

When you are speaking ordinarily you will try to give people the truth as you find it. Give Scriptural evidence of what you believe is true. Only occasionally will you try to teach people to study the Bible for themselves. I wish that was done more often than it is. But a greater part of a Christian worker's task is passing on to others what he personally believes. However, in his own words there are two equally important tasks. One is passing on to others the truth you have found in Scripture, but equally important is that you be constantly handling the Scripture right so that you are learning more of what God wants you to know from the Scripture. In this course our purpose is related to that part of your work.

I think it is not the one that will take the greatest part of your time, but I think it is really the most important. Because it is very easy for us to jump to conclusions on things that may not seem to make any difference at present, but as new situations arise, we don't know what may come where our hasty interpretation of Scripture can lead people astray.

So in Dan. 2 my purpose has not been to get all the truth I can find for me from Dan. 2, but my purpose has been to find what is clearly taught in Dan. 2, and to see what the points are at which we cannot gather answers without looking elsewhere for further evidence. That is not ordinarily part of our present task. Our present task is to see what Dan. 2 has.

In Dan. 2 we find there is a statue which has four principal metals in it. The argument has been made that there are four kingdoms here. But then we find that the feet and toes -- in the feet and toes the iron is mixed with clay. So the question comes: Is this a fifth kingdom or is this another stage of the fourth kingdom? From Dan. 2 you cannot decide that question. From Dan. 2 either answer would be possible. And so the answer as to whether there are four kingdoms or five kingdoms that are typified by the statue, is one at which we have to look at evidence further, and I believe we find evidence answering that question later.

So for the present I am speaking of the statue as five parts. We notice it speaks of "after you there will arise another kingdom" and another third kingdom which shall bear rule over all the earth, and the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron.

Then it says in v. 41, "Whereas thou sawest the feet and toes part of clay and part of iron, these kingdoms shall be divided. Does this mean the fifth kingdom, or does it mean a further stage in the fourth kingdom? It perhaps sounds a little bit more like the latter than like the former. But we should not come to conclusions on it in ch. 2. We should see whether Daniel is given further light later on. You probably all noticed that in connection with your assignment for today. So that's the answer to that question whether there are 4 kingdoms or 5.