



*Who's Afraid of the*  
**JUDGMENT?**

*Roy Gane*

The good news about Christ's work in the heavenly sanctuary



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# Introduction: Overview of Good News About the Judgment

This book, *Who's Afraid of the Judgment?* is intended to be a simple introduction to the profound and timely Bible teaching that God demonstrates His character of love through a judgment in His heavenly sanctuary before Christ's second coming.<sup>1</sup>

Most Christians have missed the fact that such a judgment exists. And many of those who recognize the fact of the judgment and its timing have misunderstood its purpose, so the event fills them with terror and undermines their assurance of salvation in Christ. But the biblical book of Daniel, drawing on profound concepts of atonement in Leviticus and paving the way for further understanding in the New Testament books of Hebrews and Revelation, shows us that the pre-Advent judgment *benefits* God's loyal people. Daniel 7:22 says "judgment was given *for* the holy ones of the Most High" (NRSV, emphasis supplied).

Within the context of the great war (or "great controversy") between good and evil in which we find ourselves, God calls broken, fallen human beings to restoration through the sacrifice of His Son. By dying the ultimate death of separation from God (Matthew 27:46; compare Revelation 20) for the entire human race, Jesus has accomplished several crucial things.

1. He has reclaimed His clear title to dominion over this world (see Daniel 7:13, 14, which pictures Him gaining dominion because of His role as "Son of Man"; see also Revelation 5).

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2. Therefore, He can restore to saved human beings the dominion that He delegated to Adam, Eve, and their descendants at Creation (Genesis 1:28), which Satan usurped (John 12:31) by deceiving our first parents regarding the character of God (Genesis 3).

3. He has died the death that is “the wages of sin” in order to give us “the free gift” of “eternal life” (Romans 6:23, NRSV). This gift is a breathtakingly comprehensive package. It includes forgiveness for our acts of un-love (in other words, *sin*; see 1 John 1:9), reclaiming us from our lives of sinning by the renewal/rebirth of our spiritual minds through the presence of Christ brought by the Holy Spirit (John 3:5–8; Romans 5:5; Galatians 2:20; Titus 3:4–7) and the transformation of our mortal bodies at Christ’s second coming (1 Corinthians 15:51–54).

4. Christ’s sacrifice makes it possible for God to extend mercy to those who believe without compromising His justice (Romans 3:26), the other side of His character of love. And through the gospel, God heals His universe from dangerous doubt regarding His character by proving His perfect love.

If God were defective either in justice or in mercy, He would not be the God of perfect love that He claims to be (1 John 4:8). And if it were not true that God is love in the ultimate sense, He couldn’t expect His created beings to live by love. Consequently, He couldn’t hold His universe together, because the ones He has created would be affected and infected by un-love, which would cause them eventually to destroy each other. It is because of the crucial importance of love that “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23, NRSV). Only those who live by the moral principle of love can continue to live in God’s universe.

Christ’s once-for-all atoning death on the cross (Hebrews 9:28) completed the foundational event of salvation history (John 19:30, “‘It is finished’” [NRSV].) from which all reconciliation with God flows. It is only because of Christ’s sacrifice that we can have freedom from condemnation and peace with God (Romans 5:1; 8:1). Christ’s sacrifice is so great that reconciliation/atonement (“at-one-ment”) continues to flow unabated from Calvary almost two thousand years later, as the Lamb carries the Cross event with Him to keep its benefits ever fresh (Revelation 5:6).

However, Christ’s death alone could not give us eternal life. Having died for our sins, He must rise from the grave to conquer the

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death that results from sin (1 Corinthians 15:12–26). Because He now lives, He is ministering as High Priest in God’s heavenly temple in order to distribute the purifying power of His sacrifice to each of us every day as we need it (Hebrews 9:11–14). Without this, salvation would be available, but it would not benefit us. It would be like a grant of ten million dollars for a scholarship fund that helps nobody because it stays in the bank, never reaching the needy students for which it was intended.

Even beyond Christ’s resurrection and high-priestly ministry in heaven, Revelation 14 tells us that the gospel, bought by Christ’s sacrifice, continues into the end time, just before Christ comes to earth again: “I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having *an eternal gospel* to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he said with a loud voice, ‘Fear God, and give Him glory, because *the hour of His judgment has come*; and worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters’ ” (verses 6, 7; emphasis supplied).

