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Next Weeks Lesson: Lesson 22 "Have Ye Received His Image in Your Countenances?" ([Alma 5-7](#))

Today's Lesson: Lesson 21 "Alma ... Did Judge Righteous Judgments" ([Mosiah 29](#); [Alma 1-4](#))

Monarchy: government under the leadership of 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 revelation to a prophet

- What type of government did the Nephites have under Mosiah?

For many years Mosiah served as a king and a prophet who received revelation from God to lead the people. Under his leadership, the government had characteristics of both a monarchy and a theocracy. After the reign of King Mosiah, Alma the Younger was appointed chief judge over the people of Nephi, thus beginning a time period known as "the reign of the judges" ([Mosiah 29:44](#)), with a new form of government that included elements of a republic, a democracy, and a theocracy. This lesson explains how the system of judges was organized to provide righteous leadership and describes some of the challenges Alma faced as chief judge and as the presiding high priest over the people.

1. Mosiah teaches principles of good government. ([Mosiah 29](#))

When all of King Mosiah's sons refused to succeed him as king, Mosiah sent a written proclamation among the people, recommending a system of government to replace the rule of kings after his death.

- A. What counsel did Mosiah give his people about having kings? (See [Mosiah 29:13](#), [Mosiah 29:16](#).) Which two men did Mosiah describe as different examples of kings? (See [Mosiah 29:13](#), [Mosiah 29:18](#).) How did Mosiah describe the consequences of having a wicked leader? (See [Mosiah 29:16-18](#), [Mosiah 29:21-23](#).)
- B. Mosiah suggested that the people establish a system of judges to replace the rule of kings. What qualities did Mosiah say these judges should have? (See [Mosiah 29:11](#); see also [D&C 98:10](#).) Why are these qualities important in leaders today?
- C. What was the foundation of the laws that the people would be judged by? (See [Mosiah 29:11](#); see also [Mosiah 29:12-14](#).) What blessings can people enjoy when they live by laws that are based on righteous principles?

- D. What did Mosiah propose to limit the power that could be obtained by wicked individuals or groups? (See [Mosiah 29:24-26](#), [Mosiah 29:28-29](#).)
- E. What did Mosiah say would happen if the majority of the people chose wickedness? (See [Mosiah 29:27](#).) What are some ways we can help others understand and choose righteousness?

2. Alma the Younger serves as chief judge and combats priestcraft. ([Alma 1](#))

The people had followed Mosiah's counsel and appointed judges throughout the land, with Alma the Younger as chief judge.

- A. In the first year of the reign of the judges, a man named Nehor was brought before Alma to be judged ([Alma 1:1-2](#), [Alma 1:15](#)). What had Nehor been teaching the people? (See [Alma 1:3-4](#).) What was the effect of his teaching? (See [Alma 1:5-6](#).) Why do you think Nehor's teachings were appealing to so many people? Which of these same teachings have you heard in our day?
- B. While Nehor was preaching to the people, he was met by Gideon, a member of the Church who served as a teacher ([Alma 1:7-8](#); Gideon had served faithfully as a captain for King Limhi). How did Gideon respond to Nehor's false teachings? (See [Alma 1:7](#).) How does knowing and testifying of the word of God help us withstand false teachings?
- C. Nehor became angry with Gideon and slew him with a sword ([Alma 1:9](#)). When the people took Nehor before Alma, what two crimes did Alma find him guilty of? (See [Alma 1:10-13](#).) What is priestcraft? (See [Alma 1:16](#); see also [2 Nephi 26:29](#).) What warning did Alma give regarding priestcraft? (See [Alma 1:12](#).) What evidence have you seen of priestcraft in our day?
- D. Although Nehor was put to death for his crimes, priestcraft and other wickedness continued to spread throughout the land ([Alma 1:15-16](#)). What began to happen between those who belonged to the Church and those who did not? (See [Alma 1:19-22](#).) How should we treat people who disagree with our beliefs? (See [D&C 38:41](#).)
- E. How did this contention affect some members of the Church? (See [Alma 1:23-24](#).) What can we learn from those who remained in the Church of God? (See [Alma 1:25](#).) How can we remain "steadfast and immovable" in keeping the commandments of God?

Let's read [Alma 1:26-30](#).

- F. How did the priests regard those whom they taught? (See [Alma 1:26](#).) Why is this attitude important when we are teaching others? How have you been

blessed by teachers who have taught with humility?

- G.** How did Alma describe the way the members of the Church treated those in need? (See [Alma 1:27](#).) How can following their example bring peace to our lives?
- 3.** Amlici seeks to be king but is rejected by the voice of the people. ([Alma 2-3](#))
- A.** In the fifth year of the reign of the judges, a cunning man named Amlici was joined by many followers who wanted to make him king over the land ([Alma 2:1-2](#)). Why did Amlici want to be king? (See [Alma 2:4](#).) What did he do when the majority of the people voted against him? (See [Alma 2:7-10](#).)
- B.** What was the result of the first battle between the Nephites and the Amlicites? (See [Alma 2:16-19](#).) When Alma sent spies to follow the remainder of the Amlicites, what did the spies observe? (See [Alma 2:23-25](#).) Even though they were fewer in number, how were the Nephites able to defeat the combined army of the Amlicites and Lamanites? (See [Alma 2:27-28](#).)
- C.** What did the Amlicites do to distinguish themselves from the Nephites? (See [Alma 3:4](#), [Alma 3:13](#).) How were these markings a fulfillment of prophecy? (See [Alma 3:14-19](#).) Why is it important for us to “see that they brought upon themselves the curse”? ([Alma 3:19](#)).
- 4.** The Church prospers but becomes prideful. Alma resigns the judgment seat to devote himself to the ministry. ([Alma 4](#))
- A.** Even though the Nephites had been victorious in battle over the Amlicites and the Lamanites, many Nephites had died, and those who remained had suffered great losses among their flocks and their grain ([Alma 4:1-2](#)). What were some results of these afflictions? (See [Alma 4:3-5](#).) How might our afflictions awaken us to remember our duty?
- B.** How long did it take the members of the Church to return from great righteousness to pride and worldliness? (See [Alma 4:5-6](#).) Why do you think it is often difficult for prosperous people to avoid pride and materialism? How can we avoid these sins?
- C.** How did pride affect the way the people of the Church treated others, both in and out of the Church? (See [Alma 4:8-12](#).) How did this influence the way nonmembers viewed the Church? (See [Alma 4:10](#).) Why is the example of Church members important to the missionary work of the Church? When have you seen people influenced for good by the example of Church members?
- D.** What did Alma do in response to the increasing pride and iniquity of the people? (See [Alma 4:15-18](#).) Why did he do this? (See [Alma 4:19](#).) How can preaching

the word of God “stir [people] up in remembrance of their duty”? How can preaching the word of God “pull down” pride, craftiness, and contention?

- E.** What does the phrase “bearing down in pure testimony” suggest about the power with which Alma would teach? ([Alma 4:19](#)). How has your life been changed by hearing others bear pure testimony of the gospel? What problems in the world today could be solved by preaching and living the gospel?

Ponder how the challenges Alma faced are similar to problems we face today and how many of the solutions to these problems are similar.

In the coming weeks, we will study Alma’s responses to other challenges he faced as the high priest over the people. Watch and observe how Alma preached the word of God to deal with each situation he faced.