

I have not noticed here anything that would indicate which. There are five parts. The fourth and fifth have a similarity in that one is entirely ~~is~~ iron, the other is partly iron. Are they the same kingdom, or are they two distinct kingdoms? I don't think you can decide that from ch. 2, unless somebody calls my attention to some point I have not noticed yet. But I do think this point can be definitely decided when we get to ch. 7. So for the present I think we should say we do not know whether there are four kgdms. or five. There are definitely five parts.

1. The starting point - Nebuchadnezzar, v. 36-39. We have a remarkable series of statements that Daniel makes to Nebuchadnezzar in vv. 36-37. Daniel says, This is the interpretation: Thou O king art a king of kings. The God of heaven has given thee a kingdom or power strength and glory. And wherever the children of men dwell. The beasts of the field and fowls of the heaven has he given into thine hand and has made thee ruler over them all." Does that mean Nebuchadnezzar had a power none of us have to order the birds of heaven in which direction they are to fly? To change their migratory progress as we may choose? It sounds to me like flattery! God has given the fowls of heaven into his hands and made him ruler over them all. I sure the birds that fly over Babylon, that there was very little Nebuchadnezzar could do about them unless they flew rather low. The beasts of the field he could not possibly control.

"Thou art the head of gold." Are Daniel's words to Nebuchadnezzar inerrant? I believe very definitely in the inerrancy of Scripture that whatever God has given us in Scripture about any subject we can stand upon and accept and believe it is true. But I think you have to be very careful. When Daniel gives Nebuchadnezzar the interpretation God has given Daniel we can accept every thing he says as being absolutely true. But when he flatters Nebuchadnezzar a little bit and begins to tell him what this means, I question how far we should go in saying that is a true description of Nebuchadnezzar's power. "Wherever the children of men dwell." Were there no Indians in the U.S. at that time? Were there no civilizations in Mexico or in Peru at that time? Were there no peoples in China at that time? We have evidence there were great many people in these areas, some of them living in rather high civilizations and some of them never having heard of Nebuchadnezzar. Probably. I say probably because there was commercial traffic between Babylon and Egypt and China at this time.

But these introductory words, the statement that is part of this interpretation is "thou art this head of gold." The head of gold stands for you, but the flattering words he gives to Nebuchadnezzar, it is absolutely true that is what Daniel said to him. But whether Daniel's words represent exact truth would be carrying inerrancy beyond what it means.

2. What is meant by this head of gold? Is this Nebuchadnezzar? Is he this head of gold? You can turn to these pieces of paper I have given you here and you have a few facts here. I am not given you these to memorize. There may be some of it you will think important to remember. There are facts in it that are useful in connection with today's lecture and with many subsequent lectures during the course. Keep it and have it with you when you want to refer to it.