

Comments on Alma 30

This chapter details the exploits of a traveling atheist preacher named Korihor.

1 BEHOLD, now it came to pass that after the people of Ammon were established in the land of Jershon, yea, and also after the Lamanites were driven out of the land, and their dead were buried by the people of the land-- 2 Now their dead were not numbered because of the greatness of their numbers; neither were the dead of the Nephites numbered--but it came to pass after they had buried their dead, and also after the days of fasting, and mourning, and prayer, (and it was in the sixteenth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi) there began to be continual peace throughout all the land. 3 Yea, and the people did observe to keep the commandments of the Lord; and they were strict in observing the ordinances of God, according to the law of Moses; for they were taught to keep the law of Moses until it should be fulfilled. 4 And thus the people did have no disturbance in all the sixteenth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi. 5 And it came to pass that in the commencement of the seventeenth year of the reign of the judges, there was continual peace.

v1-5 These verses pick up chronologically from the end of ch. 28. Note the burying of the dead and the fasting, mourning, and prayer coincide with 28:5-6. Chapter 28 covers the end of the 15th year of the judges and these verses cover the start of the 16th year.

After the Nephites clean up the mess left over from the latest Lamanite incursion (v. 1-2), they have about two full years of peace in the land (v. 4-5) as the people observe the Law of Moses strictly (v. 3).

v2 "the days of fasting, and mourning, and prayer", this is probably referring to Festival time of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot as Yom Kippur is when the people debase themselves by fasting and prayer. It coincides with the end of a great war would have added the element of mourning. Such mourning would have been particularly poignant given the meaning of Yom Kippur. Note how v. 3 says they follow the Law of Moses strictly. Observing the Feasts was a very important part of the "ordinances of God", cp. Isa. 58:13-14. Compare 45:1 for the same end/beginning or a year attended by fasting, prayer, and the worshipping of God.

This suggests the start/end of the years of the judges followed the standard Biblically instituted calendar with the

first two days of the month of Tishri (falling in our September/October) being the new year.

v6-60 review the history and fate of a man who preached atheism to the Nephites.

6 But it came to pass in the latter end of the seventeenth year, there came a man into the land of Zarahemla, and he was Anti-Christ, for he began to preach unto the people against the prophecies which had been spoken by the prophets, concerning the coming of Christ.

v6 At the end of the 17th year of the judges a man is brought into the land of Zarahemla who preached against the doctrine of Christ by saying the predictions of his coming were false (v. 6). This account of Korihor in Zarahemla picks up again in v. 30.

"there came a man into the land of Zarahemla", after Korihor is struck deaf and dumb and turns to begging, he ends up among the Zoramites (cf. v. 58-59). Did he originally come from the Zoramites in the first place? The Zoramites rejected the doctrine of Christ, but were still religious. Korihor rejected Christ, and continued that line of thinking to reject all religion. Perhaps he was among the Zoramites and had no luck with them, so he come over to the Nephites to try his luck there. But, when failing, he returns home.

"he was Anti-Christ", Korihor is attacking the doctrine of Christ because it is an imminent prediction the people of the church are thinking about, cp. 13:25. Korihor isn't merely against the doctrine of a Christ, he is a complete atheist attacking any form of theism, his target audience happens to be Christians.

7 Now there was no law against a man's belief; for it was strictly contrary to the commands of God that there should be a law which should bring men on to unequal grounds. 8 For thus saith the scripture: Choose ye this day, whom ye will serve. 9 Now if a man desired to serve God, it was his privilege; or rather, if he believed in God it was his privilege to serve him; but if he did not believe in him there was no law to punish him. 10 But if he murdered he was punished unto death; and if he robbed he was also punished; and if he stole he was also punished; and if he committed adultery he was also punished; yea, for all this wickedness they were punished. 11 For there was a law that men should be judged according to their crimes. Nevertheless, there was no law against a man's belief; therefore, a man was punished only for the crimes which he had done; therefore all men were on equal grounds.

v7-29 After Korihor's introduction in v. 6, Mormon provides a couple of parenthetical comments to establish the context of who this character is. He explains why it is the civil law could not be pressed against Korihor (v. 7-11), he then gives a synopsis of his doctrinal viewpoint (v. 12-17).

