BELSHAZZAR: THE WRITING ON THE WALL

Scripture: Daniel 5

Materials Needed: Scale; some objects to weigh

Memory Verse:

Objectives: As a result of this lesson, I want my students

To Know—When proud Belshazzar knowingly and disrespectfully took the vessels of God and praised his gods, God told him that he was found lacking and he lost his kingdom that night.
To Realize—Pride and disrespect for God are serious and will be answered for.
To Respond by—respecting God and giving him credit for one's accomplishments.

Setting up the Story:
Ask your students if they have ever seen a sign that they have to be a certain height before they can do something, like go on a ride. A person has to "measure up" before they can go on the ride or play in a game. Make a line on a piece of paper and tape it to the wall. Tell your students that whoever measures up can have a prize. (Place it high enough so that no one can measure up.) There are other ways beside height in which we must measure up before we can do something. Example: if you mother told you to clean your room before you could go outside, what would she want to check before you leave? And if she goes into your room and it doesn't measure up you won't get to go outside to play.
In Bible times, people thought of measuring up like balances on a scale. You've seen the men at the pazar

Scripture

Telling the story:

I. Belshazzar Makes a Feast
   A. Belshazzar actually a descendant of Nebuchadnezzar:
   B. Would have known the "family secrets" of Neb's insanity.
   C. Had higher regard for his idols and was in a time of religious 'revival' for his gods
   D. Persia was invading, but they had 20-year supply of food and

As you tell the story:

I. Belshazzar Makes a Feast
   A. Belshazzar actually a descendant of Nebuchadnezzar:
   B. Would have known the "family secrets" of Neb's insanity.
   C. Had higher regard for his idols and was in a time of religious 'revival' for his gods
   D. Persia was invading, but they had 20-year supply of food and
seemingly invincible walls, as well as water going through the city.
E. Throws a party to boost morale and invoke favor of his gods.
F. Specifically singles out the Jewish "God" to insult: asks for cups of gold from Jerusalem Temple to be brought.

II. God Writes on the Wall: Found Lacking
A. After the party gets going a hand appears and writes on wall
B. Belshazzar visibly shaken
C. Wise men can't interpret
D. Mother (or grandmother) suggests Daniel: someone prominent from Neb's time
E. Daniel is promised wealth if he can interpret the writing.
F. Daniel Rebukes Belshazzar
   1. Refuses the money
   2. Reminds him of the lessons about pride and God's sovereignty that Neb had learned
   3."You knew all this--yet you didn't humble yourself."
G. Interprets Dream
   1. Mene: numbered=your days have been numbered
   2. Tekel: weighed=you have been weighed in the balances and found wanting
   3. Peres: Persians=and your kingdom has been divided and given to the Persians.

III. Belshazzar Looses His Kingdom
A. That night Cyrus' army breaches the city by diverting the water and coming in under the sluice gates
B. Babylon surrenders without a fight.

Concluding the Story:
Belshazzar knew better. What was weighed? What he knew was on one side. And what he did with that knowledge was on the other side.
LESSON TITLE
HELPS FOR THE TEACHER

**Personal Application Questions:**
1. What would you want to be remembered for when you die?
2. What actions are in line with what you want to be remembered for?
3. Are there any things that need to change in order to be in line with your goals?

**Application Questions to Think Through for your Students:**
1.
2.

**Memory Verse:**

**Post-Lesson Activity:**

**Homework Idea:**