

False Weights - Yes and No

Foundation

Bible passage: Dt 25.13-16 & Mtt 5.37

False Measures

Deut 25 describes people who keep two different weights or cups. Imagine going into a sweet shop to buy 100g of sweets but finding the owner uses a scale with a 90g weight but marked 100g. The buyer is cheated out of 10g. If the owner, then buys sweets but this time uses a 110g measure pretending it is 100g they also cheat their supplier. It might be seen by some as a sharp practice and perhaps even amusing, but it is strongly condemned by God.

*“all who act dishonestly,
are an abomination to the
LORD your God”*

In verse 15 we are told to use a perfect and just weights and measures and Israel were told that if they did so they would prolong their time in the land God gave them. God would bless them but we can also see how widespread cheating and distrust can destroy relationships and families. If people deal honestly with one another, that helps relationship, businesses and society to flourish.

Centuries later the kingdoms of Israel and Judah crumbled and were eventually over-run by enemies. The prophets sent by God show us that, amongst other things, people were cheating one another:

Shall I count pure those with the wicked scales, and with the bag of deceitful weights? For her rich men are full of violence, her inhabitants have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth. (Micah 6.11-12)

*Car
emissions
test rig*



Such things also happen today whether be a person who lies about something they are selling on online or car manufacturers who falsified test data to make their cars look better than they really are. One person gains, but another person loses out and trust breaks down.

Verse 16 of Deuteronomy gives the strong statement that all who do such things are an abomination to the Lord. What they are doing is unjust but the Lord, the judge of all the earth, does what is right (Gen 18.25)

Let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’ and your ‘no’ be ‘no’.

Jesus wants us to be honest and straightforward in what we say. People will often try to avoid making an outright lie but will not tell the truth and try to disguise the fact.

The traditional translation of Matthew is better known than the ESV translation:

“But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’

For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.

James also repeats this instruction in James 5.12 and there the ESV does have the traditional translation:

but let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.



**Jesus wants us to be honest
and straightforward in what
we say whilst dishonesty is an
abomination to the Lord.**