

## Leadership Lessons from the Life of Moses

### **Lesson #21, There Will Be *Powerful Opposition*, But God Always Wins in the End**

#### **Text: Ex.7:4-13**

This lesson brings to an end **Volume I** of the series, which primarily covered Moses' *Preparation* for leadership. **Volume II** is intended to include the *10 Plagues* and *Exodus* from Egypt; and **Volume III** would then deal with the *Wilderness Wanderings* portion of Moses' life and leadership. But before wrapping up this section, one final event remains...

In Matt.18:12-14, Jesus intimates that part of spiritual leadership involves *searching for, finding, and returning "lost sheep."* Throughout this series, we've emphasized both the need and responsibility of spiritual leaders to bring others to, **back to**, and to greater faith in God. We may naively believe such to be a relatively simple and easy "search and rescue mission." It is often anything but that. Frequently: 1) the *lost sheep* is enjoying being lost, unaware of or ignoring the dangers of separation from the *flock/shepherd(s)*; 2) the *goats* with which it is in company may fight to keep it; and, 3) the *wolf* (Satan) certainly does not want to lose that which he has gained, and will exert all his cunning skill and destructive powers to prevent its return to the *fold*. OK, so what does this have to do with Ex.7:4-13? Quite a bit, actually.

- **Moses/Aaron did exactly what God commanded, vv.8-10.** They didn't: 1) Use *their ages* as an excuse, v.7; 2) Say, "That's silly" or "It won't work" either, v.10; or, 3) Excuse/Recuse themselves because they *weren't good with snakes* (or *people!*), or had a *phobia*, cf. 4:1-5 (note that Aaron was not present at the time, 4:27-28, yet he was the one who acted *in faith* here in 7:10!). They just did *what* God said, *how* God said, *when* God said, period. That's what good spiritual leaders do. They put aside their own *doubts, fears, or lack of understanding* and do "*just as the Lord has commanded*" in full faith and trust, v.10!
- **Satan and his emissaries will "fight" you, v.11.** Though not an exact representation of Moses' interaction with Pharaoh, we can certainly see the *Wolf's paws* involved, v.11. Think about the following: 1) There is no god but Jehovah, Isa.43:10; 44:6; 45:5; 1Cor.8:4; 2) What the Egyptian *sorcerers* (Heb. *kashaph* {*kaw-shaf*}, to *practice witchcraft, sorcery*) did was likely no simple magic "trick," cf. vv.12,22; so, 3) Satan was *helping them* to prevent Pharaoh from believing God's messenger and acting accordingly. Though the *Wolf* may be *restricted/bound* now (cf. Rev.20:2), but is certainly still able to put up a strong fight, Eph.6:11-12! Thus we see, again, the *need* for spiritual leaders! Good leaders aren't *unaware of Satan's nature and means* (cf. 2Cor.2:11), nor do they *underestimate him*, or *back away* from his efforts to *distract, disarm, or defeat* them, cf. Eph.4:14; 6:11.
- **The "battle" may not go well at first, v.12a.** Can you imagine what Moses and Aaron must have thought and felt when the *magicians* of Egypt duplicated the "*sign*" given them by God? In that moment, their hearts must have surely, albeit momentarily, sank! The God of the Universe has given them this marvelous miraculous sign to convince Pharaoh of His presence and power (see again 4:3-5), but the *sorcerers* have matched it! But good leaders know that one "battle" does not constitute the whole "war," nor do the initial "salvos" even make up the "battle." So, having done exactly *what* God said, they waited and watched. Oftentimes, that is exactly what spiritual leaders must do... obey, then wait and watch. Be patient. Trust. Let the power of God work, cf. Isa.55:11.
- **But the Lord will prevail, v.12b.** How relieved Moses and Aaron must have been when *their serpent* swallowed up those of the Egyptians! Isn't it amazing how God is able to turn apparent defeat into glorious victory? Good leaders know that the "war" is not over until "the end" (cf. 1Cor.15:24ff), and keep fighting for the minds, hearts, and souls of others as long as time and opportunity allow, 2Cor.10:3-5. They do so knowing: 1) that even *apparent defeat* can be turned into *glorious victory* by God, cf. Rom.9:22-24; and, 2) that the Lord (and those *with* Him) will ultimately prevail, Phil.2:3-16.

Spiritual leaders *know* and *show* others that: 1) We must always do *what* God says, *how* and *when* He says even if we don't know exactly *why*, and despite any *doubts* and *fears* we may have; 2) We're in a "war" for our and the souls of others, and that Satan is formidable adversary that will fight us for what he thinks belongs to him; 3) The "battle" may not go well at first- and that *defeat* may seem then apparent, but that the Lord (and those with Him) will win the "war"!

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### **Lesson #21, There Will Be *Powerful Opposition*, But God Always Wins in the End**

#### Discussion Questions

1. From Matt. 18:12-14, what circumstances frequently make *finding* and *returning lost sheep* more difficult? (please provide at least 3)
  
2. Moses and Aaron *did exactly what God commanded* in vv.8-10. What did they *not do* that good leaders *don't do* either?
  
3. Was Aaron present (and see) when God gave Moses the *signs* with which he was to convince Pharaoh back in 4:1-9? Why is this important?
  
4. How do you think Pharaoh's *magicians* were able to duplicate the *sign* of Aaron's *staff becoming a serpent*? Please explain your answer.
  
5. What specific lessons should spiritual leaders learn, practice, and teach about Satan from the *staves/serpents*?
  
6. Though it admittedly calls for some speculation:
  - a. How do you think Moses and Aaron felt when the Egyptian magicians duplicated the *sign* of the *staff/serpent*?
  
  - b. Explain how this might be something like what spiritual leaders feel when their efforts to *bring in* or *bring back* "lost" *sheep to the fold* are met with determined opposition.
  
7. What lessons should spiritual leaders learn, practice, and teach regarding "battles" and "war" from the *staves/serpents*?
  
8. Regardless of how an individual "battle" may turn out, what do spiritual leaders know, and thus what do they keep doing?