Mormon then recounts how it is Korihor ended up in Zarahemla. Mormon indicates Korihor's has some success among the Nephites (v. 18). Mormon then notes his lack of success among the Lamanite converts (v. 19-21) and the people of Gideon (v. 22-28) result in him being sent to Zarahemla to be questioned by Alma (v. 29).

v7-11 A parenthesis explaining why it is "the law could have no hold upon [Korihor]", cf. v. 12. There were no laws regulating a person's beliefs (v. 7) because the Scriptures say a person is to choose whom they will serve (v. 8), thus there was no law to punish people who chose not to worship God according to the Law of Moses (v. 9).

The laws of the land were there to govern people's behavior, not their beliefs. If people broke the laws of the land by committing murder, adultery, or thievery they were punished (v. 10), but there was no punishment for not believing in the Law of Moses (v. 11).

Now, if no laws could be pressed against Korihor then how is it he is bound and expelled by Ammon (cf. v. 21) and then bound by the chief judge at Gideon and sent off to Zarahemla (cf. v. 29)? While Korihor could not be punished for holding different religious views, his doctrines were leading people to break the civil laws (cf. v. 18) with his lying and flattering words (v. 47). The chief priests perceived the impact his philosophy was having on the people, so they wanted him dealt with expeditiously, but they realized the problematic nature of the situation as he wasn't committing any of the crimes himself. Ammon dealt with it by making him persona non grata, and the high priest of Gideon sent him off to be dealt with at Zarahemla rather than permit him to continue to pollute the locals.

It is unclear whether bearing false witness was a crime among the Nephites, but if it was then Korihor's railing accusations concerning priestcraft in v. 27-28 would certainly qualify as false and libelous.

12 And this Anti-Christ, whose name was Korihor, (and the law could have no hold upon him) began to preach unto the people that there should be no Christ. And after this manner did he

preach, saying: 13 O ye that are bound down under a foolish and a vain hope, why do ye yoke yourselves with such foolish things? why do ye look for a Christ? For no man can know of anything which is to come. 14 Behold, these things which ye call prophecies, which ye say are handed down by holy prophets, behold, they are foolish traditions of your fathers. 15 How do ye know of their surety? Behold, ye cannot know of things which ye do not see; therefore ye cannot know that there shall be a Christ. 16 Ye look forward and say that ye see a remission of your sins. But behold, it is the effect of a frenzied mind; and this derangement of your minds comes because of the traditions of your fathers, which lead you away into a belief of things which are not so. 17 And many more such things did he say unto them, telling them that there could be no atonement made for the sins of men, but every man fared in this life according to the management of the creature; therefore every man prospered according to his genius, and that every man conquered according to his strength; and whatsoever a man did was no crime.

v12-17 Here, Mormon gives a synopsis of Korihor's doctrines and arguments. He argues it is impossible to know the future so how can anyone believe in a prediction of Christ (v. 13)? You cannot, it is just a lot of traditions passed down (v. 14), and since you cannot see it you cannot verify it (v. 15). Korihor then attacks the people's testimonies and religious convictions by saying their religious experiences are a result of being taught things that are false (v. 16) so it is a self-delusion. Korihor's alternative is that people should act naturally and do whatever is within their power because there is no such thing as sin (v. 17) and when people die that is the end of their existence (v. 18).

Korihor's core arguments are that of Empiricism (v. 15) and Objectivity versus Subjectivity (v. 16). He states flatly that you cannot believe in anything you cannot see, and since something off in the future is entirely beyond our ability to perceive it then it cannot be believed. His argument is quite sophisticated as it goes well beyond the relatively simple statement of "I only believe what I can see" and pushes it off into an area where perceiving is impossible. Since the events are in the future there is no way to perceive them, thus Korihor effectively avoids any of the numerous counter arguments people would use against a simple or naive Empiricism.

