

these four kgdms. here described cover a period from about 600 B.C. up until c. 400 A.D. The Roman kgdm. covers as much time as the first three put together -- the Roman dominion, which gradually conquered the different sections of the Greek kgdm. and established itself over a larger territory than any of the previous groups. Then the Roman kingdom was ~~xxx~~ destroyed before 500 A.D. and broken up into sections. So we have the interesting thing of an image given before the coming of Christ, showing the progress of things up to the time of Christ and somewhat beyond. Showing the rulership over the world during this period when God was teaching His people patience, and when He was preparing the way for the coming of His Son into the world, when He was establishing the situation when His Son would come to this earth and give His life for our sins.

And the kgdm. which was in power at the time when Chríst came continued for about 4 centuries longer, then was broken up. So you might say there is a gap, a period between that time and today. What about that period? Well, God told us that Jesus is coming back to set up His kgdm. But he did not tell us when and He does not want us to know when because He wants us always to be ready. So He has not told us how long this period(gap) is to be. As you jump from the ~~xxxx~~ period of the first coming of Christ to the second coming of Christ, we have glimpses of events in between. But we are not given anything in this period in as much detail as we were given about this period before Christ came when people were looking through a glass darkly to that time when He would perform His works by the coming of Christ.

But we noticed that in the dream Neb. had, the image was destroyed. There are those today who say this is the picture of the Christian church. It says it was destroyed by a stone made without hands, and this stone went on to fill the whole earth. Some say that this is the Christian church starting in the days of the Roman empire and gradually spreading and growing until it fills the whole earth. It is not, however, a ~~xx~~ satisfactory explanation of this passage. It is not satisfactory, because we read that this stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands, this stone hit upon the feet of the image. It certainly had not gotten as far as the feet when Christ came, and by the time when the Christian church started. Then it describes how this stone fills the whole earth and establishes a kgdm. that will never be destroyed. Certainly the Christian church has never established such a kgdm., nor is there any reason to think that it is God's will it ever should.

So if we just take ch. 2 alone we can read into it, an erroneous impression of God's plan for the course of this age. We have great truths in it as to how the final dominion is to come at the end of these kgdms. of unrighteousness that rule over the earth. We have a glimpse with the coming of this stone that breaks in pieces all of these elements of the non-Christian or irreligious control of the area of the Roman empire and the much larger area in addition; it gives us a glimpse of it, and then as is so often true in prophecy we are given further details in another vision that was given. That is in ch. 7.

We will not have time to look at it in much detail in ch. 7 but I want to glance at it in its main features and then see particularly