

Read: Daniel 7:9-10

Jesus Is Our Great Judge

Daniel 7:9-10

As I looked,
“thrones were set in place,
and the Ancient of Days took his seat.
His clothing was as white as snow;
the hair of his head was white like wool.
His throne was flaming with fire,
and its wheels were all ablaze.
A river of fire was flowing,
coming out from before him.
Thousands upon thousands attended him;
ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.
The court was seated,
and the books were opened.”

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

In a scene from one of the most famous movies of all time, a girl named Dorothy and her three friends enter the throne room of a great and powerful wizard. They shake in fear as flames explode and a great voice booms: “I am OZ, the great and powerful! Who are you?” But anyone who has seen this movie knows the truth. The so-called “wizard” has no real power, just some clever tricks. The flames and fireworks are made by a machine. The booming voice comes from a hidden microphone. He looks mighty and powerful, but Dorothy and her friends have no reason to be afraid.

The story of Jesus we heard today is very different. Jesus *is* great and powerful! When he sits on his throne with flames of fire, there are no tricks involved. When he calls himself “the Ancient of Days,” he reminds us that he has eternal authority to judge the world. If he were to make a list of all our sins, we would have no way to defend ourselves. If he were to judge the world with fire or send his voice booming over the whole earth, there would be no stopping his incredible power! Our God, the Ancient of Days, is truly a great and powerful judge!

But we do not need to tremble or shake when we stand in God’s presence. We do not need to be afraid of God’s judgment. When he looks at our lives and considers the list of everything we have ever done, he sees his loving mercy stamped on every page of the book. It means that because of Jesus, we are forgiven and the record of our sins wiped clean! If God were to look at us and thunder the question, “Who are you?” he would already know the answer: This is someone I love, someone for whom I died, someone I want with me forever in heaven!

God, the Ancient of Days, allows us to see him as he actually is—mighty and powerful on his throne! But because we know that Jesus our judge rules in mercy and truth, we are not afraid. May we be amazed by his power! May we trust in his love.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for Younger Children

- What kind of people sit on thrones? What does it mean that God sits on a throne, too?
- How does God use his almighty power to take care of you?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- What is the job of a judge? When God judges you for your sins, will he find you guilty or innocent? Why?
- Jesus shows himself to us in many ways in the Bible. What do each of these pictures of Jesus teach us about him?
 - Baby Jesus in a manger
 - Jesus on the cross
 - Jesus the judge sitting on a throne of flames

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Re-read the detailed description of God and his throne in today's Bible verses. What do we learn about God's power and nature through this vivid portrayal of him as the "Ancient of Days"?
- Even when our lives and our world seem to be in chaos, God is all-powerful and reigning on this throne. How does remembering that bring you comfort?

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, you are so great and powerful that no one can stand up to you.

Lord Jesus, you are so true and right that there is nothing false in you.

Lord Jesus, you are so gracious and merciful that no one could ever fully thank you.

Lord Jesus, Ancient of Days, look on me in love, now and always. Amen.

Hymn: CW 243:1 – Oh, Worship the King

Oh, worship the King, all-glorious above;
Oh, gratefully sing his pow'r and his love,
Our shield and defender, the Ancient of Days,
Pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise.