

Weighed in the Balances



Daniel 4:28–37; 5 · This week: There Is No Other God That Can Deliver, Daniel 1–7

In the manual: **Come, Follow Me lesson 46, “There Is No Other God That Can Deliver,” on Gospel Library**

START

During a royal feast, the fingers of a man’s hand appeared and wrote on the palace wall (Daniel 5:5).

READ TOGETHER

Years earlier, Nebuchadnezzar had boasted about “great Babylon, that I have built,” and he lost his kingdom until he learned humility (Daniel 4:30–34). Belshazzar, who ruled Babylon later, knew that story and ignored it (Daniel 5:22).

DANIEL 5:5

⁵In the same hour came forth 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.

DANIEL 5:25–28

²⁵And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. ²⁶This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. ²⁷TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. ²⁸PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

WHAT IT TEACHES

Belshazzar threw a party for a thousand lords and had them drink from the gold and silver cups taken from the temple in Jerusalem (Daniel 5:1–4). The cups had been made for holy use. He used them to praise idols.

Daniel read the writing. MENE meant God had numbered the kingdom and ended it. TEKEL meant “Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting” (verse 27). The king had everything, and he came up short on the one scale that mattered.

Nebuchadnezzar’s story ended better. After his pride brought him down, he lifted his eyes to heaven and his understanding came back (Daniel 4:34). He praised the King of heaven and said, “those that walk in pride he is able to abase” (Daniel 4:37). The Lord gave him time to learn, and he learned.

Daniel told Belshazzar that he had never glorified “the God in whose hand thy breath is” (Daniel 5:23). Every breath we take is a gift from God. Humility starts with remembering who gives it.

TALK ABOUT IT

The temple cups were holy things that Belshazzar treated as ordinary. What holy things do we have in our lives, and how do we show respect for them?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Nebuchadnezzar learned humility and praised God. Belshazzar knew that story and ignored it, and his kingdom ended that same night (Daniel 5:30–31).