

# Daniel 8:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia.

## Analysis

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Gabriel explicitly identifies "The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia." This removes all ambiguity—the vision concerns historical empires, not merely symbolic or spiritual realities. The dual kingdom (two horns) precisely describes the Medo-Persian alliance that conquered Babylon in 539 BC. This fulfillment occurred 217 years after Daniel received the vision, definitively proving its divine origin. No human could predict such specific political developments over two centuries in advance.

The plural "kings" (Hebrew: *malkhey*, מֶלֶךְ) indicates multiple rulers and the dynasty's longevity. From Cyrus (559-530 BC) through Darius III (336-330 BC), the Medo-Persian Empire spanned 230 years with numerous kings. Gabriel's identification teaches that God controls not merely individual rulers but entire dynasties and imperial systems. Political power exists only by divine permission and operates within God-ordained limits.

This specific fulfillment validates all Scripture. If Daniel accurately predicted Media-Persia centuries in advance, we can trust biblical prophecies not yet fulfilled—Christ's return, final judgment, new creation. God's word proves true over centuries and millennia. The same divine authority behind accurately fulfilled prophecy undergirds all biblical teaching. This demands we take Scripture seriously, living in light of promised future realities as confidently as Daniel's audience should have anticipated Medo-Persian dominance.

## Historical Context

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The Medo-Persian Empire (539-331 BC) fulfilled this prophecy exactly. Cyrus II united Media and Persia around 550 BC, conquered Babylon in 539 BC, and established the largest empire known to that point. His successors—Cambyses, Darius I, Xerxes, Artaxerxes, and others—ruled from India to Ethiopia. Greek historians Herodotus and Xenophon documented this empire extensively. Archaeological discoveries including the Cyrus Cylinder, Persian royal inscriptions, and administrative texts from Persepolis confirm biblical accuracy. Daniel witnessed the beginning; his prophecy anticipated the entire empire's duration and eventual fall to Greece.

## Related Passages

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**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

## Study Questions

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1. How does the precisely fulfilled prophecy about Media-Persia validate Scripture's divine authority and reliability?
2. What does God's sovereignty over centuries of imperial history teach us about trusting His control of current geopolitical events?
3. In what ways should confidence in fulfilled biblical prophecy shape how we live in light of unfulfilled prophecies about Christ's return?

## Interlinear Text

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מִדְ ' מלָכִ ' מֶלֶךְ  
בְּעֵל בְּעֵל  
בְּאַתְּ בְּאַתְּ  
אֲשֶׁר אֲשֶׁר  
הַאֲיָל הַאֲיָל  
which thou sawest having  
two horns are the kings of Media

The ram H834 H7200 H1167 H7161 H4428 H4074

H352 H6539

וּפְרָסָה:

and Persia

H6539

## Additional Cross-References

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**Daniel 8:3** (Parallel theme): Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last.

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