

# Weighed in the Balances

*ADDRESSES ON THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.*

BY

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"*TEKEL*: Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting."

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# WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES:

*Or, Tried by the Ten Commandments.*

Weighted in the Balances.

IN the fifth chapter of Daniel, we read the history Of King Belshazzar. One chapter tells us all we know about him. 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. In those days a feast would sometimes last for six months in Eastern countries. How long this feast had 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. Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God, which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone."

While this impious act was being committed, "in the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and, wrote over 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. Perhaps it was at midnight. Perhaps nearly all the guests were more or less under the influence of drink; but they were not so drunk but that they suddenly became sober as they saw something that was supernatural--- a handwriting on the wall, right over the golden candlestick.

Ever 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 knees smote one against another. In haste he sent for his wisest men to come and read that handwriting on the wall. They came in one after another, and tried to make it out; but they could not interpret it. The king promised that whoever could read it should be made third ruler in the kingdom; that he should have gifts, and that a gold chain should be put round his neck. But the wise men tried in vain. The king was greatly troubled.

At last, in the mist of the consternation, the queen came in, and she told the monarch, if he would only send for one who used to interpret the dreams of Nebuchadnezzar, he could read the writing and tell him the interpretation thereof. So Daniel was sent for. He was very familiar with it. He knew his Father's handwriting.

"This is the writing that was written, Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin. This is the interpretation of the thing: Mene—God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it. Tekel--Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. Peres--Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians."

If some one 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 had come.

The weighing was soon over. The verdict was announced, and the sentence carried out. "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain, and Darius the Median took the kingdom." Darius and his army came marching down those streets. 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: and probably ninety-nine out of every hundred judgments come in this way. Death comes upon us unexpectedly; it comes upon us suddenly.

Perhaps you say: "I hope Mr. Moody is not going to compare me with that heathen king."

I tell you that a man who does evil in these Gospel days is far worse than that king. We live in a land of Bibles. You can get the New Testament for a nickel, and if you haven't got a nickel you can get it for nothing. Many societies will be glad to give it to you free. We live in the full blaze of Calvary. We live on this side of the cross; but Belshazzar lived more than five hundred years on the other side. He never heard of Jesus Christ. He never heard about the Son of God. He 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, probably he did not believe it. He had no godly minister to point him to the Lamb of God.

**Don't tell me that you are better than that king.** I believe that he will rise in judgment and condemn many of us. All this happened long centuries ago. Let us get down to this century, to this year, to ourselves. We will come to the present time. Let us imagine that now, while I am preaching, down come some balances 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 audience. 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 that will not do in the Day of Judgment.

Now we will use God's law as a balance weight. When men find fault with the lives of professing Christians, it is a tribute to the law of God. "Tekel." It is a very short text. It is so short I am sure you will remember it; and that is

my object, just to get people to remember God's own Word. Let me call your attention to the fact that God has written only three times. First, He writes Ten Commandments with His own finger on stone. Next, He writes His judgment on the cedar wall of Babylon, their pending doom. Finally, There in the Temple floor that day, He writes the sins of man in dust. He illustrates that our sins written in dust, through His mercy our sins can be forgiven, but His Commandments that were written in stone, which are enduring and unchanging. Shouldn't we be thankful that He wrote our sins in dust? These are the only messages to men that God has written with His own hand. He wrote the commandments out twice, and spoke them aloud in the hearing of Israel. If it were known that God Himself was going to speak once again to man, what eagerness and excitement there would be. For nearly nineteen hundred years He has been silent. No inspired message has been added to the Bible for nearly nineteen hundred years. How eagerly all 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 when it was delivered of old. 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. I can imagine some one saying-"I won't be weighed by that law. I don't believe in it."

Now men may cavil as much as they like about other parts of the Bible, but I have never met an honest man that found fault with the Ten Commandments. Infidels may mock the Lawgiver and reject Him who has delivered JIS from the curse of the law, but they can't help admitting that the commandments are right. Re'nan said that they are for all nations, and will remain the commandments of God during all the centuries.