His next argument attacks the very core of the religious experience, which are personal spiritual experiences, by saying it is the result of psychological problems caused by what they

have been taught. Again, it is a very sophisticated argument. He casts doubt on people's convictions by saying it is all based upon subjective experiences. If it is a subjective experience, then it is nothing more than self-deception based upon what you want or expect to experience resulting in delusions which the subject labels "spiritual". Thus, the tradition passed down becomes self-perpetuating as people fall in line with what they are taught to expect to happen by labeling any subjective experience a spiritual one so as to conform to what is expected and culturally normative.

The insidious thing about such arguments is they are partially true, and so they strike people at their heart. It is true that you cannot provide empirical evidence of things to come, because they are in the future. And, it is true that sometimes people cannot discern between subjective experiences and objective personal manifestations of the Spirit. So, for those with weak faith, these arguments undercut their religious standing. Combine that with a very appealing sensual alternative and Korihor has success.

The flaws in Korihor's arguments are exposed by Alma in v. 40-41. In v. 40 Alma points out that Korihor has contradicted himself in that he has insisted there will be no Christ. In making such an assertion he is being internally inconsistent because he argues there can be no empirical evidence of future events. And he is quite right. So, he cannot provide any evidence there will be no Christ either, yet he demands there will be none. He therefore oversteps the bounds of his argument by concluding there is no Christ, and Alma points this out to him.

Alma then rebuts Korihor's attack on religious experiences by pointing out to him that there is objective evidence of God external to any person in the Creation (v. 41, 44). Alma is employing what contemporary philosophers refer to as the Cosmological Argument.

These arguments employed by Korihor are ones we find very familiar to us today as they are employed commonly by those hostile to religion. Atheists, the most aggressive of which are Secular Humanists, commonly employ these very arguments using various popular scientific and philosophic theories to argue their viewpoint. And, they come to the same conclusions Korihor does in v. 17, that it is all a matter of "survival of the

fittest" and there is no spirit or eternity or anything beyond this life.

18 And thus he did preach unto them, leading away the hearts of many, causing them to lift up their heads in their wickedness, yea, leading away many women, and also men, to commit whoredoms-telling them that when a man was dead, that was the end thereof.

v18 Korihor achieves some success among the Nephites using this very natural and carnal doctrine. The result is the people indulge in sex immorality.

Mormon notes more especially that it is the women who are led away into whoredoms. After substantial wars, as had occurred only some 2 years earlier (cf. v. 1-2), it is safe to assume the population has shifted such that women outnumber men. As this is the case there would have been fewer opportunities to marry for upcoming women as well as many widows with little opportunity to remarry. These women would have been easy targets for Korihor's carnal philosophy, especially if the church was slow to give adequate support to the widows and orphans. Prostitution would have been an easy means of obtaining income and continuing the family line.

Note Mormon's jibe in v. 20 that the converted Lamanites are more wise than many of the Nephites in how they deal with Korihor.

19 Now this man went over to the land of Jershon also, to preach these things among the people of Ammon, who were once the people of the Lamanites. 20 But behold they were more wise than many of the Nephites; for they took him, and bound him, and carried him before Ammon, who was a high priest over that people. 21 And it came to pass that he caused that he should be carried out of the land.

And he came over into the land of Gideon, and began to preach unto them also; and here he did not have much success, for he was taken and bound and carried before the high priest, and also the chief judge over the land. 22 And it came to pass that the high priest said unto him: why do ye go about perverting the ways of the Lord? why do ye teach this people that there shall be no Christ, to interrupt their rejoicings? why do ye speak against all the prophecies of the holy prophets? 23 Now the high priest's name was Giddonah. And Korihor said unto him: Because I do not teach the foolish traditions of your fathers, and because I do not teach this people to bind themselves down under the foolish ordinances and performances which are laid down by ancient priests, to usurp power and

