

NEHOR TEACHES FALSE DOCTRINE

(Alma 1:1-52)

V1-9

These verses recount the history of Nehor.

Nehor preaches false doctrines, establishes a church based on priest craft, and strives to enforce it by the sword by killing Gideon. Nehor is brought before Alma, the chief priest, to be tried for murder; He is condemned to die and is executed upon the hill Manti.

After Nehor's death, priest craft spreads through the land among those who love the vain things of the world; the people of the church of God are persecuted by them.

Because of persecution, some apostatize from the church of God; those that remain are humble and prosper, despite persecution, and become wealthier than those not of the church.

V10-15

Exactly what happened here is not clear, but it seems to be the case that Nehor confronted Gideon in the audience of the church so as to lead them away (v. 10-11). Nehor was angered that Gideon humiliated him so he lashed out in a fit of rage and murdered Gideon (v. 13-14). The people of the church apparently witnessed the whole thing, and perhaps subdued him, and then took him to Alma (v. 15). If it was an act of rage it might have occurred so quickly and unexpectedly that the people of the church couldn't intervene quickly enough to prevent Gideon from being struck.

V16-21

It would be difficult to imagine what kind of defense he claimed in such a case (v. 16). Regardless, Alma presents three convictions against him: priest craft, enforcing priest craft by the sword (v. 17-18), and murdering an innocent man (v. 19). The verdict is the death penalty, according to the law (v. 20-21).

V22-27

The execution of Nehor (v. 22-23) does little to stem the tide of priest crafts because there are many who will deceive in order to get rich (v. 24). But, the priest crafters do have to act within the boundaries of the law, or they are punished, as was Nehor (v. 25-27).

V28-36

Division arises between those after the order of Nehor and those of the church because of their differences, with the people of the church being persecuted (v. 28-30). And, while there were strict laws among those of the church that there should not be any persecutions returned (v. 31), some of the people in the church become filled with pride and end up in fights with their persecutors (v. 32).

The result is there are a lot of hard feelings within the church over the matter (v. 33) and some people end up leaving the church as a result (v. 34-35). It was a time of trial to those of the church, but those with firm faith weathered the problems (v. 36).

V37-52

The church practices the Law of Consecration (v. 37-42), and the Lord blesses them for it (v. 43-44). In their blessed condition they in turn help others in need, turning none away (v. 45-46).

Those in the church are generally much better off materially than those who are not in the church because of their respective choices (v. 47). While those in the church are doing well, those not in the church are engaging in self-destructive and antisocial behavior (v. 48-50). But, by applying the law to those who broke it the people were less likely to commit the sins knowing they would be punished for it. So, there is peace in the land for a few years (v. 51-52).

- 1. What were Nehor's teachings regarding priesthood and salvation?**
- 2. How did Nehor's ideas affect the church? How did Alma account for their effects?**