

Revelation 10:1-3 I saw still another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was on his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. 2 He had a little book open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, 3 and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars. When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices.

Did you catch the summer mega flick: two hundred million horses with lions' heads, breathing fire, smoke and sulfur with Medusa like tails sprouting serpents? It's still playing. You can read all about it in Revelation 9.

The opening of the seven seals has unleashed the riders of ruin. Man's own sin brings judgments on ourselves. The very universe frustrated by sin's curse is falling apart. Rebellious man is desperate but unrepentant. Yet, Jesus is so longsuffering in His call to repentance, to an uncompromising love of the truth, that He keeps seeking repentance. But what more can He do? Since man does not love the truth, Jesus allows Satan to weave his webs of deceptive lies. The seven trumpets unleash false teaching. Why? So that man would turn back from the tyranny of the lie to love the truth, the only truth that sets him free. For apostasy obscures the light of life, poisons the water of life, and consumes the bread of life. Yet, obdurate man still remains unrepentant. What about us? What do we tend to do the moment we experience suffering in our life: blame God and castigate other people? What do we tend to do the moment God's Word seems irrational or unfair:

blame God and pursue our own path? What do we tend to do the moment our faith is made fun of: manifest resentment and self-pity or arrogant self-righteousness? What do we tend to do the moment we are confronted with the fact that we deserve judgement: make more excuses and demand to be treated fairly? Yet, what is the fairness we deserve? Rom 6 The wages of sin is death. Ez 33 The soul that sins shall die. Jam 2:10 whoever stumbles in one *point*, he is guilty of all.

But now, who steps on the scene in Revelation 10? A mighty angel! A great, towering colossus controlling access not just to a river or a country but to and from the whole world? None can enter His kingdom but through Him. Who is this angel colossus clothed with a cloud, with a rainbow over his head, His face like the sun, His feet like pillars of fire, and His cry like the voice of a lion roaring? In Ch.8 such an angel is the mediator who makes the prayers of the saints acceptable to the Father. In Ch.11 He knows every cubit of God's church and gives power to the ones He calls: "My witnesses." In Ch. 14 He brings the everlasting gospel. In Ch. 20 He binds Satan and casts him into a bottomless pit.

There are created angels referred to in the book of Revelation, as in the Bible, who serve Jesus. But, this Angel is the Son of Man, true God who came to be our brother. The Son of Man is pictured in the opening chapters of Revelation in the same ways as in our text. He is pictured there coming

on the clouds of Heaven to be with us (1:7) as when God dwelt in the midst of Israel in a pillar of cloud. He is pictured there coming with a roaring voice as a lion, He is the Lion of the tribe of Judah who like King David has conquered our Goliaths. He is pictured there shining with a countenance like the sun (1:16,17) as He did on the Mount of Transfiguration and will when He returns. This He does now to the eyes of faith in His word. He is pictured there with feet of burning bronze to defend us - squash all who oppose His people as He did with Pharaoh and his army. He is pictured there with a rainbow around His throne (Rv. 4) – even though He sends a flood, He is looking at you in the rainbow to assure you He is ruling all things to fulfill His promises of grace to you.

And what does our text affirm of the towering Colossus? V. 2 He has opened the little book of God's gracious will so nothing can prevent the fulfillment of God's saving will for you. Notice, He not only opened it but is holding this book open so neither principalities nor powers, not Satan himself can prevent you from having the message of the kingdom: the holy, precious blood of the very Colossus guarding the way has washed you clean from all your sins and opened the way into His kingdom so no one can close it for He is holding it open. The very Colossus guarding the way was your perfect substitute whose obedience enables you to enter and stand righteous before His Father - your Father in Heaven and

guarantees your prayers are through Him a sweet-smelling incense to your Father.

What do we tend to do the moment we experience the advancing judgment of this world: blame God and doubt God? But, this towering Colossus is holding the kingdom open for you. Jesus stands astride the world with all the might of Heaven to assure you His Word - His saving grace shall not fail. Hymn 339:1,5

“Speak friend and enter.” Some of you may remember, in Tolkein’s Lord of the Rings, those words were etched above the door. The hobbit, Frodo, Wizard Gandalf, and fellow adventurers were seeking passage under the perilous mountain having been turned back from the treacherous, blizzarding peaks. Gandalf tried to speak every word he could think of to open the door. Nothing worked until Frodo recognized the message meant to speak the word “friend.” They did, and it opened just in time to keep the monsters in the lake from devouring them.

Similarly, there are words posted over the door of worship. They are not words of make-believe magic as in the Lord of the Rings. No, these words have real power to swing open the door to the transcendent presence of the Holy,

Holy, Holy Lord. For Jesus is the mighty colossus controlling access not just to a river or a country but to the whole world. And not just to the world, his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, also control all access from this world to the Father in Heaven. (Act 4:12 NKJ) "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." "In the name of Jesus" opens Heaven for every prayer, every praise, every petition. This of course, is not a word that works (ex opera operandum) by mere rote, saying the words without faith. No, in Exo 20:24 Jesus says: "In every place where I record My name I will come to you, and I will bless you." The transcendent power of worship is not found in man's rote recitation, man's inventions, man's drama, or man's entertainment but only in God recording His name in the grace which comes to us and makes us through faith a friend of Jesus. He is the angel, the messenger sent by the Father to open the way to heaven. He is the Friend who sent the Holy Spirit to bring the message of friendship through His blood to our hearts. And so "In the Name of Jesus" is really synonymous with "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

These words, then stand over every worship service, every prayer, every baptism, every thought, movement,

will, and life. “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” At first glance, these words appear to hang unattached and unfinished. Your grammar teacher would mark them with a red pen, N/S, not a sentence. Solely a prepositional phrase, it contains no subject, no verb, it kind of floats with no beginning or no end. No parameters define or limit the ‘in’ of “in the name”, no ‘what’ is given, or ‘how far.’ It simply tells ‘who.’ We often make it a sentence: “We begin - we worship – we continue in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Certainly, that’s true and appropriate, I am not criticizing it. Yet, this phrase extends far beyond an hour of worship. And it is also true that in ourselves we cannot begin, we cannot access the Father, we can never be the primary nor initiating subject in transcendent worship. With no subject, verb, or limit set on that phrase it more clearly sets the focus on the who: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Jesus is the Colossus towering over earth and sea, no one and nothing comes to the Father except by the Spirit bringing us through Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

The Who is the one thing that matters, the Subject and the Object, the Beginning and the End, the Author and the Finisher, the Way and the Goal, the power with no limit, whose care for us has no parameters. By His grace, this is our Who. These words, then stand as the colossus over

every worship service, every prayer, every baptism, every thought, movement, will, and life. “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

These words, then, need no parameters, no limit, no beginning, nor an end. They are Jesus acting for us – without His acting we are nothing, - Jesus giving us access – without His access we have none, - Jesus creating a home for us to dwell with the Father – without His grace we are lost. “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Yes, isn’t it glorious that these words kind of float with us, around us, for us wherever we are, at all times and in all places? They open our prayers, our worship, our day, our week, our lives, and our praise into eternity. These words unite us in confession, give us comfort in trials, and uplift us in praise. They are the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. Speak “Jesus” and enter. Jesus stands astride the world with all the might of Heaven to assure you His saving grace stands for you - His name shall not fail to give entry. Amen SDG

Hymn 465 1,3