

Warrington
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"Weighed In the Balances!"

Scripture Lesson:- Daniel 5: 1-31.

Text:- Daniel 5: 27. "TEKEL, Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting!"

Introduction:- In the fifth chapter of Daniel we read the history of King Belshazzar. One chapter tells us all we know about the king. One short sight of his career is all we have. He bursts in upon the scene and then disappears.

We are told that he made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before them. How long this feast has been going on we are not told, but in the midst of it, he "commanded to bring" the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein. They did so, and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank wine from the holy vessels. While this impious act was being committed, "in the same hour came forth the fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. We are not told at what hour of the day or night it happened. But every face turned deathly pale. "The king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knee

smote one against another." The king sent for the wise men to decipher the handwriting on the wall. They could not interpret it. Then the king promised that whoever could read it, should be made the third ruler of the kingdom, with a chain of gold around his neck. But the wise men tried in vain. The king was greatly troubled. At last, the queen came in, and she told the monarch that if he would only send for one who was used to interpret the dreams of Nebuchadnezzar, he could read the writing and tell him the meaning thereof. So Daniel was sent for. He was familiar with the handwriting.

"This is the writing that was written. "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin." It is with the word, "Tekel"

"Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting!"

If someone had told the king an hour before that the time had come when he must step into the balances and be weighed, he would have laughed at the thought. But the vital hour of decision had come.

That night the verdict was announced, the sentence was carried out. "In that night was Belshazzar

the king of the Chaldeans slain, and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom." The army of Darius

came marching down the street. There was a clash of arms. Shouts of war and victory rent the air.

That night the king's blood mingled with the wine of the banquet hall. Judgment came upon him unexpectedly, suddenly.

A man who does evil in these gospel days is far worse than that king. We live in a land of Bibles

You can buy a Bible for less than one dollar. Many are given each year to the school children each year. We live in the full blaze of Calvary. We live this side of the Cross, but Belshazzar lived more than five hundred years on the other side. He had never heard of Jesus Christ. He had never heard about the Son of God. He had never heard about God except, perhaps in connection with his father's remarkable vision. He probably had no portion of the Bible, and if he had, he probably did not believe it. He has no minister to point him to the Lamb of God. All of this happened long centuries ago. Now let us get down to this century, to this year, to ourselves. We will come to the present time. Let us imagine now, that a balance comes down from the throne of God. They are fastened to the very throne itself. It is a throne of equity, of justice. You and I must be weighed. I venture to say this would be a very solemn service. There would be no trifling. There would be no indifference. No one would be thoughtless. Some people have their own balances. A great many are making balances to be weighed in. But after all we must be weighed in God's balances, the balances of the sanctuary. It is a favorite thing with infidels to set their own standard, to measure themselves by other people. But will that do in the the Day of Judgment? No it will not. God's law and his judgment. When men find fault with the lives of professing Christians, it is a tribute to the law of God. "Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting." "The law of the Lord is sure, the testimony of the Lord is sure."

If it were known that God Himself were going to speak once more to man, what eagerness and excitement there would be. For nearly 2000 years he has been silent. No inspired message has been added to the Bible for nearly nineteen hundred years.

How eagerly men would listen if God should speak once more. Yet men forget that the Bible is God's own word, and that it is as truly His message today as it was when it was delivered. The law that was given at Sinai has lost none of its solemnity.

Time cannot wear out its authority or the fact of its authorship.

But some men say that they do not believe it. Let men argue as much as they like to about other parts of the Bible, but all honest men will agree that the Ten Commandments are without fault. Infidels may mock and lawyers reject him who has delivered us from the curse of the law, but they cannot help admitting that the commandments are right. The infidel Renan said that they are all nations and will remain the commandments of God during all the centuries to come.

If God created this world, He must make some laws that govern it. In order to make life safe we must have good laws. There is not a country the sun shines on that does not have laws. Now this is God's law. It has come from on high, and those who reject the God of the universe, have to admit that it is pure. Legislatures all over the world have adopted it as the foundation of their legal systems. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making

wise the simple: the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandments of the Lord is pure; enlightening the eyes."

The question is for you and me, are we keeping the commandments? Have we fulfilled all the requirements of the law? If God made us, as we know he did, he had a right to make that law. If we do not use it right, it will condemn us. We shall be found wanting. The law is right, but are we right?

It is related of a clever infidel that he sought an acquaintance with the truths of the Bible, and began to read the books of Moses. He had been in the habit of sneering at the Bible, and in order to be able to refute arguments brought by Christian men he made up his mind, as he read the Bible, to get some ideas of its contents. After he had read the Ten Commandments, he said to a friend, "I will tell you what I used to think. I supposed that Moses was the leader of a horde of bandits; and, that having a strong mind, he acquired great influence over a superstitious people; and that on Mt. Sinai he played off some sort of fireworks to make the people believe it was supernatural. I have been looking into that law. I have been trying to see whether I could add anything to it, or take from it, so as to make it perfect. Sir, I cannot! It is perfect! Yes, the law is perfect. But are we. Would we be found wanting?"

III.

The law is binding today. Some people seem to think that they have gotten beyond the Ten Com. What did Christ say? "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets; I am come not to

to destroy but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law till all be fulfilled." The commandments of God given to Moses in the Mount at Horeb are as binding today as they have ever been since they were promulgated in the hearing of the people. The old Jewish fathers said, the law was not given in Palestine (which belonged to Israel), but in the wilderness, because the law was for all nations. Jesus never condemned the law and the prophets. but he did condemn those who did not obey them. Because he gave new commandments it does not follow that he abolished the old. Christ's explanation of them made ^{all the} them more searching. In his sermon on the Mount he carried the principles of the commandments beyond the mere letter. He unfolded them and showed that they embraced more, that they are positive, as well as prohibitive. The Old T. closes with these words: "Remember ye the law of Moses, my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold I will send upon you Elijah the prophet before the coming of that great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse!"

III.

When Christ came he condensed the statements of the law into this form. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy strength and with all thy

and thy neighbor' as thyself". Paul said, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." But does this mean that the detailed precepts of the law are suspended and have become back numbers? Does a father cease to give children rules to obey because they love him? Does a nation burn its statute books because the people have become patriotic? Not at all. And yet we speak as if the commandments do hold for Christians because they have come to love God. Paul said, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid. Yea, we establish the law." The law still holds good. The commandments are necessary. So long as we obey, they do not rest heavy upon us; but as soon as we try to break away, we find that they are like fences to keep us within bounds. Horses need bridles even after they have been properly broken in.

Conclusion:- Now face these Ten Commandments honestly and prayerfully. See if your life is right, and if you are treating God fairly. God's statutes are just, are they not? If they are right, let us see whether we are right. Let us pray that the Holy Spirit may search each one of us. Let us get alone with God and read his law, read it carefully and prayerfully, and ask him to show us our sins and what he would have us to do.

Tried, some day, some day you will be, weighed in the balances. It seems like madness to turn away and run the risk of being called by God to judgment. Now is the hour to accept salvation. You say, "I have time enough yet." Was not Belshazzar cut off suddenly? As long as you deal

your are in danger. If you don't enter the kingdom
by God's way, you cannot enter. Will you remain as
you are and be found wanting in that day? Let every
head be bowed and every eye closed. Is there some
one present here this morning who will say, "I
am not ready to be weighed in the balances." I am
not satisfied. Do you want our prayers? We will
pray for you, but we would rather pray with you
here this morning, here, at this altar of prayer.

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