Notice that the “angel” has “an eternal gospel” for the whole world and that this proclamation of the gospel calls everyone to honor and worship God as Creator “because the hour of His judgment *has come*.” Here is a judgment before Christ’s second coming—that is, a pre-Advent judgment that has a beginning point in the end time and calls people to show loyalty to Christ. This is the same end-time judgment as that prophesied in Daniel 7, which is for the benefit of God’s oppressed holy people, who welcome judgment on their behalf, just as the psalmist cried out, “Arise, O God, judge the earth” (Psalm 82:8). The judgment is good news!<sup>2</sup>

Judgment is the fulfillment of humanity’s hopes and yearnings. In our minds, it conveys the ideas of crime and punishment and inspires fear and apprehension. The Bible, however, sees judgment from the viewpoint of the oppressed, the suffering victim, and thus places it in the context of salvation and victory over the oppressor and evil. Israelite culture already recognized that fact on a national level. The judges of Israel were war heroes who would crush the enemy. Scripture also referred to them as saviors (Judges 3:9, 15; 6:36; 12:3). This two-level

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aspect of the judgment of God is especially clear in the psalms that describe the judging God as both savior and avenger (Psalms 18:47, 48; 58:11; 94:1–6, 22, 23; 149:4, 7, 9; etc.). Such a depiction of God can shock our modern sensibilities. And yet just coaxing the lion into letting go of the lamb will not work. To save the lamb, one must overcome the lion. That is why the term *tsedaqa*, which means “justice,” implying the punishment of the oppressor, also means “love,” as it liberates the oppressed back to life.<sup>3</sup>

The pre-Advent judgment is the subject of the present book. Why does God need this judgment? On what are the results of this judgment based? When does the judgment begin? How do we participate and show loyalty to God?

We will find that the purpose of the judgment is to demonstrate before the universe of God’s created beings that He is just and fair because He has justified the right people—namely, those who believe (Romans 3:26)—on the basis of Christ’s sacrifice. The foundation for this justifying of God was fully established at the Cross, but it was not yet clear who would receive the gift of faith in Jesus—that is, living faith that works through love (Galatians 5:6; James 2:26). The judgment is about who has received grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8, 9) as demonstrated in the life empowered by God and His Holy Spirit after conversion. It is not about who has sinned, because everyone knows that all human beings have done that (Romans 3:23).

We will learn when the pre-Advent judgment began and why this is so important for modern Christians to understand. The timing of the beginning of the judgment is not a stand-alone doctrine. It is significant because God has revealed when we need to coordinate our loyal devotion to Him with the final stage of His grand atonement process as loyal Israelites were to do in a smaller sense on the awesome Day of Atonement (see Revelation 14:12; Leviticus 16:29–31; 23:26–32). And because key aspects of the pre-Advent judgment—especially its timing—have been under attack, we will answer some objections in order to show how solid this biblical teaching is.

This book is limited in purpose and scope. For more information on the pre-Advent judgment, Daniel, the gospel, and related topics, the reader is directed to other resources, a number of which are cited in the endnotes. Such books include Ellen G. White’s *The Great Controversy*; *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* series; the

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Daniel and Revelation Committee Series volumes edited by Frank Holbrook (especially volumes 1–3); William Shea’s *Daniel*; Jacques Doukhan’s *Secrets of Daniel*; Gerhard Pfandl’s *Daniel: The Seer of Babylon*; Mervyn Maxwell’s *God Cares*; Brempong Owusu-Antwi’s *The Chronology of Daniel 9:24-27*; Alberto Treiyer’s *The Day of Atonement and the Heavenly Judgment*; John Anderson’s *Investigating the Judgment*; Clifford Goldstein’s *1844 Made Simple*; Erwin Gane’s *Jesus Only*; and my *Altar Call* and *Leviticus, Numbers* commentary, to name a few.

Note carefully: Just because I cite an author as helpful regarding a certain point does not mean that I agree with everything that author writes, teaches, or preaches. Like the Bereans, we need to evaluate every statement of every human (and therefore fallible) communicator in light of Scripture on a case-by-case basis, rather than doing “knee-jerk” reactions based on prejudice or simplistic “litmus tests.”

Because Scripture is the authoritative source for our understanding of all aspects of salvation, I quote many Bible passages. And because the New American Standard Bible attempts to be quite literal and precise and stays close to the original, I have used it as my default translation, referring to others by abbreviations (NKJV, NRSV, The New JPS, etc.). However, I derive my conclusions from the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts that constitute the Bible.

