Footnotes from "The Christian Character of Tolkien's Invented World"

Willis D. Glover

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defeat of Rohan, no longer held in check by Saruman, and aided by the Wild Men of the woods, arrives unexpectedly out of the forest and Sauron’s army is flanked and its commander killed (Ⅲ, p. 117). Quickly following upon this action, the army is again flanked from the south by Aragorn, who has defeated the southern allies and Sauron, en route to Gondor, is forced to retreat. He is now the victim of a two-pronged attack, and the defenders are ready for it, so there was no surprise involved. The attack of the Rohirrim and then of Aragorn, however, is a complete surprise and helps to disorganize and disorient the leadership of the enemy. The next move was not expected and the defenders were ready for it, so there had been a complete surprise. For to mystify and mislead constitutes the sequel to the loss of his freedom of conception” (Strategy, pp. 345-44.) Sauron, however, had staked everything on the fall of Minas Tirith, and when this proves impossible, he is left again where he started.

Also, after this battle the opposing military forces are more equally balanced. Resistance that the army that besieged Gondor was not the largest of the forces at Sauron’s command, there can be no doubt that he has suffered a grievous loss which, coupled with the loss of his allies, has given a serious setback to his plans in request. Nevertheless, Sauron is still far from finished. He has a chance to launch another attack and he has many troops that have not been used (Ⅲ, p. 154). Now the decision rests with Gondor and its allies. Shall they remain on the defensive and wait for another attack, or take the offensive against Mordor? Once again Gandalf shows his ability as a master strategist. Like Napoleon, he realizes that “defensive war does not exclude attacking, just as offensive war does not exclude defending…” (Phillips, p. 437). The move which he proposes reveals that he has never found a moment of fundamental military maneuver that he will not notice the true threat to his power offered by Frodo and Sam. As he says, “We must push Sauron to his last throw. We must call out his hidden strength, so that he shall empty his land. We must march out to meet him at once. We must make ourselves the bait, for he will think that in such rashness he sees the pride of the new Ringlord.” (Ⅲ, p. 156). This move is a distraction, always an essential element in grand strategy. Liddell Hart defines distraction in the following terms: “Because of the risk that the enemy may achieve such a change of front, it is usually necessary for the dislocating move to be preceded by a move, or moves, which can best be defined by the term ‘distract’ in its literal sense of ‘to divert by sunshine’...” (Strategy, p. 219). He counsels an immediate attack—not in order to make a serious attempt to break into Mordor, which would in any case be impossible, but to maintain the Christian doctrine of creation, one of which will be noticed by Sauron’s being caught off balance is a result of another of Sauron’s trap, which is pointed out by T. S. Eliot in “The Attack” (Baton Rouge, 1956), 126-33.


Footnotes from

The Character of Tolkien’s Invented World

by Willis D. Glover

(We apologize for having left these footnotes out of Mythlore 10, where the body of the article appeared on pages 3-8. —GG)


4 Voegelin, op. cit., 126-33 and passim.

5 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., 39.


7 Edmund Fuller, “The Lord of the Hobbits,” Tolkien and the Critics, p. 35.

8 Voegelin, op. cit., 126-33 and passim.

9 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., 39.

10 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

11 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

12 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

13 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

14 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

15 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

16 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

17 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

18 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

19 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

20 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

21 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

22 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

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37 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

38 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

39 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

40 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

41 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

42 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

43 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

44 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

45 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

46 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

47 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

48 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

49 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

50 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.

51 Tolkien on Tolkien,” loc. cit., p. 156.