

WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES

Daniel 5

Introduction:

- 1. Americans are the most obese people in the world.**
- 2. Medical authorities are concerned over increasing obesity.**
 - a. Children now have illnesses that used to occur later in life.**
 - b. Some say the younger generation will not live as long.**
- 3. Many are concerned about their weight.**
 - a. Diet and exercise plans abound.**
 - b. Fat grams and calories must appear on packaging.**
- 4. A good question for Christians is: "How much do I weigh spiritually?"**

Discussion:

- I. KING BELSHAZZAR MADE A GREAT FEAST.**
 - A. Critics used to deny Belshazzar ever lived.**
 - 1. He is mentioned in ancient inscriptions.**
 - 2. He was the son of Nabonidus.**
 - 3. He ruled as king in Babylon while his father was away.**
 - 4. This explains his making Daniel "the third ruler."**
 - B. This feast was attended by a thousand of his high officials.**
 - 1. The king tasted the wine before serving it to his guests.**
 - 2. He likely became intoxicated (Prov. 20:1; Eph. 5:18).**
 - 3. He called for the sacred vessels from God's temple.**
 - a. Nebuchadnezzar had taken them when he captured Jerusalem (2 Chr. 36:7,10).**
 - b. He put them in the treasury of his god in Babylon.**
 - 4. They drank from them and praised idols.**
 - 5. This was a deliberate insult to the God of Heaven!**
- II. THE KING SAW THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL.**
 - A. A hand appeared writing on the wall of the palace.**
 - B. The king was scared out of his wits.**
 - 1. He became pale and confused.**
 - 2. He lost the strength to stand and his knees knocked.**
 - C. Belshazzar called for his occultic advisors.**
 - 1. The Bible condemns dealing with such (Isa. 8:19,20).**
 - 2. They were unable to read the handwriting on the wall.**
- III. THE QUEEN SAVED THE DAY!**
 - A. Belshazzar's wives were with him in the banquet hall.**
 - 1. This was likely the "queen mother."**
 - 2. Some think she was Nebuchadnezzar's widow.**
 - B. The queen advised Belshazzar to send for Daniel who had**

interpreted dreams for Nebuchadnezzar.

IV. DANIEL WAS SUMMONED BEFORE THE KING.

- A. Belshazzar promised to make him the third ruler in the kingdom.**
 - 1. Daniel had no interest in the king's gifts.**
 - 2. He reminded Belshazzar of Nebuchadnezzar's fall because of pride (Dan. 4).**
 - 3. Belshazzar knew this, but had not humbled himself.**
 - 4. He had used the vessels of the God who gave him breath to praise gods that could not see, hear, or know!**

- B. Daniel interpreted the handwriting on the wall.**
 - 1. "God has numbered your kingdom and finished it."**
 - 2. "You have been weighed in the balances and found wanting."**
 - 3. "Your kingdom is given to the Medes and the Persians."**

V. BABYLON WAS DESTROYED THAT NIGHT.

- A. The Medes and the Persians diverted the water of the Euphrates.**
 - 1. The city was taken without a battle.**
 - 2. Belshazzar was killed.**

- B. Cyrus appointed Darius the Mede king over Babylon.**

VI. MANY ARE WEIGHED IN GOD'S BALANCE AND FOUND WANTING.

- A. The unbeliever is wanting.**
 - 1. Belshazzar knew God had humbled Nebuchadnezzar, yet he deliberately insulted Him.**
 - 2. Men know God exists, yet ignore Him (Rom. 1:18-22).**

- B. The covetous (greedy) is wanting.**
 - 1. The Rich Fool gave no thought to God (Lu. 12:13- 21).**
 - 2. Love of money will cause many to be lost (1 Tim. 6:9,10).**

- C. The reveller is wanting!**
 - 1. Belshazzar was drinking when the handwriting came.**
 - 2. Many "waste their substance in riotous living" (Lu. 15:13).**

- D. The complacent soul is wanting.**
 - 1. He thinks he has plenty of time.**
 - 2. Belshazzar was not ready to die that night (Jas. 4:13,14).**

- E. The self-righteous person is wanting.**
 - 1. All have sinned (Rom. 3:23; Isa. 64:6).**
 - 2. The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23).**
 - 3. Only the blood of Christ can cleanse (Rom. 3:24, 25).**

Conclusion:

- 1. How much do you weigh spiritually?**
- 2. May we not be found wanting when the Lord comes (1 Pet. 1:18,19)**