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1. For the idea that love is justice, see Jacques Doukhan, *Daniel: The Vision of the End*, revised ed. (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1987), 41.

2. Richard M. Davidson, “The Good News of Yom Kippur,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 2 (1996): 4–27. Davidson points out three major reasons why the end-time Day of Atonement judgment is good news: “(1) It restores the gospel to its rightful place, bringing to the believer assurance and vindication in the judgment; (2) it accomplishes the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary and its earthly counterpart, the soul temples of the saints; and (3) it vindicates the character of God” (23).

3. Jacques Doukhan, *Secrets of Daniel: Wisdom and Dreams of a Jewish Prince in Exile* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald, 2000), 112, 113.

# 1 CHAPTER

## The Great War Over God's Character

People do not usually choose to place themselves in dire straits. These situations come uninvited. Many disasters—such as tsunamis, earthquakes, and terrorist attacks—strike quickly and with brutal and devastating force. Others—such as famines, epidemics (AIDS, for instance), and wars—can last for weeks or even for generations. England and France once fought a series of conflicts known collectively as the Hundred Years' War (1337–1453). Even now, some people live their entire lives in war zones.

Correction: *All* people, including you and I, have lived their entire lives in a war zone. This war isn't a regional conflict over who rules a few hundred square miles. It isn't merely a civil war or an ethnic cleansing, as devastating as those can be. It isn't even a "World War," the last of which embroiled nations from most of the continents and claimed the lives of more than forty million people. It is far bigger than that. No human being on any body of land or sea has ever been able to escape the clutches of this great war. It has killed billions of human beings and nobody knows how many trillions of other creatures. In fact, only two people have ever escaped death in this war: Enoch (Genesis 5:24) and Elijah (2 Kings 2:11).

The great war isn't even limited to planet Earth! Jesus Christ Himself, the Son of God, fell as a casualty in the conflict. He told



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Pilate that His kingdom is not based in this world (John 18:36); He rules a far wider domain. So, the war is not only here, and it is not only about us, even though we are caught in the middle of it.

When you've lived your entire life in a war zone, emergencies seem normal. You don't know anything different. Consequently, many people simply accept suffering, pain, sorrow, and death as inevitable—the way things are supposed to be. The ancient Egyptians glorified and immortalized death as a passage to continuation of life in another form. Death was good and holy. Every tomb was a temple. Countless other groups have also been in a state of denial, not understanding or admitting that we are afflicted by a great war. Weren't good and evil, such as the Oriental yin and yang, part of the "plan" from the beginning? Isn't death an original, integral, and necessary part of life, which goes in cycles of reincarnation? Or would that mean "reincarceration"—imprisonment all over again in the deadly grip of mortality?

A modern person who is attempting to live an ideal life—and succeeding quite well at it—may not need an Eastern philosophy to put the idea of a great war far away. Life is secure, comfortable, and pleasant much of the time. Everything is under control. Hardly any problem arises that one's work associates, physician, stockbroker, insurance agent, or government can't fix. But then a car accident, a serious illness, a divorce, or a death in the family intrudes on the "good life" and brings home the haunting reality that something is drastically wrong.

Are we being melancholy, morbid, and paranoid if we reflect on our dilemma? After all, life holds a lot of joy; there is so much for which we can be thankful. There are sunsets, dear family members and friends, health, good food, trees, flowers, music, and pets. Even in the midst of war, there are islands of peace. So, we encounter radical contrast and tension between two basic categories of experience: the good and the bad, the painful and the pleasurable.

### Origin of the great war

Where did the great war and the two kinds of experience come from? This is not merely a historical question—the conflicts we encounter shape our lives and attitudes. It is the sources of these conflicts that largely determine their nature. On a smaller scale, the

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outlook and lives of an entire generation of people were forged on the anvil of World War II, which arose from the dark ambitions of European fascists and Asian warlords and the (fortunately successful) attempt of other powers to stop them.<sup>1</sup> So, who started the great war? The Bible tells us.

Originally, all was peace and perfection. The hand of God, the Creator, made everything good. Then something happened—a paradox in Paradise. God told the story later, giving the culprit the literary title “king of Tyre”:

“ ‘ “You were in Eden, the garden of God. . . .  
You were the anointed cherub who covers,  
And I placed you there.  
You were on the holy mountain of God;  
You walked in the midst of the stones of fire.  
You were blameless in your ways  
From the day you were created,  
Until unrighteousness was found in you.  
By the abundance of your trade  
You were internally filled with violence,  
And you sinned;  
Therefore I have cast you as profane  
From the mountain of God.  
And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub,  
From the midst of the stones of fire.  
Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty;  
You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor.  
I cast you to the ground;  
I put you before kings,  
That they may see you” ’ ” (Ezekiel 28:13–17).

