

As far as Dan. 2 is concerned, we cannot be dogmatic. But when we come to Dan. 7 we may find evidence that will give a definite answer.

The other question related to symbols and this is very important. Nebuchadnezzar had a dream which was a symbol. We could not understand what it symbolized except as it was explained to us. It might describe things from the bottom up, it might describe them from the top down! Or it might describe things that will all happen at once in different parts of the world. The statue had many parts to it. If every one of those parts had a meaning it would have a tremendous amount of information contained in that statue. If you don't have anything in the statue but what has a meaning, it would be hard to recognize it at all as a statue.

So there have to be features in any symbol which are not necessarily part of the meaning. If you say of a man, He was a lion in the fight, you don't mean that he went out and chewed up the enemy or he scratched him to pieces with his fingernails! You are taking the idea of a lion as being brave, powerful, and fearless, and that is all you are taking from the symbol. Many other things in the symbol of the lion would have little relevance.

So in any symbol there are quite sure to be elements present that are just part of the picture, and that do not necessarily have a meaning. We do not find in this statue any particular meaning for the eyes, the nose, the ears. The second kingdom is represented by the breast and arms. We do not have any reason to think that the Persian empire had one center and two other important but subsidiary elements. It is just a part of the picture.

Now when we get to the feet and the toes we are told how many toes there are. Now if we were told that on the right foot it had three toes and on the left foot it had four toes, we could say, Why on earth do they mention such a peculiar thing? Surely there must be a reason for it. But if it said that it had five toes on each foot, you'd ~~say~~ say that was just a natural part of the picture. In order to decide whether a part of the symbol has meaning, the most important thing is, Is it explained in the Scripture? Scripture says, Thou art this head of gold. Now we know the head stands either for Nebuchadnezzar himself or for something of which Nebuchadnezzar was an important part. We know that because we are definitely told that the head has a meaning. We are not told that the eyes or ears or the nose (have meaning) or anything like that. We are told the feet and toes represent the fifth part of the picture of the future that is given in the statue.

The most important way to tell if a thing has meaning is if it is explicitly stated. There is nothing explicitly said about the toes having meaning separate from the meaning of the feet, any more than there is about the fingers having a separate meaning & distinct from the hands.

Another way to tell is if there is something, unusual, something very strange, something that is not normally to be expected in the statue. Then we can say probably this has a specific meaning. Well now, ten & toes does not have a specific meaning. Three on one foot and four on the other would!