

Mosiah 29, Alma 1–4: Judges

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1. What if members break the laws of church?

Alma's Answer: ²⁰ I covenant with thee that thou shalt have eternal life ... ²² Whomsoever ye receive shall believe in my name; and him will I freely forgive. ²³ For it is I that taketh upon me the sins of the world; for it is I that hath created them; ... ²⁹ Whosoever transgresseth against me, him shall ye judge according to the sins which he has committed; and if he confess his sins before thee and me, and repenteth in the sincerity of his heart, him shall ye forgive, and I will forgive him also ... ³² And whosoever will *not repent* of his sins the same shall *not be numbered among my people*." (Mosiah 26:20–23, 29, 32; D&C 134:10)

"And ye shall also forgive one another your trespasses; for verily I say unto you, he that forgiveth not his neighbor's trespasses when he says that he repents, the same hath brought himself under condemnation." (Mosiah 26:31; see D&C 64:9–11)

2. Spiritual Bondage (27:16)

Angel: "Remember the captivity of thy fathers in the land of Helam, and ... Nephi; and remember how great things he has done for them; for they were in bondage, and he has delivered them."

3. Types of Government

- *Monarchy*: government under one ruler, such as a king; sometimes characterized by absolute rule
- *Republic*: rule by a group of elected representatives
- *Democracy*: government by the people, with majority rule
- *Theocracy*: government guided by God through a prophet

4. What type of government?

- Moses to Samuel (Judges)
- Samuel to Mosiah (Kings)
- Alma to Christ (Judges)
- USA (Legislative, Executive, Judicial)

5. Nehor and Priestcraft

Alma	Nehor
Priests should do God's will.	Priests should be popular (people pleaser; use words pleasing to the carnal mind)
Teach faith in God, repentance, God's commandments, and judged by our works	Fear not but rejoice! God will redeem all men and give them eternal life.
Priests labor for own support, help needy. "They did impart the word of God, one with another, without money and without price." (1:20)	Priests supported by the people without laboring. "Many did believe ... and <u>give him money</u> ." Lifted up in pride, very costly apparel
Not enforced	Enforced or not; Punish opposition (verbal or physical)
"The <u>preacher was no better than the hearer</u> , neither was the teacher any better than the learner; and thus they were all equal, and they did all labor ... And they did impart of their substance ... to the poor, ... needy, ... sick, and the afflicted; and they did not wear costly apparel, yet they were neat and comely" (1:26–27)	"Those who did not belong to their church did indulge ... in sorceries, ... idolatry or idleness, ... babblings, ... envyings and strife; wearing costly apparel; being lifted up in the pride of their own eyes; persecuting, lying, thieving, robbing, committing whoredoms, and murdering, and all manner of wickedness." (1:32–33)

6. Law of the Land

Alma: ¹³ Thou hast shed the blood of a righteous man ... and were we to spare thee his blood would come upon us for vengeance. ¹⁴ Therefore thou art condemned to die, according to the law. ... ¹⁵ They took him ... [to] the top of the hill ... and there he suffered an ignominious death. ¹⁶ Nevertheless, this did not put an end to ... priestcraft ... for there were many who loved the vain things of the world, and they went forth preaching false doctrines ... for the sake of *riches* and *honor*. Nevertheless, they durst not lie ... [or] steal, for fear of the law, for such were punished, neither durst they rob, nor murder, for he that murdered was punished unto death. (1:13–18)

7. Law of the Church

There was a strict law ... that there should not any man, belonging to the church ... persecute those that did not belong to the church ... [or one another]. Nevertheless, there were many among them who began to be proud, and began to contend warmly with their adversaries, even unto blows ..., and it was a cause of much affliction ... [and] much trial with the church. For the hearts of many were hardened, and their names were blotted out ... Also many withdrew themselves from among them. (1:22–24)

8. Nehorites

In the 5th year of the judges, Amlici, a Nehorite, wanted to be king. After losing the election, he stirred his followers to anger and war. After the war, "the people were afflicted ... for the loss of their brethren ... their flocks and herds, and ... fields of grain ... They believed that it was the judgments of God ... because of their wickedness and their abominations; therefore they were awakened to a remembrance of their duty." (4:2–3)

Nehorites later burn followers of Christ and put Alma and Amulek in prison. (Alma 14:15–16) Aaron was thrown in prison by Amalekites and Amulonites who were Nehorites (Alma 21:4)

9. Prosperity and Pride

Two years after the war, "the people of the church began to wax proud, because of their exceeding riches, ... which they had obtained by their industry; and ... they [were] lifted up in the pride of their eyes, for they began to wear very costly apparel ... They began to be scornful, one towards another, and they began to persecute those that did not believe according to their own will and pleasure ... There began to be great contentions ... envyings, and strife, and malice, and persecutions, and pride, even to exceed the pride of those who did not belong to the church of God ... The example of the church began to lead those who were unbelievers on from one piece of iniquity to another" (4:6, 8, 11)

Alma, the high priest, delegated the judgment seat, "that he might preach the word of God ... to stir them up in remembrance of their duty, and that he might pull down, by the word of God, all the pride and craftiness and all the contentions ... among his people, seeing no way that he might reclaim them save it were in bearing down in pure testimony against them." (4:18–19)