authority over them, to keep them in ignorance, that they may not lift up their heads, but be brought down according to thy words. 24 Ye say that this people is a free people. Behold, I say they are in bondage. Ye say that those ancient prophecies are true. Behold, I say that ye do not know that they are true. 25 Ye say that this people is a guilty and a fallen people, because of the transgression of a parent. Behold, I say that a child is not guilty because of its parents. 26 And ye also say that Christ shall come. But behold, I say that ye do not know that there shall be a Christ. And ye say also that he shall be slain for the sins of the world- 27 And thus ye lead away this people after the foolish traditions of your fathers, and according to your own desires; and ye keep them down, even as it were in bondage, that ye may glut yourselves with the labors of their hands, that they durst not look up with boldness, and that they durst not enjoy their rights and privileges. 28 Yea, they durst not make use of that which is their own lest they should offend their priests, who do yoke them according to their desires, and have brought them to believe, by their traditions and their dreams and their whims and their visions and their pretended mysteries, that they should, if they did not do according to their words, offend some unknown being, who they say is God--a being who never has been seen or known, who never was nor ever will be.

29 Now when the high priest and the chief judge saw the hardness of his heart, yea, when they saw that he would revile even against God, they would not make any reply to his words; but they caused that he should be bound; and they delivered him up into the hands of the officers, and sent him to the land of Zarahemla, that he might be brought before Alma, and the chief judge who was governor over all the land.

v19-29 After achieving some success among the Lamanites, Korihor moves on the land of Jershon where the Anti-Nephi-Lehis (a.k.a. the people of Ammon) have recently moved. They don't listen to him, but take him before Ammon who is the local high priest (v. 20). Ammon expels Korihor from their lands, so he moves on to the land of Gideon. He preaches there and again has little success and is taken before the high priest (v. 21).

The high priest questions Korihor concerning his motives in attacking the doctrines of the church (v. 22). Korihor's response is a series of railing accusations against the priests (v. 23-24) which expose his ignorance of the scriptures (v. 25-26) and of the church (v. 27-28). The high priest sees there is no reasoning with Korihor so he send him on to the chief high priest over all the Nephites to deal with him once and for all (v. 29).

v21 "the land of Gideon", the people here are noted for their religious zeal in Alma 7.

v22 Korihor never really answers the high priest's questions. The high priest is interested in why Korihor is doing what he is doing. Korihor ignores the question and instead attacks the priest and accuses him of being an oppressive self-promoter who uses the church to benefit himself materially. We can assume from this Korihor is trying to present himself a defender and liberator of these allegedly oppressed and exploited laymen. Thus, he is presenting himself as an altruist and attempting to define himself as the opposite of this vilified version of the priests.

v25-26 While the doctrine of Christ (v. 26) is a relatively complex one, the doctrine of the Fall (v. 25) is pretty straightforward. Korihor either never understood it very well in the first place, or he has warped it quite badly to make it suit his needs. As Korihor seems to be quite a clever character it seems likely the latter is case. If he is preaching at people he would warp things intentionally to make the doctrines of the church sound bad.

v27-28 As Alma point out later (v. 32-33) the priests don't get compensated for their labors in the church, so this statement is completely unsupportable. As Korihor is obviously not stupid, we would have to assume what he is doing here is equating all of the religions among the Nephites in order to attack them in a sort of guilt-by-association argument.

We know those after the order of Nehor practiced priestcraft (cf. 1:16), so we would assume Korihor is making more of a general attack on religion among the Nephites than on the doctrines of this church in specific. Such accusations might work on a group of disaffected church-goers, or people who were fairly secularized already.

Note in v. 35 when Alma questions him concerning this accusation despite evidence to the contrary he fails to respond.

30 And it came to pass that when he was brought before Alma and the chief judge, he did go on in the same manner as he did in the land of Gideon; yea, he went on to blaspheme. 31 And he did rise up in great swelling words before Alma, and did revile against the priests and teachers, accusing them of leading away the people after the silly traditions of their fathers, for the sake of glutting on the labors of the people.

