



# Following Gandalf: Epic Battles and Moral Victory in The Lord of the Rings

By Matthew T. Dickerson

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### **Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

Dickerson, a teacher at Middlebury College in Vermont and devoted student of Tolkien, begins his work with a strong thematic link to the very popular The Lord of the Rings movies: epic battles. Against the criticism that The Lord of the Rings glorifies war, he argues cogently that Tolkien's original written treatment of these battles provides a very different picture than the films or spin-off video games. He demonstrates how Tolkien offers a deeply nuanced understanding of the nature of war, and how the trilogy criticizes self-aggrandizing glory in battle. As Dickerson moves into the more central, philosophical themes of the books-free will, moral responsibility and ethical absolutes-readers may lose interest, especially when he punctuates discussion of very basic concepts with obscure references from Tolkien's Silmarillion, a work that few will have read: "In contrast to subjective morality, or moral relativism, objective morality is independent of the individual subject.... Feanor's evil deeds, for example, especially the tragic Kinslaying at Alqualonde, are going to be judged." Dickerson's exploration of the nature of the ring's evil power and his final conclusions about the pervasive theological structure behind these stories are engaging, but the verbosity and academic trivia of other sections may alienate some readers.

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About the Author

Matthew Dickerson is a computer science professor at Middlebury College. He is the author of The Finnsburg Encounter and Hammers and Nails. He lives with his wife and children in Bristol, Vermont.

### **Users Review**

**From reader reviews:**

**Bruce Bracey:**

This Following Gandalf: Epic Battles and Moral Victory in The Lord of the Rings book is not really ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you get by reading this book is actually information inside this reserve incredible fresh, you will get data which is getting deeper anyone read a lot of information you will get. This particular Following Gandalf: Epic Battles and Moral Victory in The Lord of the Rings without we comprehend teach the one who studying it become critical in imagining and analyzing. Don't become worry Following Gandalf: Epic Battles and Moral Victory in The Lord of the Rings can bring when you are and not make your tote space or bookshelves' become full because you can have it within your lovely laptop even cell phone. This Following Gandalf: Epic Battles and Moral Victory in The Lord of the Rings having great arrangement in word in addition to layout, so you will not really feel uninterested in reading.

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