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## The Fifth Empire: The Kingdom of God 2: 44-45

The fifth empire, the Kingdom of God DIG: What will distinguish this Kingdom from the other four? Whenever the word rock is used symbolically in the Bible, how is it used? How is the term huge mountain used symbolically in the Bible? In what ways will this Kingdom be different from the Gentile kingdoms?

REFLECT: What signs of the end times does this passage encourage you to look for? How does the knowledge of the end times encourage your walk today? How does it make you feel that the Kingdom of God will last forever? Is that a hard concept for you to grasp? How so? How is Yeshua Messiah your Rock?

**The destruction of the statue represented the coming of Yeshua Messiah.**



Dani'el now reaches the climax of **his dream** interpretation. Once the first **Four Gentile Empires** run **their** course, a **Fifth Kingdom** will be set up. As **verses 44-45** show, this **Kingdom** will be very different from all **the** other **empires** that preceded **it** because **ADONAI** Himself will set **it** up. In the last three days of **the Great Tribulation** (**Hosea 6:1-3**), the God of heaven will set up a **Kingdom** that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end (**2:44a**). The chronology is important here. God will allow the **one world** government to exercise authority for the Great Tribulation (**to see link click Ct -**

**Dani’el’s Vision of the Seventy Weeks**). Its feet mixed with **iron and clay** will come after **the Dispensation of Grace** (see **Hebrews Bp - The Dispensation of Grace**), when **Ha’Shem** will resume **His** dealing with **the nation of Isra’el**. Therefore, just as the **one world government** led by **the antichrist** is still in the future, so is **the Kingdom** that will be set up by **God Himself**.<sup>97</sup>

It is also significant that all **the empires** comprising the different parts of the statue surveyed thus far are literal **empires** that existed for a literal time, occupied specific lands with identifiable borders, and had a capital city. This begs the question, why wouldn’t the last kingdom, represented by **the Rock not cut human hands**, also not be a literal **Kingdom** that will reign for a literal time (**Revelation 20:1-10**), and that will occupy a specific land with identifiable borders (**Genesis 15:18-21**), and have a capital (**Isaiah 2:2-3**)? Such a viewpoint represents a premillennial view of history. The expression “millennial” simply means **a thousand years**. Premillennialism is the belief that **the thousand-year Kingdom** will not come into existence until **Yeshua Messiah** comes back first (or “pre”) and then sets up **His earthly Kingdom** (see the commentary on **Revelation F1 - When the Thousand Years Are Over**).<sup>98</sup>

In summary of what has been stated so far, **God Himself** will set up **His Messianic Kingdom** after the last three days of **the Great Tribulation (Hosea 6:1-3)**. Because **He** will be **the Ruler**, **the Fifth Kingdom** will be a theocracy. **Daniel** explained that **His Kingdom will never be destroyed**. **God’s** domain will continue beyond any human **empire**. Furthermore, the sovereignty of **His Kingdom will not be left to another people**. This is very important to understand. It means that **the Fifth Kingdom** will not belong to the Gentiles, but to **Isra’el** (see the commentary on **Jeremiah Eo - I Will Make a New Covenant with the People of Isra’el**). **Dani’el** concluded **the verse** by stating that **the Fifth Kingdom will itself endure forever (2:44b)**. The Aramaic term for **forever**, *alam*, means *perpetuity* or *antiquity*. It corresponds to the Hebrew term *olam*. While *olam* can refer to the indefinite future, it can also refer to a duration of an age. This meaning is applicable in **verse 44b**; as a result, **the Kingdom of God** will never end.

Then, **Dani’el** connected **the Kingdom of God** with **the Rock of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream (2:45a)**. The Bible uses many symbols, but it is consistent in its usage. In almost every instance, any specific symbol will mean the same thing throughout the TaNaKh and the B’rit Chadashah. When the word **Rock** is used symbolically, **it** always refers to **the Messiah**. Thus, **its** usage can be seen in passages such as **Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16; Zechariah 3:9; Matthew 21:44; Acts 4:11; First Corinthians 10:4; and First Peter 2:4-8**.