If God created this world, He must make some laws to govern it. In order to make life safe we must have good laws; there is not a country the sun shines upon that does not possess laws. Now this is God's law. It has come from on high, and infidels and skeptics have to admit that it is pure. Legislatures nearly all over the world adopt it as the foundation of their legal systems. **"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is pure, making wise the simple: the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes."**

**Now the question for you and me is, are we keeping these 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; and if we don't use it aright it would have been better for us if we had never had it, for it will condemn us. We shall be found wanting. The law is all 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 at 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 knew nothing about it, to read the bible and get some idea of its contents. After he had reached 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 banditti; that, having a strong mind, he acquired great influence over a superstitious people; and that on Mount Sinai he played off some sort of fireworks to the amazement of his ignorant followers, who imagined in their fear and superstition that the exhibition was supernatural. I have been looking into the nature of that law. I have been trying to see whether I could add anything to it, or take anything from it, so as to make it better. Sir, I cannot! It is perfect!"

"The **first commandment** directs us to make the Creator the object of our supreme love and reverence. That is right. If He is our Creator, Preserver, and Supreme Benefactor, we ought to treat Him, and none other, as such. The **second** forbids idolatry. That certainly is right. The **third** forbids profanity. The **fourth** fixes a time for religious worship. If there be a God, He ought surely to be worshipped. It is suitable that there should be an outward homage significant of our inward regard. If God be worshipped, it is proper that some time should be set apart for that purpose, when all may worship Him harmoniously, and without interruption. One day in seven is certainly not too much, and I do not know that it is too little.

"The **fifth commandment** defines the peculiar duties arising from family relations. Injuries to our neighbor are then classified by the moral law. **They are divided into offences against life, chastity, property, and character; and I notice that the greatest offence in each class is expressly forbidden.** Thus the greatest injury to life is murder; to chastity, adultery; to property, theft; to character, perjury. Now the greatest offence must include the least of the same kind. **Murder must include every injury to life adultery every injury to purity; and so of the rest.** And the moral code is closed and perfected by a command forbidding every improper desire in regard to our neighbors.

"I have been thinking, Where did Moses get that law? I have read history. The Egyptians and the adjacent nations were idolaters; so were the Greeks and Romans; and the wisest or best Greeks or Romans never gave a code of morals like this. Moses obtain that law, which surpasses the wisdom and philosophy of the most enlightened ages? He lived at a period comparatively barbarous; but he has given a law in which the learning and sagacity of all subsequent time can detect no flaw. Where did he obtain it? He could not have soared so far above his age as to have devised it himself. I am satisfied where he obtained it. It came down from heaven. It has convinced me of the truth of the religion of the Bible." The infidel (now' au infidel no longer) remained to his death a firm believer in the truth of Christianity. We call it the "Mosaic" Law; but it has been well said that the commandments did not originate with Moses, nor were they done away with when the Mosaic Law was fulfilled in Christ, and many of its ceremonies and regulations abolished. We can find no trace of the existence of any law-making body in those early times, no parliament or congress that built up a system of laws. It has. come down to us complete and finished, and the only satisfactory account is that which tells us that God Himself wrote the commandments on tables of stone.

Some people seem to think we have got beyond the commandments. **What did Christ say?** "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets; I am not come 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 from the law, till all be fulfilled." The commandments of

God given to Moses in the Mount at Horeb are as binding today as ever they have been since the time when they were proclaimed in the hearing of the people.

The Jews 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 them all the 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 Testament 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 you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the 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 their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.**" Does that look as if the law of Moses was becoming obsolete? The conviction deepens in me with the years that the old truths of the Bible must be stated and re-stated in the plainest possible language. I do not remember ever to have heard a sermon preached on the commandments. The people must be made to understand that the Ten Commandments are still binding, and that there is a penalty attached to their violation. We do not want a gospel of mere sentiment. The Sermon on the Mount did not blot out the Ten Commandments.

**When Christ came He condensed the statement 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 mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." **Paul said: "Love is the fulfilling of the law."** But does this mean that the detailed precepts of the Decalogue are superseded, 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 people speak as if the commandments do not 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." It 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 they are like fences to keep us within bounds.

**Horses need bridles even after they have been properly broken in.** " We know that the law is good if a man use it lawfully; knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men-stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine."

Now, my friend, **are you ready to be weighted by this law of God?** A great many people say that if they keep the commandments, they do not need to be forgiven and saved through Christ. But have you kept them? I will admit that if you perfectly keep the commandments, you do not need to be saved by Christ; but is there a man in the wide world who can truly say that he has done this? Young lady, can you say: "I am ready to be weighed by the law?" Can you, young man? Will you step into the scales and be weighed one by one by the Ten Commandments? 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 if we are right. Let us pray that the Holy Ghost 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.

Respectfully,  
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