

Weighed in the Balances

“And I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned” (Matthew 12:36-37).

Do you weigh the consequences of what comes out of your mouth? We rise at our appointed time, get prepared for the day, and out the door we go. Do we take the time to consider what lies before us, with whom we are likely to come into contact, and when speaking you “Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for edifying as the need may be, that it may give grace to them that hear” (Eph. 4:29)? Do we start the day cognizant of the words of the Lord, saying, “I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned” (Matt. 12:36-37)?

For our learning (Rom. 15:4), the scriptures introduce us to a king named Belshazzar who “made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king and his lords, his wives and his concubines, might drink therefrom.” These festive idolators took “the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives and his concubines, drank from them.” They had taken vessels that had been devoted to the sacred things of God and “drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.” These actions had consequences: “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. Then the king's countenance was changed in him, and his thoughts troubled him; and the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another” (Dan. 5:1-6). Belshazzar was understandable desirous to know the interpretation of the writing, to which Daniel said, “This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and brought it to an end; TEKEL; thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES; thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians” (Dan. 5:24-28).

Just as Belshazzar was “weighed in the balances,” and “found wanting”, his conduct being contrary to the laws of God, we too need to weigh our thoughts and words so that we are not “found wanting”, Solomon put it this way, “Death and life are in the power of the tongue; And they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof” (Proverbs 18:21), and again “Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles” (21:23).

We have a great day set before us, an opportunity that “whatsoever we do, in word or deed”, we must “do in the name of the Lord”, (Col. 3:17), and that will begin with our speech. As you embark upon a day in which your conduct will be weighed by those around you, remember that “A good name is better than precious oil” (Eccl. 7:1). ret