32 Now Alma said unto him: Thou knowest that we do not glut ourselves upon the labors of this people; for behold I have labored even from the commencement of the reign of the judges until now, with mine own hands for my support, notwithstanding my many travels round about the land to declare the word of God unto my people. 33 And notwithstanding the many labors which I have performed in the church, I have never received so much as even one senine for my labor; neither has any of my brethren, save it were in the judgment-seat; and then we have received only according to law for our time. 34 And now, if we do not receive anything for our labors in the church, what doth it profit us to labor in the church save it were to declare the truth, that we may have rejoicings in the joy of our brethren? 35 Then why sayest thou that we preach unto this people to get gain, when thou, of thyself, knowest that we receive no gain?

And now, believest thou that we deceive this people, that causes such joy in their hearts? 36 And Korihor answered him, Yea. 37 And then Alma said unto him: Believest thou that there is a God? 38 And he answered, Nay. 39 Now Alma said unto him: will ye deny again that there is a God, and also deny the Christ? For behold, I say unto you, I know there is a God, and also that Christ shall come. 40 And now what evidence have ye that there is no God, or that Christ cometh not? I say unto you that ye have none, save it be your word only. 41 But, behold, I have all things as a testimony that these things are true; and ye also have all things as a testimony unto you that they are true; and will ye deny them? Believest thou that these things are true? 42 Behold, I know that thou believest, but thou art possessed with a lying spirit, and ye have put off the Spirit of God that it may have no place in you; but the devil has power over you, and he doth carry you about, working devices that he may destroy the children of God.

43 And now Korihor said unto Alma: If thou wilt show me a sign, that I may be convinced that there is a God, yea, show unto me that he hath power, and then will I be convinced of the truth of thy words. 44 But Alma said unto him: Thou hast had signs enough; will ye tempt your God? will ye say, Show unto me a sign, when ye have the testimony of all these thy brethren, and also all the holy prophets? The scriptures are laid before thee, yea, and all things denote there is a God; yea, even the earth, and all things that are upon the face of it, yea, and its motion, yea, and also all the planets which move in their regular form do witness that there is a Supreme Creator. 45 And yet do ye go about, leading away the hearts of this people, testifying unto them there is no God? And yet will ye deny against all these witnesses?

And he said: Yea, I will deny, except ye shall show me a sign. 46 And now it came to pass that Alma said unto him: Behold, I am grieved because of the hardness of your heart, yea, that ye will still resist the spirit of the truth, that thy soul may be destroyed. 47 But behold, it is better that thy soul should be lost than that thou shouldst be the means of bringing many souls down to destruction, by thy lying and by thy flattering words; therefore if thou shalt deny again, behold God

shall smite thee, that thou shalt become dumb, that thou shalt never open thy mouth any more, that thou shalt not deceive this people any more.

48 Now Korihor said unto him: I do not deny the existence of a God, but I do not believe that there is a God; and I say also, that ye do not know that there is a God; and except ye show me a sign, I will not believe. 49 Now Alma said unto him: This will I give unto thee for a sign, that thou shalt be struck dumb, according to my words; and I say, that in the name of God, ye shall be struck dumb, that ye shall no more have utterance. 50 Now when Alma had said these words, Korihor was struck dumb, that he could not have utterance, according to the words of Alma.

51 And now when the chief judge saw this, he put forth his hand and wrote unto Korihor, saying: Art thou convinced of the power of God? In whom did ye desire that Alma should show forth his sign? would ye that he should afflict others, to show unto thee a sign? Behold, he has showed unto you a sign; and now will ye dispute more? 52 And Korihor put forth his hand and wrote, saying: I know that I am dumb, for I cannot speak; and I know that nothing save it were the power of God could bring this upon me; yea, and I always knew that there was a God. 53 But behold, the devil hath deceived me; for he appeared unto me in the form of an angel, and said unto me: Go and reclaim this people, for they have all gone astray after an unknown God. And he said unto me: There is no God; yea, and he taught me that which I should say. And I have taught his words; and I taught them because they were pleasing unto the carnal mind; and I taught them, even until I had much success, insomuch that I verily believed that they were true; and for this cause I withstood the truth, even until I have brought this great curse upon me.