So the problem started with none other than a mighty angel—“the anointed cherub who covers,” who was closer to God than anyone else was! He became proud because of his beauty. But he didn’t just look at himself and ask rhetorically, “Mirror, mirror on the wall, who’s the fairest one of all?” Through the prophet Isaiah, God tells us more. This time He addresses the originator of evil as the “king of Babylon”:

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“ ‘How you have fallen from heaven,  
O star of the morning, son of the dawn!  
You have been cut down to the earth,  
You who have weakened the nations!  
But you said in your heart,  
“I will ascend to heaven;  
I will raise my throne above the stars of God,  
And I will sit on the mount of assembly  
In the recesses of the north.  
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;  
I will make myself like the Most High” ’ ” (Isaiah 14:12–14).

Here is the stuff of which wars are made: The servant presumed to dethrone his master, as many servants have done in subsequent human history. But in this case it was the Master of the entire universe, so the stakes were high and the war would be a great one. Indeed, it has been great, as John saw: “There was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him” (Revelation 12:7–9).

### Originator of the great war

So the fallen angel was the one we now call “the devil” or “Satan” (literally, the *satan*, “the adversary”). He is the leader of a group of angels, now called “demons,” whom he led in rebellion against God.

For many people these days, the devil or Satan is merely a cultural artifact like Santa Claus. In America at Halloween, some people wear humorously garish devil costumes. Satan has become a subject of comedy. Flip Wilson provoked barrels of laughs when he said, “The devil made me do it!” Jokes and cartoons depict the devil as the horned, pitchfork-wielding overseer of hell who is on our side in the sense that he enjoys tormenting our enemies in all kinds of delightfully frightful ways.

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But even twisted modern entertainment holds hints that the devil is not on our side. When you see a picture of Marilyn Manson, a male rock star who is a sinister minister of the church of Satan and rather convincingly impersonates his diabolical master, you get the impression that behind the occult-friendly gloss of Disney and Harry Potter magic there is a darker reality. You wonder if it is coincidence that Manson was a favorite of Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, the teenage boys who carried out the Columbine High School massacre in Littleton, Colorado.<sup>2</sup>

I met a man who was converted because of a Rolling Stones rock concert. In his youth he didn't believe that Satan existed. Consequently, he felt no need of Jesus Christ. His hero was Mick Jagger, lead singer of the Rolling Stones. But at the concert he attended, amid the seismic, decibel-defying clamor of the "music," the young man heard a voice that he recognized as belonging to Satan. The voice said, "You're mine, and I'm going to kill you!" Terrified, he was unable to party after the concert. Instead, he found his grandmother's copy of *The Great Controversy* by Ellen G. White and read it. He gave his life to Jesus Christ and became a minister of His gospel. Satan had scared him out of hell!

Many people today deny the existence of Satan. Therefore they don't recognize the nature of the great war or their need to be saved from evil by their loving Creator, who originated only good and who has given His life to save them. But those who are in closest touch with Satan know that he is real and that he is bitterly opposed to the God of the Bible.

In a terrifying book about deliverance from the occult titled *He Came to Set the Captives Free*, Rebecca Brown relates the life of a former witch, a satanic high priestess who was at one time the top "bride" of Satan in the United States, who was delivered from appalling degradation when she accepted Christ. To Brown, the ex-witch graphically described monstrous, giant demons who could tear a person apart; ritual sex orgies; a Black Sabbath (or Black Mass) that involved crucifixion of a man to mock the crucifixion of Christ; and the attempt of satanists to carry out Satan's order to murder a family of Christians who were interfering with Satan by converting some cult members to Christ.

Surrounding the property of the Christians was a ring of huge "link angels" from God, with no weapons or armor. The satanists

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repeatedly tried to break through the cordon, but they could not. Weapons bounced off the angels, who simply laughed. And when the angels merely changed the expression on their faces to a fierce look, the powerful satanists fell back helpless onto the ground.<sup>3</sup> As the apostle Paul put it, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31, NKJV).

### The human role in the great war

Paul recognized that by ourselves, we are helpless: "We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12, NKJV). But if we are with God, the forces of evil are helpless: "I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38, 39, NKJV).

