

1. Approximately 70 years have passed since the events of chapter 1.
2. The interpretation of the image in chapter 2 concerning Nebuchadnezzar was going to be fulfilled in chapter 5. (Daniel 2:39)
3. Nebuchadnezzar died in 562 B.C. after ruling for 43 years. Approximately 23 years elapsed between chapter 4 and chapter 5.
4. During this period several monarchs had succeeded Nebuchadnezzar.
5. The identity of Belshazzar had been a challenge up until the discovery of the cuneiform text 135.
6. Succession from Nebuchadnezzar to Belshazzar:
  - A. Evil-Merodach, son - reigned for 2 years
  - B. Neriglissar, son-in-law - reigned for 4 years
  - C. Labashi-Marduk, son of Neriglissar - reigned for 2 months
  - D. Nabonidus - reigned for 17 years - did much to restore the glory that had belonged to Babylon.
  - E. Belshazzar, identified as the son of Nabonidus - whose mother was either a wife or a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar.
7. During the 23 plus years the further revelations given to Daniel in chapters 7 and 8 occurred. Chapter 7 was revealed to Daniel in the "first year of Belshazzar" (7:1) and the vision in chapter 8 occurred in the "third year of Belshazzar" (8:1).
8. The information Daniel received from these two visions was therefore known by Daniel before the events of chapter 5 - approximately 12 years prior to chapter 5.
9. So - we pick up with the event that occurred at the feast called by Belshazzar in chapter 5.
10. In verse 8 - a question arises as to why these counselors, or for that matter the king and his nobles, could not read the writing.
11. Most likely the words were understood, but they "simply did not convey any intelligible meaning because of the way they were written.
12. Word of the dilemma finally reached the queen, and she hurried to the banquet hall. (5:10-16)
13. Most likely "the queen" was the wife of Nabonidus, and a daughter, not a widow, of Nebuchadnezzar.
14. Belshazzar did not seem to be personally acquainted with Daniel. One reason is that it had been twenty-three years since Nebuchadnezzar's death, and Daniel did not have the exalted position in the new regime that he had enjoyed earlier.
15. Daniel likely refused Belshazzar's gifts not out of pride or rudeness but in order to alleviate any misconception that God's services could be bought and to avoid obligation to the king. (5:17-24)

## ***The Book of Daniel (Chapter 5:1-31)***

**4-10-19**

16. The message in verses 25-28 was written in Aramaic and that language was well-known in Babylon.
17. The inscription was an announcement of the divine evaluation of Belshazzar's reign and a pronouncement of imminent judgment.
18. The word "*Mene*" signifies that Belshazzar's evil rule (and his life) would soon be over.
19. Another important fact should be noted here. Verse 28 specifically states that Belshazzar's kingdom would be given to the "Medes and Persians."
20. This is an additional indication that Daniel was well aware that there was no separate Median world empire succeeded by a Persian.
21. Chapter 5 verses 30-31 contains one of the most significant events in world history, the fall of the Babylonian Empire and the beginning of the Medo-Persian Empire.
22. That night the city fell and with it the last remnants of Babylonia dominance. Belshazzar was executed only a few hours later.
23. Several truths may be gained from chapter 5.
24. First, as in all of the book, God's sovereignty is emphasized. Belshazzar foolishly challenged Yahweh's power, and he was no match for the living God.
25. Next - human beings may go so far in sin (in this case blasphemy) that they bring God's temporal judgment upon themselves.
26. Also - we see a lesson concerning God's faithfulness and the trustworthiness of the Word of God.
27. This chapter records the fulfillment of prophecies predicting the downfall of Babylon. God had kept His word. "Babylon has fallen, has fallen!" (Isaiah 21:9)