

# “None Could Deliver Them but the Lord”

Lesson  
19  
Summary

Mosiab 18–24

**Scripture Summary:** *Alma preaches in private—He sets forth the covenant of baptism and baptizes at the waters of Mormon—He organizes the Church of Christ and ordains priests—They support themselves and teach the people—Alma and his people flee from King Noab into the wilderness. [About 148—145 B.C.]*

*Gideon seeks to slay King Noab—The Lamanites invade the land—King Noab suffers death by fire—Limbi rules as a tributary monarch. [Between 145 and 122 B.C.]*

*Lamanite daughters are abducted by the priests of Noab—The Lamanites wage war upon Limbi and his people—They are repulsed and pacified. [Between 145 and 122 B.C.]*

*Limbi's people are smitten and defeated by the Lamanites—They meet Ammon and are converted—They tell Ammon of the twenty-four Jaredite plates. [Between 145 and 121 B.C.]*

*Plans are made for the people to escape from Lamanite bondage—The Lamanites are made drunk—The people escape, return to Zarahemla, and become subject to King Mosiab. [About 121 B.C.]*

*Alma refuses to be king—He serves as high priest—The Lord chastens his people, and the Lamanites conquer the land of Helam—Amulon, leader of King Noab's wicked priests, rules subject to the Lamanite monarch. [Between 145 and 121 B.C.]*

*Amulon persecutes Alma and his people—They are to be put to death if they pray—The Lord makes their burdens seem light—He delivers them from bondage, and they return to Zarahemla. [Between 145 and 120 B.C.]*

**Supplemental Holy Land and Jewish insights:** **Each Covenant – a Step Closer to God:** Alma, transformed as a result of the inquisition of Abinadi, works diligently to bring people to the Lord. Following their new found faith and repentance he baptizes converts in “living waters.” Immersion, or baptism, as Latter-day Saints call it, is a covenant that brings God’s children a step closer to him. “As an everlasting covenant, baptism began on this earth with Adam (Moses 6:64-67) . . . It was not a new rite introduced by John the Baptist and adopted by Christ and his followers. The Jews were baptizing their proselytes long before John . . . the part of the Book of Mormon of the pre-Christian Era contains some of the best information we have relative to this eternal law.” (*Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, Pg.71*)

**Crossing Waters of Jordan – Stepping into Promised Land:** “. . . the Jordan river has come to have a deep significance for Jews, symbolizing the gateway to the homeland after years of wandering in exile in the desert . . . the river is also important to Christians because John the Baptist performed baptisms on its banks and Jesus was baptized there.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*) Some religious Jews who experience repeated immersions (monthly for women and regularly for men), step into their immersion font from the East side, immerse themselves and then exit to the West side. This could be construed as a reminder of entering into the gateway of cleanness as the Children of Israel entered into their Promised Land.

**Symbolism of Immersion Facilities:** For the religious Jews, immersions are favored below ground level in flowing water that emanates from bedrock - the “Rock of Salvation.” Consider that the lowest spot on the face of the earth where water flows originating in bedrock is where the Children of Israel crossed into their erstwhile homeland. Judaism and Christianity agree that it is also the likely spot where Jesus came to John the Levite in Judea and was immersed. In addition to several legal requirements of the font (Mikveh in Hebrew), is the underlying principle of “purification.”

**Intent of Purification:** “. . . ritual impurities are not to be regarded as infectious diseases or the laws of purification as hygienic measures . . . (although) . . . immersion in a *mikveh* must be preceded by careful cleansing of the body. Maimonides wrote: ‘Uncleanliness is not mud or filth which water can remove . . . but is dependent on the intention of the heart.’ The sages have therefore said: ‘If one immerses himself, but without special intention, it is as though he had not immersed himself at all.’” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*) In Alma’s case, the people had prepared themselves by true faith and repentance and he baptized them in pure water. (*Mosiab 18:5*)

