

ready to do His bidding. This representation of the power of God corresponds to the emphasis on the supernatural origin of the stone in chapter 2. This emphasis appears again in verses 13-14 where "one like a son of man" is brought into the presence of the Ancient of Days, and given glory and sovereign power so that "all peoples, nations and men of every language should worship Him."

There has been considerable discussion about the use of a plural noun and a plural verb in the statement "thrones were set in place" (v. 9). John Calvin wrote: "Thrones were created for the Almighty to sit on with his councillors; not implying His need of any council, but of His own good will and mere favor He dignifies angels with this honor."⁶ Yet none of the proposed explanations, not even that of Calvin, really gives sufficient reason for the use of this plural noun. I feel that it would be altogether proper here, as in a number of other places in the Old Testament, to suggest that the Holy Spirit has caused terminology to be used which might be difficult to understand in the light of the knowledge then available but would become clear in the light of New Testament teaching (cf. 1 Pet. 1:10-12), and that the use of the plural in relation to the thrones involves a hint of the New Testament revelation that God exists in three persons;⁷ cf. the definite intimation of the trinity in Isaiah 48:16.

Verse 10 ends with the words "and the books were opened." Revelation 20 contains a similar statement in connection with a judgment of individuals, where books that contain records of their deeds are opened and they are judged accordingly. Here we have an entirely different situation. This is not a judgment of individuals but of an ungodly governmental system that crushes God's people for centuries. It would not be necessary to hold a deliberative meeting to decide what God would do about this situation. Hundreds of years in advance He predicted to Daniel that the fourth kingdom would arise and also described its end. The reference to these books points to the fact that the Lord's decree for the final end of ungodly human government was made long before this fourth beast came into