



CHURCH EDUCATION

The Holy Bible
The Book of Mormon



'...and they shall become one in thine hand.' Ezekiel 37.17

LESSON TITLE

Alma Judges Transgressors According to God's Commandments

TEACHER NOTES

45-minute lesson

UNIT 6 - Evidence of Authority and Establishing the Church

GRADES 7-9

HOLY BIBLE

Titus 1:9, "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."

To prepare for this lesson, study the scriptural references listed in **PROCEDURE**.

Q = Teacher asks question

THE BOOK OF MORMON

Mosiah 26:29, "Therefore I say unto you, Go; and 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."

Faith and Doctrine Article 6 We believe that mankind will be punished only for their own actual sins

OBJECTIVES

The student will be able to:

- Discuss reasons for discipline/accountability within the Church
- Discuss how to receive discipline respectfully
- Discuss how to give and receive forgiveness

MATERIALS

Bible and Book of Mormon

Object Lesson: 2- batches of Brownies/Cookies. Habanero hot sauce, Cayenne pepper, or some other undesirable topping

Board and marker

Task: Judgment Log, page 5

PROCEDURE

Motivation/Introduction (5-10 minutes)

Object Lesson: Teacher tries to entice students to eat a contaminated batch of brownies and relates it to not allowing sin to enter our bodies.

- Shows students a large plate full of delicious brownies (any type of delicious food can be substituted for brownies) and says that he/she brought them to share with the class.
- Unexpectedly, teacher pours a large amount of hot sauce (teacher should choose a sauce or seasoning that she is confident the students will not want to taste) on top of the brownies and smiles as he/she passes one out to each student saying, "Go ahead! Take a big bite! These look great, don't they?" (Students will be reluctant to taste the brownies.)
Q: What's wrong? Why won't you eat them brownies I made just for you? (Wait for students' to respond.)

Talking Points: Something bad can totally ruin something very good, just like the hot sauce totally ruined the taste of the brownies. No one would seriously put something like that into their bodies, because even though the brownies are good, they have been polluted with something bad.

Goals: Discuss reasons for discipline/accountability within the Church

Discuss how to receive discipline respectfully
Discuss how to give and receive forgiveness

Lesson Development (30 minutes)

- Familiarize students with the story found in Mosiah 26: how Alma disciplined the transgressors in the church.

Background Info: People from the younger generation began to challenge and persecute the people in the Church, causing much distress and dissension in the Church.

Some of the believers broke their covenants to serve God and began to commit acts of sin. Alma, the leader of the Church, was faced with the challenge of how to restore peace to the Church and how to deal with the people who broke their covenant.

Q: Do you think that Alma as the leader of the Church had the right to hold people accountable for their sins?

Q: Do our church leaders (i.e. elders, teachers, deacons, and deaconesses) have the right to hold YOU accountable for your sins?"

- Read **Mosiah 26:13-33** in which Alma inquires of the Lord what he should do about the sinners in the church.
- Ask students to summarize God's response. If they have trouble doing this, ask:

Q: How does the Lord feel about sinners who claim to follow God? (Look at verse 28.)

Q: Did the Lord give Alma the authority to judge the people?"

Q: Do you think it's fair that God gave Alma the right to judge the people of the Church? (Discuss this topic. Relate it back to the brownie scenario):

Q: How did you feel when I poured the hot sauce on the brownies? (e.g. lost my appetite, disappointed, felt like it wasn't fair that you added hot sauce without asking us if we wanted it on the brownie)

Talking Points: Alma may have felt the same disappointment when he saw the people of God bringing sin into the Church. He felt like something beautiful was being spoiled, and he felt it was his job as a leader to put a stop to it.

- Read aloud and discuss **Mosiah 27:13**. Ensure that students know that the Alma referred to in this verse was the son of Alma, the high priest, and he was an Unbeliever.

Q: Was it fair that God gave Alma the right to judge the people of the Church?

Talking Points: Our church leaders have a responsibility to hold us accountable to the standards Christ set up for us. If they ignored sin, then they would not be doing their job and the Church would become polluted and our relationship with God would become ruined.

Q: Besides church leaders, who else holds you accountable in your life?

Q: How can you respectfully receive advice/admonition from those who hold you accountable?

Q: In **Mosiah 26:29-32**, God told Alma how to judge the people. Do you consider this judgment particularly harsh or overly lenient? (Most students will probably say that it is a

fair judgment because it allows forgiveness to be given to those who seek it. Describe to them how this is a type of Christ.)

Talking Points: Let's talk more about forgiveness.

Yes, we do need to hold one another accountable, although our ultimate accountability will be to God; however, that doesn't give us the right to unjustly judge one another.

5. Read aloud again and discuss, **Mosiah 26:31**.

Talking Point: We need to help one another stay on the narrow path, and to do that we must forgive one another just like Christ forgave us.

6. Spend the remainder of the class discussing the following statements. (Perhaps write these on the board so students can see them, or just ask them orally).

True or False:

____ Forgiveness is optional. You only must forgive people if you want to.

____ You only must forgive people if you think they deserve it.

____ If you forgive someone, you completely let them off the hook for what they've done.

Q: How does one seek forgiveness?

- Acknowledges that he/she did something wrong
- Ask the other person to forgive him/her
- Ask God to forgive him/her
- Is willing to accept the punishment and understands that mercy, if extended, is a gift, undeserved
- Is determined to not break the same rule again
- Is grateful for being forgiven and for mercy extended

Q: How does one grant forgiveness?

- Tell the individual that he/she forgave them and will not hold anger toward them
- Reassures the person that he/she loves them and/or desires to have a good relationship with them
 - Read aloud **Romans 12:18**
- Give up his/her right to get even
 - Read aloud **Romans 12:17**
- Extend mercy - removes the debt the other person owes/ lets him/her totally off the hook
 - Read aloud **Romans 12:19**

- Releases resentment/anger with full purpose of heart, not begrudgingly
 - Read aloud **Romans 12:21**

Talking Point: This is how we show one another the love of God and keep one another in check.

Review/Assessment (5-10 minutes)

- Ask your class for forgiveness for pouring hot sauce on the brownies.
- They will probably laugh as you reveal another plate of brownies (keep the lid on the hot sauce this time) and distribute one to each student.
As you eat, ask if the students have any questions that the lesson might have sparked.
- If not, review the story in Mosiah 26 orally, asking them questions about the story to check their understanding.

Let the review time be an opportunity for the students to bring up issues in their minds.

Life Application

(Address and apply as the lesson is taught.)

As students discuss their feelings about being held accountable for their own actions and about forgiveness, they should understand how these issues relate to their everyday lives. Make these applications clear during the discussion.

Scripture Texts/ References/ Memory Verses (Suggested time: (2) minutes)

The Book of Mormon

Mosiah- chapters 18, 25 and 26

Memory Verse:

2 Timothy 3:16, 17, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Follow-Up/Take-Home Activities

1. Hand each student a Judgment Log.
2. Students keep a record or log of each time someone "judges" them (good or bad) in a single day (i.e. someone commenting on their behavior, attitude, or actions).
3. Students simultaneously keep a record of all the times they "judge" others.

4. During the next class, talk about the results.
 - Who do students mostly get “judged” by? Friends, parents, teachers?
 - Who do they often “judge”?
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 - Are they harsher or less harsh on their friends, parents, teachers, siblings, strangers, etc...?

Key words: evidence authority, establish church, Alma, accountability, accountable.

Judgement Log

I judged: (enter name)	Date	Reason for Judgment	I was judged by: (enter name)	Date	Reason for Judgment