

THE MAN MOSES: LEARNING HOW TO BE USED BY GOD
Part III: After Ministry Failure, Being Mightily Used By God
E. Step Five - The Encouragement of "Step-By-Step" Ministry Efforts
(Exodus 7:8-11:10)

I. Introduction

- A. In our study of Moses' rebound from ministry failure, we have demonstrated how Moses was forced into a moment-by-moment, "baby-step" way of following close on God's heels just to minister, cf. Ex. 2:11-7:7.
- B. We might think that this is awfully demeaning a position to take to become useful to God. After all, adults are not used to following in terms of "baby steps"!
- C. In spiritual matters, there is a reason for such a humble posture in serving God as Ex. 7:8-11:10 displays!

II. The Encouragement of "Step-By-Step" Ministry Efforts, Exodus 7:8-11:10.

- A. With Moses following God for every detail, God made Moses inflict ten plagues on Egypt!
- B. These plagues were carefully, artfully designed by God to cover all areas of Egyptian false beliefs with the result of attacking Egyptian theology thoroughly as follows:
 - 1. The first plague of turning the Nile River to blood critiques the Egyptian belief that the god Osiris' bloodstream is the Nile River, B.K.C., O.T., p. 121. But Osiris was to cause miraculous rebirth of vegetation along the Nile's banks with its annual floods, not stinking dead fish, Ex. 7:14-25! God thus showed His power over the false Osiris and His critique of belief in him.
 - 2. The second plague of frogs all over Egypt attacks several Egyptian beliefs. Heqet was responsible in Egyptian belief for the breath of life in the bodies created by her husband, Khnum (Ibid., 121-122). But God sent frogs to infiltrate Egyptian bedrooms so that procreation was held to a minimum! (Ex. 8:1-15) This was a biting critique on false Egyptian theology!
 - 3. The third plague of lice (Ex. 8:16-19) made the Egyptian priests impure opposite their beliefs, Ibid.
 - 4. The fourth plague of flies (Ex. 8:20-32) critiqued either the sun god, Re or Uatchit, Ibid.
 - 5. The fifth plague of the death of livestock (9:1-7) attacks the bull god Apis or Re, and the cow god, Hathor, the goddess of love, beauty and joy, Ibid., p. 123! The Egyptian horses, a recently imported animal and highly prized, was also afflicted by this problem, cf. Ryrie St. Bible, KJV, ftn. to Ex. 9:3.
 - 6. The sixth plague of boils on man and beast (Ex. 9:8-12) attacked belief in Sekhmet, a lion-headed goddess who allegedly had power over diseases; Sunu, the pestilence god and Isis, the goddess of healing could not help as well in relieving man or animal in Egypt from disease, Ibid.
 - 7. The seventh plague of hail (Ex. 9:13-35) attacked several deities: Nut, the sky goddess was not able to stop the storm and Osiris, the god of crop fertility could not maintain Egypt's crops in the hailstorm. Set, the storm god, could not hold back this storm, Ibid. Hailstorms are rare in Egypt, something that further exaggerated the emphasis on this storm being from God, Ibid., Ryrie, ftn. to Exodus 9:23.
 - 8. The eighth plague of locusts (Ex. 10:1-20) again showed the impotence of Hut, the sky goddess and Osiris, the god of crops and fertility to withstand the judgment of Israel's God, Ibid., p. 124. Locusts can destroy a nation's economy in a matter of hours, and this judgment was unprecedented, 10:6.
 - 9. The ninth plague of darkness (10:21-29) was aimed at the chief Egyptian deity, Re, the sun god. Pharaoh was the representation of Re, showing the heightened conflict between God and false theology, Ibid., p. 125. Horus, associated with the sun, would also have been humiliated here.
 - 10. The tenth plague of the death of the firstborn (11:1-12:36) attacks the goddess Isis, the wife and sister of Osiris who supposedly protected children. Min, the god of reproduction, Heqet, the goddess who attended women at childbirth and Pharaoh's firstborn, a god, were all thus critiqued, Ibid., 120, 126.
- C. By following God in "baby-steps" this way, God caused the Egyptians to respect Moses highly, Ex. 11:3! In fact, God so honored him that when Israel asked the Egyptians for their **money** in leaving the land, these Egyptians gave this nation of slaves jewels of silver and gold along with what they had not asked for, their expensive clothes, Ex. 11:1-2; 12:35! Thus, they spoiled the Egyptians, Ex. 12:36b!

Lesson: When Moses had to follow God step-by-step, God was free to deliver incredibly devastating, effective, and ingenious plagues to glorify Himself and honor Moses as Moses was not in His way to make a mess as he did in Exodus 2:11ff! Thus, we are highly encouraged to follow God step-by-step!