If the power of God and His angels is so much greater than that of the enemy forces, why didn't the great war end long ago? Shouldn't overwhelming military superiority ensure a quick victory, like the Blitzkrieg of 1939–40 or Operation Desert Storm of 1991? What is holding things up?

The answer is found in the role of human beings in the great war. We have been pawns of Satan. God cannot "nuke" all evil without exterminating people whom He is trying to rescue. If we were simply kidnapped or hijacked, God would have no problem. His angels could invade the kingdom of darkness the way commandos freed hostages from an Air France jetliner in Entebbe, Uganda, in 1976. God's challenge is that human beings have chosen Satan's kingdom.

According to the book of Genesis, God gave the dominion of this world to Adam and Eve, the first human beings (Genesis 1:28). But by following the voice of evil in rebellion against God, they fell under the control of Satan, who became "the ruler of this world" (John 12:31). This explains why the book of Job describes Satan as showing up among the "sons of God" to present himself before the Lord (Job 1:6). Because Adam and Eve had elected him to the heav-

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only congress, Satan could claim to represent planet Earth in place of them.

Satan lost his seat in congress when Jesus Christ, a descendant of Adam and Eve, regained dominion for the human race. As Creator of the world, Christ had always been the Sovereign of planet Earth. That is why Satan tempted Him to avoid suffering by simply reversing the hierarchy of authority, putting Satan in first place instead of Himself. But Christ knew that if He worshiped Satan, all human beings would be lost. If the Most High gave in to the one who coveted His place, He would no longer be the Most High and He couldn't save us. Rather, Christ the Creator chose to become a human being and live a life of total loyalty to God—thereby succeeding where Adam and Eve had failed—and to pay the painful penalty for the disobedience of the human race. In this way He “judged” the world in the positive sense of gaining justice for planet Earth by casting out Satan, the oppressive, foreign usurper (John 12:31; compare the judges, or deliverers, of the book of Judges).<sup>4</sup>

A couple questions arise. First, why didn't God simply destroy the human race when Adam and Eve decided to follow Satan instead of Him?

God didn't destroy Adam and Eve because they didn't fully understand what they were doing. Eve was deceived, and Adam didn't grasp the big picture. They were like inexperienced children who disregard a warning without comprehending the consequences. Do we kill our children when they disobey us and get into big trouble?

Second, why didn't the great war end two thousand years ago when Christ cast out Satan at the Cross? Hadn't John the Baptist and Jesus proclaimed, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 3:2; 4:17)?

Christ's victory on the cross was like D-Day in 1944, when the Allies gained a foothold on the continent of Europe and practically ensured that Hitler's days were numbered. In fact, the outcome of the great war is absolutely assured: Good will inevitably triumph over evil. However, the fighting goes on and even increases in intensity because many human beings still prefer the lordship of Satan. They choose him because he continues to cruelly deceive them into thinking that God doesn't want the best for them and that they aren't accountable to Him. Therefore, they believe that they can provide

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for their own happiness better than God can by being free to be self-ish and worship themselves. The lie is an old one. In fact, it is what the satanic serpent promised Eve in the Garden of Eden: “ ‘You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil’ ” (Genesis 3:4, 5, NKJV).

Having aspired to take the place of God, Satan tries to pass his dream of being “like God” on to us in order to make us little satans. If he has failed at taking God's place even though he was the mighty covering cherub, what makes us think we can succeed—mortal flesh and blood that we are?

We have found that there is a great war between God and Satan over rulership of this world. The disputed issue is the character of God and whether anyone should take His place. In the remaining chapters of this book, we will explore the way in which God demonstrates His fairness when He saves or condemns human beings in accordance with their choices for or against Him. When this “judgment” is complete, no more questions about God's character will remain and nobody will be lost who otherwise could be saved. At that point, no further delay will be needed, and God can swiftly move to end the great war.

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1. Regarding the profound impact of World War II on worldviews, see Margaret Mead, “Family System and Society,” in *Changing Sexual Values and the Family*, G. Pirozo Sholevar, ed. (Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1977), 33–35.

2. Adam Cohen, “A Curse of Cliques,” *Time*, May 3, 1999, 45.

3. Rebecca Brown, *He Came to Set the Captives Free* (New Kensington, Penn.: Whitaker House, 1992), 56, 57.

4. Roy Gane, *God's Faulty Heroes* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald, 1996), 44.