

Biblical Weights, Measures, Values and Coins

- No precise modern equivalents can be given for the units of measurement, weight and value used in the ancient world, which themselves varied at different times, in different places, and in different contexts of use. The approximate equivalents given below may be helpful as an indication of the order of magnitude implied by a particular term.

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Length

Unit	Approx. equivalent in meters	Approx. equivalent in inches	As read at
handbreadth	0.075	2 15/16	Ezek 40:5
span	0.225	8 7/8	1 Sam 17:4
cubit (short) = 6 handbreadths	0.45	17 3/4	Judg 3:16
cubit (long) = 7 handbreadths	0.525	20 1/2	2 Chr 3:3

Weights and Values

Unit	Approx. equivalent in grams	Approx. equivalent in pounds & ounces	As read at
gerah	0.6	1/50 oz	Ezek 45:12
sanctuary shekel = 20 gerahs	12	2/5 oz.	Lev 27:25
mina = 50 shekels	600	1 lb. 4 oz.	Ezek 45:12
talent = 3,000 shekels	36,000	75 lb.	Ex 38:25

- Mention is made (Gen 23:16) of a shekel measured "according to the weights current among the merchants;" its relationship to the sacred standard is uncertain.
- The "pound" of the New Testament (Jn 12:3) may be referred to the Roman standard of about 12 oz. or 317 grams.
- Related to gold or silver, the weights tabulated above are frequently used as measures of value. In the Old Testament "beka" (lit. half) is used to signify a half-shekel (Ex 38:26). The "talent" of the New Testament (Mt 18:24) evidently signifies a large but not precise monetary value.

Capacity: Dry Measures

Unit	Approx. equivalent in liters	Approx. equivalent in quarts and bushels	As read at
kab	1.1	1 quart	2 Kings 6:25
omer	2.2	2 quarts	Ex 16:32
ephah = 10 omers	22	20 quarts	Ex 16:36
cor = 10 ephahs	220	6 1/2 bushels	1 Kings 4:22
homer = 10 ephahs	220	6 1/2 bushels	Ezek 45:11

Capacity: Liquid Measures

Unit	Approx. equivalent in liters	Approx. equivalent in pints and gallons	As read at
log	0.3	7/10 pint	Lev 14:10
hin = 12 log	3.6	1 gallon	Num 15:7
bath = 6 hin	22	6 gallons	Ezek 45:14
cor = 10 bath	220	60 gallons	Ezek 45:14

Coins

- The "daric" (1 Chr 29:7) was a gold coin weighing just over 8 grams or a quarter of an ounce, said to have been equivalent to a month's pay for a soldier in the Persian army. The gold "daric" referred to in Neh 7:70 may have weighed about 4.4 grams or an eighth of an ounce.
- The "denarius" of the New Testament (Mk 14:5) is said to have been the equivalent of a day's wage for a laborer.