

January 22, 2013

# EXTREME FAITH

**Daniel and the  
Loins**

Character  
challenged  
God provides!



## DANIEL AND THE LIONS DEN

### Character leads the way

Darius reorganized his kingdom. He appointed one hundred twenty governors to administer all the parts of his realm. Over them were three vice-regents, one of whom was Daniel. The governors reported to the vice-regents, who made sure that everything was in order for the king. But Daniel, brimming with spirit and intelligence, so completely outclassed the other vice-regents and governors that the king decided to put him in charge of the whole kingdom. The vice-regents and governors got together to find some old scandal or skeleton in Daniel's life that they could use against him, but they couldn't dig up anything. He was totally exemplary and trustworthy. They could find no evidence of negligence or misconduct. So they finally gave up and said, "We're never going to find anything against this Daniel unless we can cook up something religious." The vice-regents and governors conspired together and then went to the king and said, "King Darius,

live forever! We've convened your vice-regents, governors, and all your leading officials, and have agreed that the king should issue the following decree: For the next thirty days no one is to pray to any god or mortal except you, O king. Anyone who disobeys will be thrown into the lions' den." Issue this decree, O king, and make it unconditional, as if written in stone like all the laws of the Medes and the Persians." King Darius signed the decree. When Daniel learned that the decree had been signed and posted, he continued to pray just as he had always done. His house had windows in the upstairs that opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he knelt there in prayer, thanking and praising his God. The conspirators came and found him praying, asking God for help. They went straight to the king and reminded him of the royal decree that he had signed."

To read the rest of the story go to page 3



**Daniel in the lion's den:  
Because of his great character,  
and desire to only worship God.  
Daniel was sent to the lion's  
den. Character Under Fire!  
God protects and provides for  
those who will sacrifice all for  
Him!**

# STEP BY STEP



## Follow these steps

**Depend on God...**Living for God means we depend on Him for everything.  
James 1:5

**Grow in God...**Everyday we grow, but what are we growing in depends on us and where we get our information.1 Timothy 6:12

**Give God the Glory!...**Every day we are giving something the glory, we are praising something, or giving something our attention.Psalm 33:21

## YOUR LIFE

Take a moment to think about the concept of extreme sacrifice. Use these questions to help you apply what you've just heard to your life.

☛ How did Daniel live as a sacrifice?

☛ Why do you think Daniel prayed to God even though he was ordered by the King to not pray to God?

☛ How do you depend on God in your daily life?

☛ What do you depend on more than God? Why do you depend on it?

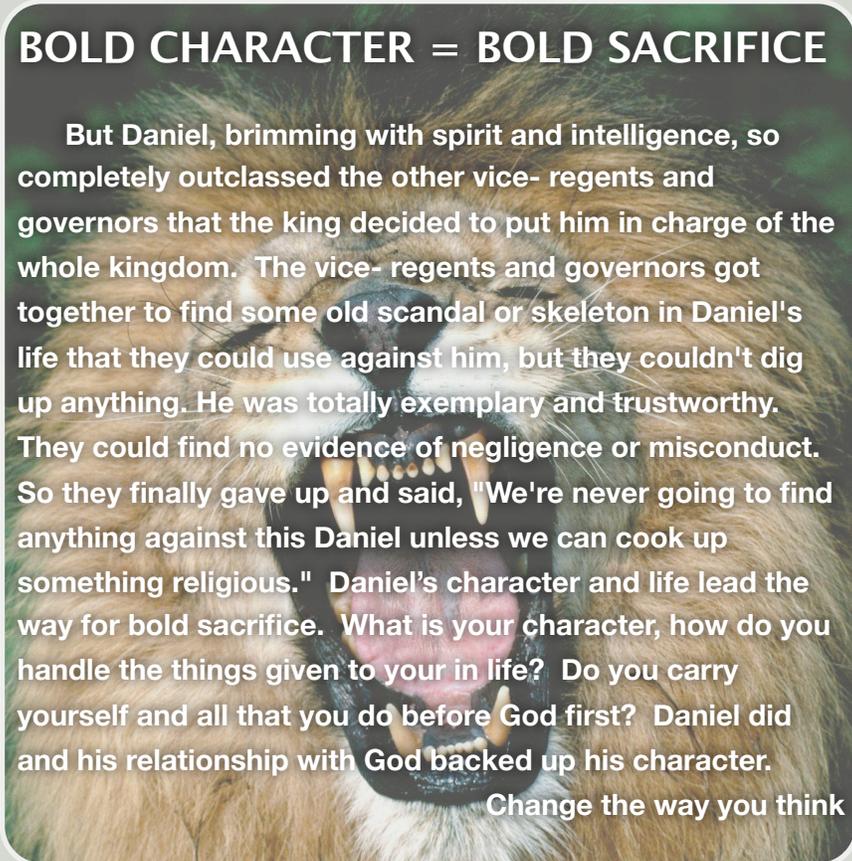
☛ What are you doing to grow in God?

☛ How do you give God the glory for the things in your life?

☛ What is your character, how do you handle the things given to you in life?

☛ Do you carry yourself and all that you do before God first?

## BOLD CHARACTER = BOLD SACRIFICE



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Change the way you think

### Living Sacrifice!

Being a middle school student does not set you up to live a life where God is first, very few people are going to give you a pat on the back for standing up for God. Hardly a day goes by that you don't have to choose between living the way the world tells you to live and living with loyalty to God. The story of Daniel and the Lion's Den keeps us alert to what is at stake day by day, hour by hour, we must Depend on God, Grow in God, and Give God the Glory.