54 Now when he had said this, he besought that Alma should pray unto God, that the curse might be taken from him. 55 But Alma said unto him: If this curse should be taken from thee thou wouldst again lead away the hearts of this people; therefore, it shall be unto thee even as the Lord will. 56 And it came to pass that the curse was not taken off of Korihor; but he was cast out, and went about from house to house begging for his food.

v30-56 These verses pick up the chronology from v. 6 with Korihor being delivered up to Alma. Korihor goes on arguing in the same manner as he did in the land of Gideon (v. 30-31).

Alma points out to him that he knows he hasn't benefitted financially at all from being the high priest (v. 32-34), but Korihor doesn't answer.

Alma then turns the conversation to evidence and he asks Korihor if he thinks the church is deceiving people when the evidence indicates it is making them happier (v. 35), as opposed to miserable and exploited as Korihor has previously accused. Korihor ignores this and says they are deceived (v. 36). Alma continues this line of questioning by asking Korihor how it is

he rejects the existence of God and Christ (v. 37-39) when he has no evidence to prove they don't exist (v. 40). Alma then presents the Creation as evidence that They do exist (v. 41), but since he is possessed by a lying spirit (v. 42) he knows he will reject this as evidence just as he has rejected all the other evidence.

Korihor realizes his sophistry has been exposed, so he abandons the debate and demands a sign to prove that God exists (v. 43). Alma questions him if he will really believe any more evidence from God when he has already ignored all of the evidence around him and deliberately fought against God, and Korihor says he will continue to deny unless a sign is provided (v. 44-45). Alma sorrows at the hardness of his heart, but admits it is better that he alone be destroyed in his unbelief (v. 46) than to continue to lead others into destruction with his lies. So, Alma tells him that if he again denies God then he will be struck dumb so he cannot preach his lies anymore (v. 47). Korihor tries to skirt the issue of denying God, but he still rejects Alma's testimony and demands a sign (v. 48). Alma gives the sign that he warned Korihor of and he is struck dumb in the name of God (v. 49-50).

After he is struck dumb one of the priests present writes him asking if he is now convinced of the power of God (v. 51). Korihor now readily confesses everything having been punished. He confesses he knew there was a God (v. 52), but he was deceived by the devil to preach flattering words which even he ended up believing and this brought the curse on him (v. 53). He then asks Alma to have God reverse the curse and heal him (v. 54).

Alma declines to ask God to restore his speech, as he doesn't believe Korihor is truly repentant, but will just go back to his lies again (v. 55). And thus, the curse remained on him and he ended up being rejected by the people and turned to begging (v. 56).

v35 The question in the latter half of this verse is a jab by Alma. Alma has just caught Korihor in a lie, and he then asks him who it is that is truly deceiving the people.

v41, 44 Alma uses the Cosmological Argument as evidence against Korihor's insistence there is no discernable evidence of God. Korihor is left unable to rebut Alma's argument, so he changes the subject.

That wouldn't happen in a similar debate today. The Cosmological Argument is one that is very much under attack today as Atheists use various scientific theories as foils against it. The Big Bang is used to explain how the universe came into existence, so there is no need for God there, and then Evolution brought about life on earth, so once again God isn't necessary as a Prime Mover or Supreme Creator. The issue is not the science in and of itself. The issue is the use of these scientific ideas by polemicists to argue against religion and win the debate. Science in and of itself is not against religion, it is the attempt to understand order in the natural world. The science of Evolution is not the problem, it is the polemics of Evolution that is the problem. When contentious people use science to attack religious beliefs, it is simply a matter of pride, to win the argument. Science and polemics are entirely different in their purpose and goals.

