

July 15–21  
Alma 30–31

“The Virtue of the Word of God”



# Overview

## Ezra Taft Benson

“God, with his infinite foreknowledge, so molded the Book of Mormon that we might see the error and know how to combat false educational, political, religious, and philosophical concepts of our time.” (CR, April 1975)

# Korihor the Anti-Christ

Alma 30:6,12-16

What are some of the arguments Korihor uses to attempt to convince them that they should not believe in Christ?

According to Korihor, what is the damage that comes from believing in Christ?

## Todd Christofferson

"On the surface such philosophies seem appealing because they give us license to indulge any appetite or desire without concern for consequences. By using the teachings of Nehor and Korihor, we can rationalize and justify anything. When prophets come crying repentance, it 'throws cold water on the party.' But in reality... the gift of repentance is the cause for true celebration." (CR, Oct. 2011)

# Korihor the Anti-Christ

Alma 30:17-18

How would you describe the philosophy that Korihor was trying to convince the Nephites to believe in?

What is wrong with believing that “every man [ prospers ] according to his genius and... strength”?

Korihor was a secular humanist, as was Nehor, his predecessor. He believed that if success came it was because the individual had earned it. If progress was made it was because of hard work, consistent effort, and fulfillment of one's goals. The humanist focuses upon man: Man is the measure; all things rotate around man; man is the center of the universe; man has the power to solve his own problems, the power to make himself happy, the power to do anything he sets his mind to. Humanism points toward man's genius, toward man's strength, toward man's works and accomplishments. (Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon, 3:204)

Humanism points toward man's genius, toward man's strength, toward man's works and accomplishments. It is an anti-Christian philosophy and is thus false, devilish, and destructive. It draws man's attention away from the one source which could bring liberation from this world's woes and give satisfaction and happiness in the world to come. It deflects one's vision away from Christ and away from that grace or enabling power which comes from him. (Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon, 3:204)

## Boyd K. Backer

"True doctrine, understood, changes attitudes and behavior. The study of the doctrines of the gospel will improve behavior quicker than a study of behavior will improve behavior.... That is why we stress so forcefully the study of the doctrines of the gospel." (CR, Oct. 1986)



2 Nephi 28:4-5,31

4) And they shall contend one with another; and their priests shall contend one with another, and they shall teach with their learning, and deny the Holy Ghost, which giveth utterance.

5) And they deny the power of God, the Holy One of Israel; and they say unto the people: Hearken unto us, and hear ye our precept; for behold there is no God today, for the Lord and the Redeemer hath done his work, and he hath given his power unto men;

31) Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, or maketh flesh his arm, or shall hearken unto the precepts of men, save their precepts shall be given by the power of the Holy Ghost

# Korihor the Anti-Christ

*Alma 30:22-23,27-28*

According to Korihor, how are people “kept down” by believing in Christ?

## Todd Christofferson

"As in the days of Nehor and Korihor, we live in a time not long before the advent of Jesus Christ—in our case, the time of preparation for His Second Coming. And similarly, the message of repentance is often not welcomed. Some profess that if there is a God, He makes no real demands upon us.... Others, with Korihor, deny the very existence of Christ and any such thing as sin. Their doctrine is that values, standards, and even truth are all relative. Thus, whatever one feels is right for him or her cannot be judged by others to be wrong or sinful." (CR, Oct. 2011)

# Korihor the Anti-Christ

Alma 30:30-36

What does Alma give as the reason he desires to labor in the church?

# Korihor the Anti-Christ

Alma 30:37-44

How does Alma address Korihor's assertion that there is no evidence of the existence of Christ?

# Korihor the Anti-Christ

Alma 30:53

What do you think it is about the message of the anti-Christ that is “pleasing unto the carnal mind”?

# Teaching the Zoramites

Alma 31:1-2,5

Why do you think the word of God “[has] more powerful effect” than fighting and war?

Lynn G. Robbins

"Alma discovered this same principle.... Why? Because the sword focused only on punishing behavior while preaching the word changed people's very nature—who they were or could become." (CR, April 2011)



## Henry B. Eyring

“The word of God is the doctrine taught by Jesus Christ and by His prophets. Alma knew that words of doctrine had great power. They can open the minds of people to see spiritual things not visible to the natural eye. And they can open the heart to feelings of the love of God and a love for truth.” (CR, April 1999)

# Teaching the Zoramites

Alma 31:12-18

Do you see any similarities between the anti-Christ teachings of Korihor and the religious practices of the Zoramites?

Do you see any difference between the teachings of Korihor and the practices of the Zoramites?

## Richard Lloyd Anderson

"The Son of God came to call all men to repentance—because all mankind has sinned. But some are so virtuous in their own eyes that they will not listen. Jesus told many parables that illustrated the narrow-mindedness of the self-righteous. Before one such story—the parable of the Pharisee and the publican—Luke mentions that Jesus 'spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.' (Luke 18:9)

“Joseph Smith clearly identified why self-righteousness is so dangerous: it prevents repentance and keeps a person from developing the love of God. In an 1842 discourse, he said, 'All the religious world is boasting of its righteousness—it is the doctrine of the devil to retard... our progress by filling us with self-righteousness' (HC 5:24)."  
("Parables of Mercy", Ensign, Feb. 1987)

# Teaching the Zoramites

Alma 31:24-29

How did the actions of the Zoramites demonstrate what was really in their hearts?

## Hugh Nibley

“The wickedest people in the Book of Mormon are the Zoramites, a proud, independent, courageous, industrious, enterprising, patriotic, prosperous people who attended strictly to their weekly religious duties with the proper observance of dress standards.... Well, what is wrong with any of that? There is just one thing that spoils it all, and that is... they are really thinking of something else. ‘Behold, O my God, their costly apparel... all their precious things... their hearts are set upon them, and yet they cry unto thee and say--We thank thee, O God, for we are a chosen people unto thee, while others shall perish.’” (Old Testament and Related Studies, pg. 222)

# Teaching the Zoramites

Alma 31:31-38

How does this prayer contrast the belief of Korihor and the Zoramites with true gospel doctrine as demonstrated by Alma?

Next Week:

July 22–28

Alma 32–35

“Plant this Word in Your Hearts”