### Daniel and the Lions Den Daniel chapter 6 cont.

The conspirators came and found him praying, asking God for help. They went straight to the king and reminded him of the royal decree that he had signed. "Did you not," they said, "sign a decree forbidding anyone to pray to any god or man except you for the next thirty days? And anyone caught doing it would be thrown into the lions' den?" "Absolutely," said the king. "Written in stone, like all the laws of the Medes and Persians." Then they said, "Daniel, one of the Jewish exiles, ignores you, O king, and defies your decree. Three times a day he prays." At this, the king was very upset and tried his best to get Daniel out of the fix he'd put him in. He worked at it the whole day long. But then the conspirators were back: "Remember, O king, it's the law of the Medes and Persians that the king's decree can never be changed." The king caved in and ordered Daniel brought and thrown into the lions' den. But he said to Daniel, "Your God, to whom you are so loyal, is going to get you out of this." A stone slab was placed over the opening of the den. The king sealed the cover with his signet ring and the signet rings of all his nobles, fixing Daniel's fate. The king then went back to his palace. He refused supper. He couldn't sleep. He spent the night fasting. At daybreak the king got up and hurried to the lions' den. As he approached the den, he called out anxiously, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve so loyally, saved you from the lions?" "O king, live forever!" said Daniel. "My God sent his angel, who closed the mouths of the lions so that they would not hurt me. I've been found innocent before God and also before you, O king. I've done nothing to harm you." When the king heard these

### What if...

Daniel chose to not pray, or to hide that he was still praying to God? Pray to the King or be eating by lions...

If Daniel had not continued to pray to God then God would not have been given all the glory that He was given by King Darius. Look at what this King said about God!

At the end of the story.

words, he was happy. He ordered Daniel taken up out of the den. When he was hauled up, there wasn't a scratch on him. He had trusted his God. Then the king commanded that the conspirators who had informed on Daniel be thrown into the lions' den, along with their wives and children. Before they hit the floor, the lions had them in their jaws, tearing them to pieces. King Darius published this proclamation to every race, color, and creed on earth: Peace to you! Abundant peace! I decree that Daniel's God shall be worshiped and feared in all parts of my kingdom. He is the living God, world without end. His kingdom never falls. His rule continues eternally. He is a savior and rescuer. He performs astonishing miracles in heaven and on earth. He saved Daniel from the power of the lions. From then on, Daniel was treated well during the reign of Darius, and also in the following reign of Cyrus the Persian.

# MODERN EXTREMES

## Linh. Dao Vietnam 1991 "What Harm Can a Little Girl Do?"

Four police officers suddenly burst into ten-year-old Linh Dao's home. They forced her father, an underground pastor in North Vietnam, to remain seated while the authorities ransacked the home searching for Bibles. "I remember when the police came," Linh Dao recalls. "They searched around the house all of that morning and asked many different questions. It was scary to talk to the policemen, but I knew what they were looking for, so I concentrated and tried my best not to be scared or nervous." As the police questioned her parents, Linh courageously hid some of the Bibles in her school knapsack. When the police asked her about the contents of the knapsack, Linh simply replied, "It is books for children," Linh Dao's father was arrested that day and sentenced to seven years of re-education through hard labor. "When the policemen decided to take my dad away, all of my family knelt down and prayed. I prayed first, then my sister, then my mom, and last of all, my dad. I prayed that my dad would have peace and remain healthy and that my family would survive these hard times. We were all crying, but I told myself I have to face what's happening now." Word quickly spread about the arrest, and neighbor children began to ask Linh what criminal acts her father had done. She told her friends, "My father is not a criminal. He is a Christian, and I am proud of him for not wavering in his faith!" As each day passed, Linh Dao made a mark on her wooden bookcase as she prayed for her father. She remembers, "I cried

almost every single night because I worried how my father was doing in prison and how the policemen were treating him. "Before my dad was in prison, I was just a child. I didn't need to worry about anything. It was a lot different after my dad left. My mind got older very quickly. I told my sister that we had to help Mom do the work around the house, so she could continue to do my dad's work in the church. "I prayed every day and every night. My faith grew very fast. I knew one thing that I had to concentrate on and that was spending time learning from the Bible so when I grew up, I could be like my dad, sharing and preaching. When I think about this, I feel my heart burning inside me, pushing me, telling me this is the right thing to do." Finally, after more than a year, Linh, her mother, and sister were able to visit their father in prison. When they reached the compound, they were separated by a chain fence, Linh quickly discovered that she could squeeze into the prison yard through a chained gate. She ran to her father and hugged him tightly. The guards watched the little girl but, surprisingly, left her alone. What harm can a little girl do? they must have thought. Little did they know! **Armed with innocence and childlike faith, children are a secret weapon against the kingdom of Satan.** During that first visit to her father's prison, Linh was able to smuggle him a pen, which he used to write scriptures and sermons on cigarette paper. These "cigarette sermons" traveled from cell to cell and were instrumental in bringing many

prisoners to Christ. Linh Dao's prayers were answered. Her father was released early, before he had served all seven years of his sentence. "It was a big surprise when I came home from school one day and saw my dad had been released from prison. I ran and then gave him a big hug. We were so happy. I was proud of my family and I wanted to yell and let the whole world know that I wasn't scared of anything because God always protects each step I go in my life." Linh Dao is now a teenager. She desires to follow in the footsteps of her father and be a preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. She knows firsthand the dangers of sharing her faith in Communist Vietnam and remains determined to obey Christ rather than men. In spite of a "grim future," she spends her time in intense Bible study.

Don't underestimate what you, as one person, can do. God will work through anyone who is submitted to Him — of any age — to accomplish His will on the earth. Just look at what Moses discovered: If one man or woman is willing to obey God, it can change the destiny of millions.

**Armed with innocence and childlike faith, children are a secret weapon against the kingdom of Satan.**



Living life with  
Extreme faith  
and  
Extreme vision

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