



J.R.R. Tolkien: Myth, Morality, and Religion

Richard Purtill

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Here is an in-depth look at the role myth, morality, and religion play in J.R.R. Tolkien's works such as *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and *The Silmarillion*-including Tolkien's private letters and revealing opinions of his own work. Richard L. Purtill brilliantly argues that Tolkien's extraordinary ability to touch his readers' lives through his storytelling-so unlike much modern literature-accounts for his enormous literary success.

This book demonstrates the moral depth in Tolkien's work and cuts through current subjectivism and cynicism about morality. A careful reader will find a subtle religious dimension to Tolkien's work-all the more potent because it is below the surface. Purtill reveals that Tolkien's fantasy stories creatively incorporate profound religious and ethical ideas. For example, Purtill shows us how hobbits reflect both the pettiness of parochial humanity and unexpected heroism.

Purtill, author of 19 books, effectively addresses larger issues of the place of myth, the relation of religion and morality to literature, the relation of Tolkien's work to traditional mythology, and the lessons Tolkien's work teaches for our own lives.



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