v44 "the earth...its motion, yea, and all the planets", the Nephites clearly had a good understanding of astronomy, as archaeological evidence attests.

v50 Korihor was apparently struck both deaf and dumb. The priest writes to Korihor in v. 51. If Korihor could still hear it doesn't seem likely he would have written the message to him. But, since Korihor was no longer able to talk he simply initiated the conversation on paper to show him how to communicate now.

v51 "In whom did ye desire that Alma should show forth his sign? Would ye that he should afflict others, to show unto thee a sign?", it is not clear what point the priest is trying to make here. There is nothing in the preceding text indicating what kind of sign Korihor wanted to see, only what Alma threatened Korihor with in v. 47. Perhaps what the priest is saying is the equivalent of "What did you expect?"

v52-54 Korihor confesses immediately in the face of punishment, but he does so only in an attempt to avoid the punishment. He never accepts responsibility for his actions and repents of them, he just blames them on the devil and tries to portray himself as a deceived victim. Alma recognizes his lack of contrition and refuses to lift the curse (contrast Alma's own repentance process and conversion with Korihor's forced confession). Korihor's confession is about as genuine as is Cain's, cp. Moses 5:38-39. Perhaps Korihor's story of being deceived by the devil appearing as an angel is just another lie,

this time intended to ingratiate himself with Alma. In any case, it is plain from his subsequent actions that he doesn't make any effort to repent and make amends for his actions.

v53 If Korihor's confession in v. 52-54 is true and not a fabrication, then we can discern his underlying motives in preaching as he did. In this verse Korihor admits that he himself didn't really believe what he was preaching, but he did it because it was carnally appealing and so he would have success at it. So, what he was really after was success in preaching, to win people over to his way of thinking and he was willing to do whatever it took to have success. There is nothing in the text indicating he wanted wealth out of it, he simply wanted to be popular. And, by preaching a popular doctrine that was sensual he achieved that success to some degree until he was exposed as a fraud. We can only speculate at what underlying causes drove him to succeed at any cost.

57 Now the knowledge of what had happened unto Korihor was immediately published throughout all the land; yea, the proclamation was sent forth by the chief judge to all the people in the land, declaring unto those who had believed in the words of Korihor that they must speedily repent, lest the same judgments would come unto them. 58 And it came to pass that they were all convinced of the wickedness of Korihor; therefore they were all converted again unto the Lord; and this put an end to the iniquity after the manner of Korihor. And Korihor did go about from house to house, begging food for his support. 59 And it came to pass that as he went forth among the people, yea, among a people who had separated themselves from the Nephites and called themselves Zoramites, being led by a man whose name was Zoram--and as he went forth amongst them, behold, he was run upon and trodden down, even until he was dead. 60 And thus we see the end of him who perverteth the ways of the Lord; and thus we see that the devil will not support his children at the last day, but doth speedily drag them down to hell.

v57-60 Word spreads of Korihor's fate so all those who believed him will repent (v. 57), and they are converted back to the Lord. Korihor ends up begging door to door (v. 58), and he goes among a group of apostate Nephites where ends up being trampled to death (v. 59). Thus is the fate of those who follow the devil, as once they are no longer of any use to him he leaves them to be destroyed (v. 60).

v58 "And Korihor did go about from house to house, begging food", if Korihor was merely mute then why didn't he take up some form of manual labor for his support rather than beg? His resorting to begging makes more sense if he was both deaf and

dumb as that would make obtaining manual labor for pay more difficult. Having to beg would be utter humiliation for someone who was formerly driven to succeed at any cost to be popular.

v60 Mormon's closing editorial comment on Korihor sounds perhaps cliché. There are too many examples of evil people who delay justice, both temporal and eternal. Yes, in this case Korihor ended up getting his sooner rather than later, but this is not always the case. However, instead of it being trite, this might actually be a jab at the Zoramites, who are the subject of the next chapter. Korihor ends up among them, who are as bad as he is, and their lack of compassion end up leading to Korihor's untimely demise.

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