

The first mention of prayer in the book of Daniel is found in Chapter 2:16-18. It comes on the heels of a serious threat of death to Daniel and his friends. Troubled by his dreams the night before and which he had forgotten, Nebuchadnezzar was anxious to understand one of those dreams. Therefore, he ordered his wise men to recall the dream and interpret it. The wise men were not able to do either. Hence, they asked Nebuchadnezzar to tell the dream and then they would declare the interpretation. In response, the king demanded that they recall the dream and give its interpretation. If they are able to declare and interpret the dream, he promised to shower them with gifts (Dan. 2:4-6). If they fail, they would be executed. Again the wise men asked the king to tell the dream, and they would give an interpretation. Nevertheless, Nebuchadnezzar considered their request a way of buying time.

Alas, the wise men confessed that the king's request was too difficult. Eventually, Nebuchadnezzar became "indignant and very furious, and gave orders to destroy all the wise men of Babylon." (Dan. 2:12). After the decree went out for the wise men to be maimed, they resolved to kill Daniel and his friends (Dan. 2:13). Consequently, the king's commander informed Daniel of the matter.

When Daniel learned of the impending ruin of the wise men, he asked the head of the executioners the reason for the king's decree. At that point "Daniel went in and requested of the king that he would give him time, in order that he might declare the interpretation to the king" (Dan. 2:16). Without delay, Daniel informed his friends about the impending danger so that they can pray to the God of heaven to seek understanding of the king's dream, which Daniel calls a "mystery" (Dan. 2:18). Subsequently, Daniel received an interpretation of the mystery from his God. In response, Daniel turned to God in praise, acknowledging Him as the source of wisdom and power (Dan. 2:19-23).

Let us, like Daniel, seek God in prayer. And when He answers our prayers, let us respond to Him with praise and thanksgiving.