According to **Dani’el**, **the Rock was cut out of the mountain without** (human) **hands (2:45b)**. This description shows the divine origin of **the Rock**. In **verse 34**, **Dani’el** only mentioned that this **Rock was cut out without human hands**; here, **he** adds that **it** was **cut out of the mountain**. This can only be **Mount Zion**, where **the God of heaven** has founded **His Kingdom**, which shall spread all over the earth and destroy all of the world-**empires**. It’s not only important to note that **the Rock** is part of this **mountain**, but that it was **cut without hands**. The focus is on the divine origin. In **2:35**, **Dani’el** explained that **the Rock itself** would become **a great mountain and fill the whole earth**. When the term **mountain** is used symbolically, it always refers to **the king, kingdom, or throne**. This points to the fact that **the Kingdom of God** will start with **the Messianic Kingdom** for a thousand years, and then transition into **the Eternal State** (see **Revelation Fq - The Eternal State**).

The fact that **it** will **crush the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold (2:45c)**, indicates that **His Kingdom** will bring **the Times of the Gentiles** (see **Ao - The Times of the Gentiles**) to an end. There are **three distinctions** to be made between **the Kingdom of God** and **the Four Gentile Empires**. **As to origin**, the **Four Gentile Empires** are human, but the **Kingdom of God** is divine. **As to duration**, the **Four Gentile Empires** are temporary, but **the Kingdom of God** is eternal. **As to power**, the **Four Gentile Empires** are each overcome by successive **empires**, but **the Kingdom of God** cannot be conquered.<sup>99</sup>

**Rabbinic theology agrees with most of this interpretation.** Rashi noted, “**The Kingdom of the Holy One, blessed be He, which will never be destroyed, is the Kingdom of the Messiah.**”<sup>100</sup> **Rabbi Bahya ben Asher (1255 to 1340), known as Rabbeinu Bahya, stated, “The whole message is that once the Messiah arrives, the kingship will not depart anymore from Judah forever.”**<sup>101</sup> **The Kabbalistic Zohar observes, “Some have prevailed in this world, and all will prevail at the advent of King Messiah, when Isra’el will be one nation in the Land (Ezeki’el 37:22), one nation before the Holy One, blessed be He. This is the meaning of the verse, and I will make them one nation in the Land, and they will reign above and below, as it is written: and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven (Dani’el 7:13). This is King Messiah, as it is written: In in the times of those (ten) kings, the God of heaven will set up a Kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people (Dani’el 2:44a).**”<sup>102</sup>

**Dani’el’s** interpretation of **Nebuchadnezzar’s dream** concludes in **2:45d** with the statement that everything will happen exactly as **he** prophesied: **The great God has shown**

the king what will take place in the future. The dream is true and its interpretation is dependable. ADONAI provided the interpretation of the dream. So both the dream and its interpretation are trustworthy. Nothing could stop their fulfillment.<sup>103</sup>



As Warren Wiersbe relates in his commentary on **Dani’el**, the destruction of the statue (see **Be - The One World Government Stage**) represented the coming of **Yeshua Messiah**, who would judge **His** enemies and establish **His** universal **Kingdom**. As simple as this seems to be, it carries with it **four important messages**. **First, it reveals that ADONAI is in control of history**. **He** knows the future because **He** plans the future. This doesn’t mean **God** is to blame for the evil things that leaders and nations do, but that **He** can overrule even their wickedness to accomplish **His** divine purposes. **The God of heaven** gave **Nebuchadnezzar** his throne and enabled **him** to defeat **his** enemies and expand **his** empire (2:37-38). But the **God** who gave **him** this authority could also take it away, and **He** did (see the commentary on **Jeremiah Ez - A Message Against Babylon**). **The king** didn’t know how long **his** empire would last, but **he** knew it would end someday. In fact, **Babylon** was conquered by what **Dani’el** called an “**inferior**” kingdom (2:39).

**Second, the dream reveals that human plans decline as time goes on**. The massive and awesome statue not only changed in value from head to foot – from **gold** to **clay** – but is also changed in strength, finally ending in feet of **iron mixed with clay**. Actually, **the statue** was top-heavy, for the atomic weight of **gold** is ten times that of **clay**, and **silver** is five times heavier than **clay**. Therefore, from age to age, nations and kingdoms might appear strong and durable, but they’re in constant danger of falling over and crashing. **The statue Nebuchadnezzar** saw dazzled **him** with the brilliance of the **gold, silver** and **bronze**, but it was standing on feet composed of **iron and clay**.

