

Ir-BoM-19
None Could Deliver Them but the Lord
(Mosiah 18-24)
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(This material shows **how the waters of Mormon, past and present, bring deliverance and joy.**)

I. A major theme in the Book of Mormon and in these chapters is *how* the Lord frees men from bondage.

A. The purpose of these experiences was to prepare the Nephites (and us future generations) to understand how the Lord will free men from *spiritual* bondage.

B. Thus the concept is established that "none can deliver except the Lord."

II. Another theme centers on **the Joy that comes through Christ's deliverance.**

A. Alma brings to the waters of Mormon those who are "desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people."

1. They must be willing to bear others burdens, to mourn with and comfort others (18:9).

2. They must be willing to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things (18:9).

B. Those who enter into His covenant will be redeemed of God, be numbered with those of the first resurrection, and receive Eternal Life (Mosiah 18:9). They will also receive His Spirit in great abundance (Mosiah 18:10).

C. When Alma's followers heard these promises they "clapped their hands for joy and exclaimed, 'This is the desire of our hearts' " (Mosiah 18:11).

1. The people entered into the waters of Mormon in baptism and received great joy.

D. I personally love the photographic representation of Christ's baptism in Mark Mabry's *Reflections of Christ*, which is unique in that it portrays great joy in the countenances of both the Savior and in John the Baptist --- the utter joy which should be part of baptism.

E. Alma's people were also blessed to receive the Sabbath Day, which they found to be a Day of Joy in Holiness, and then every day to be a day of giving thanks to God (Mosiah 18:23).

F. Later, Limhi's people also desired to enter into the covenant of baptism (Mosiah 21:32-35).

1. In their case, no one had authority to do it, so they had to patiently wait.

III. **The name "Mormon" is purposely introduced in a very powerful way.**

A. This name was given to waters from a fountain of pure gushing water.

1. These pure waters and the surrounding area were all named "Mormon."

2. Significantly, they became "beautiful in the eyes of those who there came to a knowledge of their Redeemer" (Mosiah 18:30).

B. Note that at this place the true order of the priesthood and the first Church was established after a time of apostasy.

1. Note too that priests were set apart who possessed power and authority to act in the name of God (Mosiah 18:31-33).

C. All these events regarding the waters of Mormon likely foreshadowed what has occurred in our Days: the Book of Mormon has come forth, offering its great refreshing waters to all, and laying the foundation for the restoration of the priesthood, true baptism and true works of God.

D. We see more of the significance of the name "Mormon," and its implications for our days, through its deliberate repeated usage in the following scripture.

1. "And now... all this was done in Mormon, yea, by the waters of Mormon, in the forest that was near the waters of Mormon; yea, the place of Mormon, the waters of Mormon,...; yea, and how blessed are they [who there came to a knowledge of their redeemer], for they shall sing to his praise forever" (Mosiah 18:30).

E. Later the prophet Mormon tells that he received his name from the "Land of Mormon," again showing how precious this name became to those who were brought to Christ at that place (3 Nephi 5:12). He reiterates **that the place of Mormon was important because there the true church, after an apostasy, was restored.**

F. President Gordon B. Hinckley has taught the name "Mormon" means "more good." We can definitely see how those baptized in the waters of Mormon received "more good."

IV. As Alma's people found joy in the waters of Mormon and receiving true priesthood, so Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery rejoiced in those very same blessings.

A. Oliver wrote "what joy filled our hearts ... when we received ... the Holy Priesthood." It was a joy through that priesthood to be baptized and then to baptize. He testified of the great "willingness of the heart [to] being buried in the liquid grave, to answer to a 'good conscience by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.'" And he called those days **"days never to be forgotten..."** (For more powerful details, read all of footnote on pp. 58-59 in Joseph Smith-History).

Similarly, when Joseph Smith revealed the even more astonishing details of baptism for the dead, he could not contain that joy. **"Now what do we hear... A voice of gladness! A voice of mercy from heaven.... Brethren, shall we not go on in so great a cause? ... Let all the mountains shout for joy, and all ye valleys cry aloud;** and all ye seas and dry lands tell the wonders of your Eternal King!" (See D&C 124:19, 22, 23).

Thus now when understanding of true baptism and the authority granted to perform it are restored, [which is the gateway to God's deliverance], there is indeed cause for great joy!

V. Limhi and his people are forced to recognize that deliverance can only come through the Lord, Jesus the Christ (Mosiah 21:1-14).

A. As previously warned, the Lord was slow to hear their cries for deliverance (Mosiah 21:15).

B. After Ammon and his group join Limhi, they work to find the way to escape bondage, but feel it impossible (Mosiah 21:36-22:1-2).

C. Gideon presents a plan, **and with the help of the Lord,** Limhi and his people escape to Zarahemla (Mosiah 22:3-16).

VI. Alma reminds his people that they have been delivered only by the power of God.

A. First, they were delivered out of bondage under King Noah (Mosiah 23:13).

B. But they were also delivered out of bondage to sin (Mosiah 23:13).

C. **The important thing is to remain free and not to return to sin.** "Even so I desire that ye should stand fast in this liberty wherewith ye have been made free" (Mosiah 23:13). They would escape a return to physical bondage if they "trusted no man to be made king over you."

D. They could escape a return to spiritual bondage if they "**trusted no man to be your teacher nor your minister except he truly be a man of God, walking in Christ's ways**" (Mosiah 23:14).

E. These are very important concepts for our time as we select those to lead us. It is imperative that we look for those "of God" who "walk in Christ's way."

F. Their new found physical freedom allowed them to establish the church in full, which brought spiritual nourishment unto the people (Mosiah 23:15-18).

VII. Sometimes the faithful come into bondage for reasons other than committing iniquity.

A. Alma's people, though worthy, came under bondage anyway when the Lamanites accidentally discovered them (Mosiah 23:25-24:1-12). The Lord reveals the purpose of this bondage.

1. The Lord does try the patience and the faith of the righteous too, further teaching them to put their trust in Him (Mosiah 23:21-24). The Lord hears their cries and promises, and due to their covenant He will deliver them. And He fulfills His word (Mosiah 24:14-25).

B. Elder Marlin K. Jensen of the Seventy used a parallel concerning the Sacred Grove. At one time all competing foliage was removed from one area of the Grove to allow the good trees there to grow uninhibited. What they discovered was that these trees, however, did not grow as well as they had hoped. He said, "**... none of the trees in the test plot compared in size or vitality to the trees left to grow more naturally and that had to overcome opposition in order to survive and to thrive.**" (Reported by Marianne Holman, Deseret News, May 7, 2012). (Emphasis added).

C. Thus **many times the righteous suffer to give them experience and to bring greater vitality to their spiritual growth.**

VIII. The faithful *will* find joy through God's ultimate deliverance.

A. As Alma's people found great happiness in the waters and place of Mormon by making covenants, all persons who also covenant will find even greater joy by keeping those covenants.

B. Elder Neal M. Maxwell faced mortal death due to leukemia. While doing so, he chose to write a book entitled *One More Strain of Praise*. It is a remarkable testimony of one who kept his covenants and looked forward with great expectation to His future reconciliation with Christ. In fact the book began with and was based upon the words of the hymn:

"Sing we now at parting
One more strain of praise
To our Heavenly Father
Sweetest songs we'll raise.
For his loving kindness,
For his tender care,
Let our songs of gladness
Fill this Sabbath air."

Note that **reentering Christ's presence is the ultimate Sabbath.**

While there will be trials for the most righteous, the Lord will always deliver His people. His greatest deliverance will be to bring them back into Eternal Life, to be embraced by Him, where our joy will truly have no bounds.