the True Worship of *YHWH's* people to itself in duplicitous ways. If our desire is to be a *kadosh/set* apart people unto *YHWH* as His Word and The Living Word, our Messiah *Yahshua* calls us to be we must examine in this new light of concern even what we have thought acceptable in the past.

In light of the additional information about Lewis and Tolkien and the recognition that the *Luciferian* agenda is the evil one's scheme of our age it becomes important to speak clearly. It would appear that their works could be the most dangerous of them all. It is the subtlety and duplicity that is the scheme of *ha shatan* in this age. It is **not** whether or not one likes or appreciates the quality of the writing (because the writing is by most standards quite good!). The Christian themes overlying these works HAVE caused confusion and perhaps, complacency. Far too many Christians do not have the discernment necessary to enjoy the literary aspects without being influenced by the subtle underlying themes. In this *Luciferian* age, surely we do not want to confuse our children or ourselves with expectations that fit the anti-Christ far better than they do the Messiah *Yahshua*!

One final point regarding the last "Terrible D": **division**. A frequent scheme of the devil is to lay out options that polarize and lead to **division** among people in general and Believers in particular. In fact, all too often, the so-called options are just opposite elements of the same thing; in other words, a double bind. Thus, it is not whether Tolkien/Lewis are "good" and Rowlings is "bad" (Some people say, "You can't win for losing."). It may well be a case of "both/and" being closer to the truth.

If this is the case, the existence of *Harry Potter* vs. Lewis/Tolkien may be just the sort of false dichotomy that the evil one will use to get people focusing on a subject that is not productive to faith and instead leads to more division and distraction from a sincere devotion to Messiah.

Here is one link to some suggestions on how to recognize and combat these concerns, in homes and schools.

<http://www.crossroad.to/Books/BraveNewSchools/4-Global%20Spirituality.html>

We at Set Apart Ministries encourage people to check these things out more closely. We do not wish to be alarmist yet we do want to sound the alarm about duplicitous, *Luciferian* schemes so that we, His set apart people, understand the need to separate ourselves from that which is not clean or wholesome or pure. The real Messiah IS coming soon and we want to be ready!

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

Philippians 4: 8

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

Ephesians 5: 11