



## **A Cup of Blessings**

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### **A Test of Faith**

*By Minister Dr. Katrina White Brown*

Today's Cup of Blessings is being poured from the New Testament book of 1<sup>st</sup> Peter, especially for those whose faith is being tested by the trials and challenges of life, and who are trying to endure while suffering. Peter wrote this comforting letter to the Christians in Asia Minor who were suffering for the sake of Christ.

As believers, our faith is tested daily. Faith, as described in Hebrews 11:1, is confidence in what we hope for; the assurance about what we do not see. Simply stated, faith is a matter of trusting God and believing His Word. However, there is nothing simple about having faith, and it gets tested every day.

Think about the men and women in Bible days who, by faith, persevered against seemingly hopeless situations to fulfill God's Will. Moses is a great example. He was assigned to lead generations of Hebrews out of Egyptian captivity. Confronted by an obstinate and arrogant Pharaoh who believed he could disobey God without consequences, Moses was overwhelmed by the magnitude of God's assignment for his life.

After Moses led the Hebrews out of captivity, attacks on his faith escalated. He was confronted by ungrateful, disobedient, arrogant, and contentious Hebrews who praised God one minute and complained about God in the next. Even though God had delivered the Hebrews, they rejected, lacked trust, and refused to honor God. This continually challenged Moses' faith.

Abraham's test came when he was confronted with having to sacrifice his son Isaac. This was the son that he had prayed for, but God told Abraham to use him as a burnt offering. Abraham was deeply challenged by this extreme test of his faith and obedience.

Queen Esther's encountered her test of faith in a way that could have ended her life. She risked everything for her faith, and when she was face-to-face with her life-threatening challenge, her response was "if I perish, let me perish..."

Daniel's test of faith came while he was staring into the powerful jaws of a lion. When challenged to be disobedient, and to stop praying to the one true God, his faith in the Lord protected him from harm.

Peter's faith was challenged by persecution. He was beaten, jailed, and threats on his life were frequent, but he saw genuine faith resulting from trials and tribulations. He wrote that faith "is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold – though your faith is far more precious than gold." (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:7).

Everyone who serves the Lord will be challenged by countless situations that will test faith beyond what we believe we can, or even should, endure. The Bible acknowledges that troubles, hardships, persecution, and dangers will come into our lives; also, that “...we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered”. But “in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us” (Romans 8:35-37). Your test of faith may be daunting, but it should never be defeating. We can pass every test of faith knowing that Jesus is the answer, and we can face suffering as victoriously as Christ did, when we rely on Him.

In Peter’s letters to the Christians of Asia Minor, in the area known today as Turkey, he both encouraged and challenged them to be faithful to Christ by pointing out the hope of eternal glory awaiting those who persevere. Christians will suffer for what we believe, but our cups overflow with the assurance that “we are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, called out of darkness into His wonderful light” (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:9). Our trials make us partners with Christ in His suffering, “so that we will have the joy of seeing His glory when it is revealed to all the world” (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:13).

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