

GAINING APPROVAL

In our last study, we introduced a new series of lessons from (Heb.11:1) entitled, **The Faith Cycle**.

This lesson title, Gaining Approval, comes from (Heb.11:2) and (Heb.11:39). We will study five aspects of Gaining Approval (NASB) or Obtained a Good Report (KJB). These and others left the literal definition of matureo (witness testimony) for application meaning.

1. We will begin by examining three Scriptures of matureo of the context: All taken from the NASB.

- (Heb.11:2)
”**For by faith the men of old** (Old Covenant, Super Grace believers) **gained approval.** (matureo/ a.p.ind.3pl).”
- (Heb.11:39)
”**All of those, having gained approval** (matureo/ a.p.ptc.nplm) **through their faith (cycle), did not receive what was promised.**”
- (Heb.12:1)
”**Therefore, since we** (New Covenant believers) **have so great a cloud of witnesses** (Old Covenant believers) [martus/ gplm] (Old Covenant, Super Grace believers) (martyred believers) **surrounding us.**”

The Greek word Martureo (**Super Grace believers who bear witness for Christ**) is used in some form in this series of three passages to show the importance of the Faith Cycle in each dispensation of biblical history, both the Old Covenant and the New Covenant (Rom.14:8).

2. The Greek word for “men of old” is hoi (definite article) presbuteros .

Presbuteros is normally translated **elder**. In (Heb.11), Presbuteros refers to both men and women believers (Sarah/ 11; Rahab/ 31; women/ 35).

They were spiritually mature believers living the faith cycle as a normal lifestyle and as a result were **witnesses** of the light of Christ in the world (Matt.5:14)

(Eph.5:8) “For you were formerly darkness, **but now** you are Light in the Lord; **walk as children of Light.**”

(Gal.2:20) “**I have** been crucified with (sunistemi/ perf.p.ind.1ps) (John 19:30; Rom.6:6) Christ; and it is no **longer I who live**, but Christ **lives in me**; and the **life** which **I now live** in the flesh I **live** by faith (cycle) in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.” (note the use of the word “live”, used five times) (Rom.14:7-9; Phil.1:21)

3. One thing that always interested me was the people the writer of Hebrews picked to show cases of believers Living by the Faith Cycle in (Heb.11:4-32).

I have listed them by four groupings.

- Antediluvian period (Heb.11:4-7) Abel, Enoch, Noah).
- Patriarch period (Heb.11:8-22) Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph).
- Jewish Exodus- Conquest period (Heb.11:23-31) Moses (3x), Israelites (2x), Rahab).
- Jewish Judges, Kings, Prophets period (Heb.11:32-38) Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, the prophets, and women.

Another thing of interest, the writer would break and give a general doctrinal principle of living the Faith Cycle.

- Antediluvian period (Heb.11:6) between Enoch and Noah
- Patriarch period (Heb.11:13-16) between Abraham and Sarah and Isaac
- Jewish period (Heb.11:38) at the end of list and before the final principle of faith cycle

4. Then the writer of Hebrews closed with a final doctrinal principle of the faith cycle to spiritually mature believers of the New Covenant in (Heb.11:39-40).

(Heb.11:39-40) “**And all of these (the Old Covenant), having gained approval (martureo) though their faith, did not receive what was promised, because God had promised something better for us (New Covenant), so that apart from us they would not be made perfect (complete).”**

- What was promised that they “**did not receive**” while living by means of the Faith Cycle?
- What was promised that would “**perfect**” in their living by faith?
- What was promised that was **beyond** “all of these, having **gained approval through their faith?**”

5. The answer to these questions is the historical coming of the messianic seed (Matt.1:1-17; Luke3:23-38) (Jesus Christ).

- **The seed** of the woman of (Gen.3:15) (Adamic covenant)
- **The seed** of Abraham and Sarah of (Gen.17:15-16, 21) (Abrahamic covenant)
- **The Seed of David** – (2 Sam.7:11-16; Luke 1:32-33) (Davidic covenant)
- **The seed of virgin** Mary (Luke 1:34-35; Matt.1:21) (New covenant) (Heb.9:15)

(Gal.3:16) “Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as referring to many, but **rather to one**, ‘And to **our seed**,’ that is **Christ**.” (New Covenant)

(Gal.4:4) “But when the **fullness of the time came**, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law.”