

described as such a terrible anti-God figure, then we find that he turns his eyes away from that and sees the great unseen reality of the tremendous power, knowledge and wisdom and authority of the triune God.

It is not a matter of God having to decide whether the beast deserves to be punished or not. The whole evidence is very clear. There is no question about it. -- that this beast deserves to be destroyed. It is a destruction that is not of individual human beings who are judged for their acts. But it is certainly God's judgment upon this great ungodly figure which represents so much of the characteristics of human government all through the ages.

In a world of sin, government is needed. We would all kill each other off if we did not have government. We need government. We need order. When we read about these great empires we think of them as great beasts, creatures of terror. They establish their will with force. But when we think of the world of sin, there is another way it is perfectly reasonable to think of these as that they were tremendous improvement over the situations that existed before them.

Because before these empires took control over great areas and in those areas established a great deal of peace and a considerable amount of justice, you had little tiny sections constantly fighting against each other, and no one's life was safe for very long. There was always lots of fighting and confusion between these very small sections, each of which had its sovereignty and was fighting against other sections in one conflict or another, and then a third one attacking these, etc.

So the establishing of empires is a necessity in a world of sin. We are not told anywhere in Scripture that God is going to establish a condition of anarchy in the world in which no government is needed. But we are told that all the wicked features of human government are to be completely destroyed, and that the One who will rule who is absolutely just and true and free from all sin.

So in this Vision of Deity it seems to me that it is a picture of the power of the great God as over against the wickedness of these great empires. That it is not a deliberative body in any sense of the word. This is a sign of God's judgment, a sign of His pouring out of His wrath upon ungodliness, rather than a picture of judgment of individuals. However, it is quite common to speak of it as a judgment scene.

Although I am quite convinced that the general bearing of the whole passage of these two verses is definitely different from a court scene, yet there are arguments on both sides. All recent translations that I have looked at take it as a court scene which seems to me to go against the general impact of the passage.

But in favor of its being a scene of judgment, is the placing of thrones. It seems as if they --- which looks as if they might be meeting for a judgment or court. It seems to me that instead of that he sees thrones which are in place there; the great God is