**“Bondage” of Freedom:** Their immersions became a bond to sustain each other and bear each other’s burdens as they prepared themselves to return to their God. It is a “bondage of freedom” from the chains of the adversary. Most people consider the term bondage as slavery. Indeed we are “slaves” to our God. He has bought and paid

for us! “. . . do as he hath commanded you . . . he doth immediately bless you; and therefore he hath paid you. And ye are still indebted unto him, and are, and will be, forever and ever . . .” (*Mosiah 2:23-24*)

**Biblical Laws of Slavery:** “the *halakhab* tended to view the slave more as a hired laborer and it established numerous rules and regulations . . . assure that the human dignity of slaves was properly maintained.” “Strictly speaking, a Jew could not be sold as a slave. He could give himself voluntarily into bondage (for example, to a creditor to whom he could not pay his debts) or a court of law could hand him over as a slave (for example, . . .(to) make restitution for his theft). In either case, the Jew would then be considered an *eved Ivri* and could serve a maximum of six years . . .” “Aliens and non-Jews could be bought and sold as slaves . . . and . . . in theory, serve in perpetuity. However, they were considered to be members of the master's household . . . enjoyed many benefits . . . subject to certain obligations . . . had to be circumcised . . . keep the Sabbath and the festivals. They partook of the Passover sacrifice and even succeeded the master if he had no direct heirs.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Keeping the Sabbath Day Holy – Symbol of Freedom:** God requires the keeping of the Sabbath as a reminder that he freed us from slavery. Violating the Sabbath in Biblical times was a capital offense, punishable by death. “Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt and the Lord your God freed you from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; there for the Lord your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.” “. . . another dimension is added to the Sabbath --- that it is a day of rest, not only for you but for your slaves and that God, so to speak, has the right to demand it because He freed you from slavery.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Importance of the “Do’s” of Sabbath:** “The rabbis . . . thought that the Sabbath is the most important of all the laws of the Torah and . . . equal to all the rest . . . ‘if Israel keeps one Sabbath as it should be kept, the Messiah will come.’” “. . . besides the things you must not do, there are positive acts . . . to sanctify the Sabbath. The Sabbath law . . . starts with the admonition ‘Observe the Sabbath day . . .’ ‘Remember the Sabbath day . . .’ which means the positive acts of sanctification. These include ushering in Shabbat with *Kiddush*, a declaration of the Sabbath's holiness . . . made over a festive goblet of wine and the eating of three Sabbath meals.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*) It is a custom that every meal begins with a piece of bread . . . on Sabbath it is “wine and bread.”

**Always a Positive Note for Sabbath:** “A delightful Talmudic sermon has it that two angels accompany a man on his way back from synagogue, one good and one bad. When they arrive home, if the table is laid nicely and all the Sabbath preparations have been made, the good angel says, ‘May it be so next week’ and the bad angel is forced to say, ‘Amen!’ If, however, the home is not Sabbath-like, the bad angel invokes: ‘May it be so next week,’ and the good angel has to answer ‘Amen!’” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Listening, a Step Closer to God:** As a closing comment to this lesson, I add the experience of Jews and Arabs getting to know each other. The amount of mistrust reduces in direct proportion to the amount of interest we have in each other. In more than twenty-nine years of living in Israel I see more Arabs and Jews getting along with each other than the ones who don't. The most important and successful projects are those that include listening to each other and focusing our resources to help the needy. It is a basic tenant of Judaism and Islam. It is a commandment from heaven. Assisting each other brings us a step closer to God. It transforms us to be in His hands rather than our own.

Daniel Rona, born in Israel and living in Jerusalem has authored Old & New Testament and Book of Mormon Supplement Study Materials to be used in conjunction with the weekly LDS Gospel Doctrine Lesson study. NOTE: Three versions of the supplemental study materials are available *FREE* at [www.HolyLandsRevealed.com](http://www.HolyLandsRevealed.com). (Just click “LDS SUPPLEMENTS”)

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