**Third, it will be difficult to hold things together at the end of the age**. The feet of

the **statue** were composed of **iron** and **clay**. **Iron** is strong and durable, but **clay** is weak and prone to crumble. The **iron** gives the appearance of strength and endurance, but the **clay** announces just the opposite. In fact, **clay** robs the **iron** of its ability to hold things together, for whenever the **iron** touches the **clay**, it produces weakness at those points. Society today is held together by treaties that can be broken, promises that can be ignored, traditions that can be forgotten, organizations that can be disbanded, and money-making businesses that can fail - all of it **iron** mixed with **clay**. At his best, man is **clay**, for **YHVH** made him out of the dust of the earth. Though man and woman are both made in **the image of God (Genesis 1:26)**, sin has robbed us of the dominion **He** gave us. We are both creators and destroyers, and we seem bent on destroying another and the world **the LORD** has graciously given us. The heart of every problem is the problem in the human heart - rebellion against **God**.

**Fourth, Yeshua will return, destroy His enemies, and establish His Kingdom.** The **Rock** that destroys **the statue** is a frequent image of **God** in Scripture, and especially of **Messiah, the Son of God (Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16; Matthew 21:44; Acts 4:11; First Corinthians 10:4; and First Peter 2:4-8)**. The phrase "**without hands**" is used in Scripture to mean *not by human power* and refers to something only **God** can do (**Colossians 2:11; Hebrews 9:11 and 24**). The world will be delivered from evil, not by a process, but by a crisis, the promised return of **Messiah Yeshua**. Whatever remains of **the Four Gentile Empires**, passed from one **empire** to the next, will be destroyed and become **like chaff on a threshing floor (2:35a)**. Then **Messiah** will establish **His Kingdom**, which will **fill the earth**.

When we consider these truths, our response ought to be one of joyful confidence, knowing that **the Lord** has everything under control and will one day reign on earth. While **God's** people should do everything they can to alleviate suffering and make this a safer and happier world, our hope is not in laws, political alliances, or moral crusades. Our hope is in **the Lord**. People's hearts need to be changed by the grace of **God**, and that means **God's** people must be witnesses to the ends of the earth. The only **Kingdom** that will stand forever is **Messiah's Kingdom (2:44)**, and the only people who will be citizens of that **Kingdom** are those who have trusted **Him** to be their **Lord** and **Savior**, being born again by **the Spirit of God (John 3:1-18)**.

What would all of this have meant to **King Nebuchadnezzar** as **he** sat on **his** throne listening to **Dani'el** explain the mysteries of **God**. For one thing, the message of **the statue** should have humbled **him**. It was not **Nebuchadnezzar** who conquered nations and kingdoms; it was **YHVH** who enabled **him** to do it and who gave **him his empire**. **Your**



majesty, you are the king of kings, said Dani'el. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory (2:37). Sadly, the great king forgot this lesson and one day said: Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty (4:30)? ADONAI had to humble the king and make him live like an animal (see Bx - **Humiliation: The King's Decline**) until he learned that Ha'Shem does according to His will, and who alone deserves the glory (4:35). In giving the dream and enabling Dani'el to interpret it, YHVH displayed His wisdom and power. God has the wisdom to plan the ages and the power to execute it. King Nebuchadnezzar ruled from 605 BC to 562 BC, but Messiah Yeshua's Kingdom will never end.<sup>104</sup>

*Dear heavenly Father, praise You that as You reign in Your Millennial Kingdom (Revelation 20) no one can ever conquer. It is an everlasting Kingdom (Dani'el 7:26). Your marvelous heavenly Kingdom follows Your Millennial kingdom. You are always Almighty, All-Powerful with Steadfast Love! How gracious You are to have paid sin's gruesome penalty of death thru Messiah's death as the Lamb of God (John 1:29) and resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:3). How wonderful that You adopt me as Your child. But whoever did receive Him, those trusting in His name, to these He gave the right to become children of God (John 1:12).*

*It is so sad that people will have such proud hearts that though some will be able to do miracles in Your Name, they will love themselves more than You and so You will not allow them into heaven. Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord!" will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, "Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in Your name, and drive out demons in Your name, and perform many miracles in Your name?" Then I will declare to them, "I never knew you. Get away from Me, you workers of lawlessness" (Matthew 7:21-23)! But to Your children, you say: If anyone wants to follow Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross every day, and follow Me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it (Luke 9:23-24).*

*What joy it will be to live with You in Your eternal heavenly Kingdom. Even if it costs Your follower His earthly life for loving You most- it will be worth it all! What a marvelous home of eternal peace and joy it will be, living with You in Your eternal heaven! Behold, the dwelling of God is among men, and He shall tabernacle among them. They shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them and be their God. He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more. Nor shall there be mourning or crying or pain any longer, for the former things have passed away (Rev*



**21:3b-4).** Praise **You** forever! In **Messiah Yeshua's** holy **Name** and power of **His** resurrection. Amen