

a rose by any other name

"because of the fragrance of your good ointments, Your name is ointment poured forth." song of sol 1:3

perhaps many of you will think i am straying too far from scriptural importance, but i think not. you see, the whole message of the bible is just really one big, long love letter from a Creator to His creation; from our God to us. in His imagination we are not just another of His creation brought forth for His amusements. we were created in His very own image; created to be like Him and oh, what a mess we have made of it.

be that as it may, His love and desire for us exceeds any limits we knew love could reach; that the creator would don our limitations, endure our temptations, feel our anxieties and enter the realm we most greatly feared - the unknown realm of death. He would do all this without experiencing the shortcomings and failures we had succumbed to. He would redeem His beloved creation from the vast canyon our actions had dug. so it was in shakespeare's romeo and juliet - two families divided in such a way that only the tragedy of unfulfilled love could unite them again.

i love roses. i have more than a dozen rose bushes in my front yard alone, each sharing their unique beauty and vibrant colors. their fragrance and their prickling thorns remind of the pain such beauty sometimes requires. i think of my Lord whose brow was pierced with harsher thorns and the sweetest of fragrances that emerged with His blood; blood that

allows one to jump in and swim across the canyon of sin created by our depravity.

i know i might be getting too "flowery" here with my words, but even in my extremity i cannot come close to the love God has for His creation; His prized creation. i don't always put a lot of stock in near death experiences because i will not allow my faith to stand on someone else's experiences. it's just that i remember one man's story about having died and experienced the hereafter. he remarked how he had angels almost approaching him with reverence. when he questioned why, he was told this, "because we see in you the glory of our Lord."

we know and must always be careful to remember all glory belongs to our God alone. He has said He would not share it. "I am the Lord, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another." isa 42:8 but we are blood-bought and by His amazing grace we are allowed to be inheritors with His son, Jesus Christ. "by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." 2 pet 1:4 we are reborn to grow "to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." eph 4:13 all this so He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

now just try to tell me that isn't a love story than exceeds time and space itself; exceeds all of creation and the yet uncreated. "in this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 john 4:10

"do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." luke 12:32 all the time we thought we had an fervent love for the Lord. His love for us exceeds anything we could ever know or imagine.

as so, whether we're left with romeo and juliet or we're left with the shulamite girl pursuing her beloved until He embraces her in exquisite passion, we're left with the question: would a rose by any other name smell as sweet? the fact is: "there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." acts 4:12

it's only in the knowing of what we are looking for that enables one to fill that vacuum inside; and it's not a "what" - it's a "who." if one is seeking to fill that emptiness with any religion, including the "big five" religions, they are looking in the wrong place. those most notable would be: hinduism, buddhism, judaism, christianity, and islam. i would suggest He is not found in any of these. He is found in a name, in a relationship, in a torrid love affair. He is found in Jesus. and no - no other name could smell as sweet.