

think that Nebuchadnezzar was a better speaker than any of the kings represented in the following sections of the image, or that he had a more acute sense of smell or better vision.

The second portion of the image, consisting of its chest and arms, could easily suggest that the second kingdom would be composed of three parts represented by the two arms and the central trunk. Historically there is nothing that would correspond to any such division. There is no reason to think that the elbow had a special meaning, or that the hands or fingers did. In such a prophetic representation it would be possible that any or all of these features might have a meaning, but there is no reason to think that this is the case here.

This brings squarely before us a vital problem in the interpretation of symbolism. How can we determine which features of a vision are significant, and which are merely incidental to the picture? Four suggested criteria are worthy of mention.

The first and most important indication that a particular feature has a definite meaning would be a specific statement in the interpretation. Here Daniel says that the head represents Nebuchadnezzar and that the other parts represent three later kingdoms.

A second indication that a feature is of importance in determining the meaning is the presence of something quite out of the ordinary. Except for the fact that this statue is said to be composed of four different metals, it would seem to be a normal image of a man. If it were said that the image had three arms, or that one leg was longer than the other, one might reasonably expect the peculiarity to have a definite meaning.

There is a third indication which must be applied with great caution. When one knows the general meaning of a symbol he is justified, to a limited extent, in looking for detailed similarities between it and the thing symbolized. Since no symbol corresponds in all respects to what it is intended to represent, this method may easily lead to false conclusions. Its dangers can be illustrated by comparing the third and fourth parts of the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's