10. What is priestcraft and its consequences?

Priesthood	Priestcraft
Priests should do God's will.	Priests should be popular
Called of God by those in authority. They hold up Christ as the light of the world	"men <u>preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world</u> ,"
"seek ... the welfare of Zion"	"that they may get gain and praise of the world" (2 Ne 26:29)

"Because of priestcrafts and iniquities, ... [the Jews] will stiffen their necks against [Christ], that he be crucified." (2 Ne 10:5)

“Thou art not only guilty of priestcraft, but hast endeavored to enforce it by the sword; and were priestcraft to be enforced among this people it would prove their entire destruction.” (1:12)

11. How is priestcraft relevant now?

12. Consequences of Pride

“The pride of this nation, or the people of the Nephites, hath proven their destruction except they should repent.” (Moro 8:27)

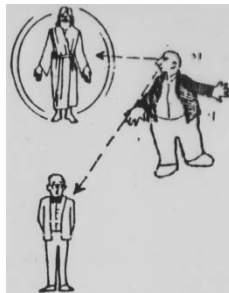
“Beware of pride, lest ye become as the Nephites of old” (D&C 38:39)

Pride is a close friend of priestcraft and secret combinations. “Satan had great power, unto the stirring up of the people to do all manner of iniquity, and to the puffing them up with pride, tempting them to seek for power, and authority, and riches, and the vain things of the world.” (3 Ne 6:12) The goal of secret combinations is to help people get power and gain, and to murder, plunder, lie, and commit whoredoms (Ether 8:16, 22). Such secret combinations led to the destruction of the Jaredites and the Nephites (Ether 8:21; Hel. 2:13)

13. What is pride?

TV English vs Scripture English

C.S. Lewis: It is the comparison that makes you proud: the pleasure of being above the rest. Once the element of competition has gone, pride has gone. (ETB)



14. How does pride relate to love of God and neighbor?

“The central feature of pride is *enmity* ... toward God and enmity toward our fellowmen.” (ETB)

Enmity is hatred toward, hostility to, or a state of opposition. It is the power by which Satan wishes to reign over us. (ETB)

Enmity to God: hard hearted, stiff necks, deaf ears, puffed up, rebellion, boasting in own strength, trample or set at naught the commandments,

“They do not desire that the Lord their God ...should rule ... over them; ... they do set at naught his counsels, and they will not that he should be their guide.” (Hel 12:6)

Enmity to man: better than, above, despise (look down on), mock, scornful, persecute, social classes.

15. What is humility?

TV English vs Scripture English

“Ye shall *not esteem one flesh above another*, or one man shall not think himself above another; therefore I say unto you it is not expedient that ye should have a king.” (Mos 23:7)

“When the priest had imparted unto them the word of God they all returned again diligently unto their labors; and the priest, *not esteeming himself above his hearers*, for the preacher was no better than the hearer, neither was the teacher any better than the learner; and thus they were all equal, and they did all labor, every man according to his strength.²⁷ And they did impart of their substance ...” (Al 1:26–27)

³ And there was a strict command throughout all the churches that there should be no persecutions among them, that there should be an *equality* among all men; ⁴ That they should let no pride nor haughtiness disturb their peace; that every man should *esteem his neighbor as himself*, laboring with their own hands for their

support.⁵ Yea, and all their priests and teachers should labor with their own hands for their support ... (Mos 27:3–5)

“Because of the coarseness of their apparel ... they were not permitted to enter into their synagogues to worship God, being *esteemed as filthiness* ...” (Al 32:2)

Examples?

- 80% of drivers consider themselves to be above average. Why?
- Esteem self as better or above others
- Finding fault with others
- We're number one!! (Sports, King of the Mountain, Musical Chairs, *Chariots of Fire*)
- Lucy to Charlie Brown: “I can't help thinking that this would be a better world if everyone would listen to me.”
- How do we use the scriptures (Stick of Judah and Joseph)?
- It's difficult to Soar with Eagles when you Work with Turkeys!
- “They began to be scornful, one towards another, and they began to persecute those that did not believe according to their own will and pleasure.” (4:8)
- Samson killed 1000 Philistines with the jawbone of an ass. Everyday 10,000,000 relationships are destroyed with the same weapon.
- Hardening of “ought-eries” leads to hardening of the arteries.



16. Pride and Judgment

“Judge not, that ye be not judged.” (Mt. 7:1)

“Judge not unrighteously, that ye be not judged; but judge righteous judgment.” (JST Mt. 7:1)

Righteous Judgment of Others

- Stewardship (civil or church judge)
- No conflict of interest (not involved)
- Know the law and hear both sides.
- Revelation to know God's will

Righteous Judgment for Self

- What do I want instead of what is?
- What should I do? (If it seems wrong, I shouldn't do it.)
- How should I respond?

17. How could we “gratify our pride, our vain ambition”?

(D&C 121:37)

- Not pray or read scriptures daily.
- Find fault with others. “The devil flatters us that we are very righteous, when we are feeding on the faults of others.” (TPJS, p. 41)
- Make fun of others. (“Put down humor,” name calling)
- Look down on, mock, scorn, or pick on others.
- Provoke others to anger (Top 10 ways.)
- Pat ourselves on the back.