

was conquered by the Persian and taken over. And the Persian kingdom was conquered by Alexander and taken over. And there were parts of Alexander the Great's kingdom that were conquered by the Romans and taken over. But the Scripture merely says, and After you shall be another kingdom. And after it a third which shall rule over the whole world.

So in the first three kingdoms there is no specific prediction in either ch. of any overthrow of any one of them. This is something that someone might immediately question. I myself would have questioned it not very long ago. Because you noticed that in ch. 7 it speaks about the first kingdom in a way which at first sight might seem to tell of its destruction.

7:4, The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings; I beheld till its wings were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made to stand upon the feet as a man . . . At first sight you can say, Here's the first kingdom described and it is lifted up from the earth; it is destroyed. But it is no way something is destroyed to make it say to stand on its feet like a man and a man's heart was given to it! That's no account of destruction.

Certainly the conquest of the Babylonians by the Persians could not be called "a man's heart was given to it." It is quite obvious when we look closely at it that this verse describes something quite different from that.

2. The added detail about the first kingdom, v.4. What it means is shown in Dan. 4, because in the fourth ch. of Daniel we have the account of how Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar that Nebuchadnezzar was going to go out of his mind, he was going to grovel on the ground, live like an animal. Then he was told that after a certain length of time, God would raise him up again from this and again give him a man's heart and return his kingdom to him. So this is a description of what happened to Nebuchadnezzar, not to the Babylonian kingdom.

That fits with the way the first part of the statue is introduced in ch.2 where it says, O king thou art the head of gold. This describes something that has happened to Nebuchadnezzar at least 10 years, maybe 20 years before Daniel had this vision. So here he is giving them a statement about the first kingdom which shows to him clearly that the first kingdom is the same as the head of the statue; that it is Nebuchadnezzar. And that shows him something that has already happened. And therefore that strengthens his faith that what follows in ch. 7, is also going to happen.

So here, a part of the description is not a prophecy, but a picture of what has already happened.

3. The second kingdom, v.5

"And behold another beast, a second, like a bear, and it raised up itself on one side." Many think this statement "raised itself up on one side" suggests the fact that the second kingdom was the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians in which the Persians had been subordinate to the Medes but in which they gained superiority over the Medes before the time that they conquered the Babylonians.