

Daniel 8:3-4

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/dan/dan-8/daniel-83-4/>

The Vision of the Ram and the Goat:

Daniel sees a vision of a ram with uneven horns lashing out at all animals west, north, and south, doing whatever it wants and acting proudly.

Daniel is witnessing another vision. In his vision, he is standing beside the Ulai Canal in Susa, one of the cities of the Babylonian empire during the reign of Belshazzar, who was Nebuchadnezzar's grandson.

A violent scene occurs. Daniel lifts his eyes and looks. He sees *a ram which had two horns*. The animal is *standing in front of the canal*. It is an uneven animal; its *two horns* are long, but *one horn is longer than the other, with the longer one coming up last*. This description makes it sound as though the horns grew before Daniel's eyes, with one horn ceasing to grow, while the second horn began growing after the first, yet ends up being longer than the first horn.

The *ram* in the vision begins *butting* in multiple directions. It bucks *westward, northward, and southward*. Daniel sees *other beasts* which could not *stand before* the ram. Other animals running away from it, or being gored and trampled by it. The *ram* bucked so wildly, and dominated so thoroughly that Daniel writes *nor was there anyone to rescue from his power*. Every animal flees or falls under the ram. The ram did *as he pleased and magnified himself*. Not only is the ram unstopably strong, he is proud. He shows no restraint. He does whatever he wants. And in all this victory, he glorifies himself.

This vision will be explained to Daniel later in this chapter (Daniel 8:16). This ram with uneven horns "represents the kings of Media and Persia" (Daniel 8:20). At the time of the vision, Babylon is still the most powerful nation, but Media and Persia have been amassing power since the death of Nebuchadnezzar. Media is the greater nation at first, allied with Persia, but King Cyrus of Persia and a contingent of rebellious Medes will defeat King Astyages of Media in 550 B.C. at the battle of Pasargadae, handing power of both nations to Cyrus the Persian. Daniel sees the *ram* had *two horns*, one longer than the other, but the second one grows *longer* than the first during the vision. Persia grew more powerful after Media, being *the longer* of the *two horns coming up last*.

The Medo-Persian empire conquered *westward, northward, and southward*. It ruled greater territory than the Babylonian empire. *No other nations (beasts) could stand before* it for hundreds of years. The empire *did* as it *pleased and magnified* itself, as empires do. It was the supreme power from modern-day Pakistan to Turkey, covering some 2 million square miles of territory (see map on sidebar).

Biblical Text

³Then I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a ram which had two horns was standing in front of the canal. Now the two horns were long, but one was longer than the other, with the longer one coming up last. ⁴I saw the ram butting westward, northward, and southward, and no other beasts could stand before him nor was there anyone to rescue from his power, but he did as he pleased and magnified himself.