

and the coming of this other kingdom some years later in 536, about 23 years later, or else when you say "thou art this head of gold" it represents not simply Nebuchadnezzar but the empire of which he is the temporary head. So as between those two, I incline to think that the second is more likely ~~xxxxxxx~~ interpretation. That this does not represent Nebuchadnezzar alone, but represents the Neo-Babylonian empire.

But then again we get a question. The Neo-Babylonian empire altogether only lasted from 605 to 539. The Persian empire lasted two centuries. The Hellenistic empire lasted about two centuries. The Roman empire last somewhere between four and six centuries. When he says, "thou art this head of gold", does it mean just the Neo-Babylonian kingdom, or is the entire period perhaps of this Neo-Babylonian imperial power? A period of perhaps nearly 1000 years in which great power was wielded by the Babylonians and Assyrians and in the end by the Babylonians which were a closely related people using the same language, the same type of writing, a closely related culture?

Those are three possibilities, and at this ~~point~~ point we cannot speak dogmatically. Personally I incline very much to the third. Now this word Kingdom is a word that is not used very much today. Sixty years ago we would speak of the kingdom of Spain, the kingdom of Portugal, the kingdom of Greece, kingdom of Italy. We had many kingdoms in the world. Today the word kingdom is little used. By the word kingdom are we referring specifically to the rule of one man, or do we simply mean a nation's power? A strongpower? The word kingdom is used in the passage at this point in a way that what it ~~really~~ really means is not what we meant by kingdom even 100 years ago! What it means is more like what we meant by empire then. The word empire never occurs in the Bible but I think it comes closer to representing what is meant by these kingdoms.

This word empire originally meant a military command. The Roman troops after a great battle would sometimes hail their commander as Emperor. The Commander, the man who gave the command! From this word Emperor we derive our word Emperor. So it developed from the great power of the Roman rulers and it has been carried on since that time usually to mean someone who rules much more than one nation. Thus the king of Germany during the Middle Ages, if he had sufficient power, would go to Rome and be crowned Emperor by the pope and then he would ~~call~~ call himself Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire which was ~~supposed~~ supposed to embrace ~~Germany~~ Germany, Italy and all the regions in between them. If he was a ~~very~~ very powerful man he could come down several times and keep Italy under his control. It was a difficult thing to do and most of them did not succeed very well. But the Emperor was considered a higher type of a king.

In modern times, I believe the term empire refers, like the term kingdom, not so much to a particular ruler as to a power. When we speak of an empire we are apt to mean that more than one nation is involved. That one nation exercises control over another nation, or that one man exercises control over several nations. That, I feel is what most interpreters would feel is meant by these various kingdoms, in Daniel. That it is not used in the sense that we speak of the kingdom of Portugal and kingdom of Spain, of Greece, of Italy.