

Weights and Measures

Explanation

Chart 2-10 shows the various measures of weight, length, and volume used in New Testament times. In the left-hand column, the basic terms are given (scripture references for those that appear in the New Testament are given in the far right column). Biblical equivalents are given in the second column to facilitate comparisons. In some cases, modern equivalents are known precisely; others are calculated approximations.

Reference

Marvin A. Powell, "Weights and Measures," *ABD*, 6:897–908.

Weights and Measures

BIBLICAL UNITS	ANCIENT EQUIVALENTS	BRITISH, U.S. EQUIVALENTS	METRIC EQUIVALENTS	NEW TESTAMENT OCCURRENCE
WEIGHT				
Tyrian talent		91 pounds	42.5 kilograms	
Galilean talent		45 pounds	20.4 kilograms	Mt 25:15
mina	50 shekels	1.25 pounds	0.6 kilogram	Lk 19:13
litra	Roman pound	12 ounces	327.45 grams	Jn 19:39
shekel	2 bekas	0.4 ounce	11.5 grams	
pim	2/3 shekel	0.27 ounce	7.6 grams	
beka	10 gerahs	0.2 ounce	5.5 grams	
gerah		0.02 ounce	0.6 gram	
LENGTH				
mile (<i>milion</i>)		4500 feet	1.380 kilometers	Mt 5:41
furlong (<i>stadion</i>)		600 feet	190 meters	Lk 24:13
rod (<i>kalamos</i>)		10 feet	3 meters	Rev 11:1
fathom		6 feet	1.8 meters	Acts 27:28
cubit		18 inches	0.5 meter	Mt 6:27
span		9 inches	23 centimeters	
handbreadth		3 inches	8 centimeters	
VOLUME				
kor		11 bushels	393 liters	Lk 16:7
homer	10 ephahs	6 bushels	220 liters	
lethek	5 ephahs	3 bushels	110 liters	
firkin, batos		9 gallons	33 liters	Jn 2:6; Lk 16:6
ephah	10 omers	0.6 bushel, 6 gallons	22 liters	
saton		3 gallons	11 liters	Mt 13:33
modios		0.25 bushel	9 liters	Mt 5:15
seah	0.3 ephah	7 quarts	7.3 liters	
hin	0.17 bath	1 gallon	4 liters	
omer	0.1 ephah	2 quarts	2 liters	
cab	0.06 ephah	1 quart	1 liter	
xestes		0.5 quart	0.5 liter	Mk 7:4
log	0.02 bath	0.33 quart	0.3 liter	