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Peace, Sun Prairie
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End Times 2

Daniel 7:9-10
“God Judges”

Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come. Amen.

Dear Friends in Christ,

A giant asteroid threatens to crash and destroy all life on earth. An out of control super computer sends robots to wipe out humanity. Unstoppable space aliens invade, exterminating all in their path. A deadly virus spreads across the globe. Hollywood has made many such movies with end of the world themes.

But even with modern special effects, they can't compare with the handful of striking sentences God had His prophet Daniel write 500 years before Jesus' birth. For no Hollywood blockbuster ever takes up the central theme of the last day: that **God Judges**. Movies of

course are only to entertain. But God gives us His Word about the future to prepare us for that day when **God Judges**.

In a vision, God showed Daniel a glimpse of the future: one kingdom after another rising up to rule for a time. But suddenly, Daniel now sees that day when the rule of nations of this world is over: **“As I looked, “thrones were set in place...**

Without warning, on that day known to God alone, everyday life will screech to a halt. With a trumpet call, Christ will return, the dead will be raised and God’s royal judgment thrones thunder into place.

Then the judge enters the courtroom: **The Ancient of Days took his seat.** Human lives are brief. We live only 70, 80, maybe a hundred years or so. But God is the truly **Ancient of Days.** He was here before human nations, before He made the world. He has been and always will be, the One Eternal God.

Earthly judges wear special robes. So does the Judge of All: **His clothing was as white as**

snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. The spotless bright clothing stands for God's unapproachable holiness. He is pure and free from evil, so much so that imperfect sinners must hide their eyes at the Holy One who requires absolute perfection.

When the Lord appears in His glory, no one will be able to say to him what they try to often say in this life: 'who are you to judge me?' One look at the Holy Lord and all will know who judges--*God Judges.*

And He has the power to carry out His judgment. **His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze.** This fiery 'Glory of the Lord' shows us He is God and there is no one like Him. **Wheels** tells us God's throne has the appearance of a battle chariot, the most feared weapon on the ancient battlefield. The point: No one can challenge God's verdict.

A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. God's authority is supreme. His judgment is swift. A river of fire will sweep the wicked into hell's furnace, that burns

without relief or escape for all eternity. This is the truly fitting and frightening punishment for rebelling against this holy and eternal God—the punishment that every sin, even the smallest sinful thought deserves.

No one can escape the judgment: **Thousands upon thousands attend him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.** God's angel legions will assemble every person who has ever lived into the courtroom where **God Judges.**

How can we who know God's Word is true not shudder a bit at this picture? Especially when we hear this: **The court was seated, and the books were opened.**

We can *sometimes* hide our wrongdoing from family and friends, teachers, pastors, even from ourselves as we fool ourselves into thinking our sin isn't so bad, we must be okay. But there's no hiding from God and his books like the ones described in Revelation: **the dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.** The book of

Romans adds this: **God will judge men's secrets.** Again the Bible tells us: **God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing.**

God knows the heart. No mere membership in an earthly church will save. Every hypocrite will be exposed.

Can you imagine it? A giant book is carried from God's library. Your name is on the cover. As it is slammed open, you see page after page of fine print—all listing sins. That sin that still haunts you with guilt. Sins you purposely put out of your mind or made excuses for them. Sins done without thinking, and sins planned out. Sins of thought that would make you blush with shame if others knew them—but of course God knows. The good left undone, kind words unspoken, work left unfinished, sins we never even realized.

What can we plead before that open book? I tried to live a good life? That goes nowhere with the Holy Judge who requires not a good try, but only perfection, as—holy—as—God--is

holy—absolute perfection. What can we plead? Will not the **river of fire** flowing from His throne sweep us away? How can any of us stand when **God judges?**

Yet you will stand on that day. We will stand in the same way even we guilty sinners can stand right with God this morning. We stand by turning away from our sinful selves and dropping any illusion we could do enough to get ourselves through God's judgment. We turn away in disgust from our sin and cry out with the Psalm verse: **If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?**

But then listen to God's promise in the very next verse of that Psalm: **But with you (Lord) there is forgiveness.** God's forgiveness is the only reason we *will* stand in joy and peace on Judgment day.

We could not stand on our own, but God *makes us to stand firm in Christ.* We stand because of another one of God's books. *This* book. God's Word. The Holy Bible. This book that was **written that you may believe that**

Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

The book that tells how filled with mercy, the eternal God, the **Ancient of Days** made and kept His promise to send us a Savior.

Since we could not stand in God's judgment, God himself stood in for us, when the Son of God became human and was born in Bethlehem to be that promised Savior, **whose origins are from old, from ancient times.**

Hiding his amazing glory in our human flesh and blood, Jesus came to show us God's saving love as He lived among us. Jesus also filled up a book of deeds like yours and mine.

But instead of sin and failure, his is packed full of success and perfection. He always put God's Word and Will in first place. His every thought was pure and holy. He spoke every word in truth and love. Jesus defeated every temptation. Jesus had nothing to hide, nothing to be ashamed of in His book!

So Jesus passes the judgment! He stands tall!

But now take another look at your book—the one filled with sin and failure. Look again at the accusing words. They are gone!—covered over with the blood of Jesus the spotless Lamb of God.

Colossians says: **He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code... that was against us...He took it away, nailing it to the cross!** On the cross, Jesus let full force of the **river of fire** of God's judgment and hell flow over himself so that it would never touch us!

As a baptized, believing child of God, look again and you can now see words in your book again, the very same words you saw in the book of Jesus' sinless life. For Jesus' personally gives the record of His perfect for all who trust in Him. Now on the cover you'll find your name and next to it, the word: **Forgiven.**

How shall we stand on Judgment day before God's throne? How shall we plead? Only one

plea works: The plea of faith: Jesus my Savior, lived, died and rose for me!

And now the Judge takes one **opened book**, one mentioned several times in the Bible: **the Book of Life**. This book contains nothing but names—the names of all who trust in Jesus Christ as their God and Savior.

See how the glorious Judge, whose verdict cannot be challenged, now points to your name, written in the **Book of Life** because God chose you to be His own. He, Himself wrote your name there with the Holy Blood of Jesus.

Now the Judge swings down his gavel with a hand once pierced with nails to save you. Heaven's gates swing open before you with endless joy.

In Christ, **God Judges** you *not guilty*. In Christ, you will stand in joy in the judgment. Therefore go and live each day for Christ. Amen.

There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.