Lesson 23
Alma 8–12

The *Gospel Doctrine Teacher’s Manual* gives this overview of the material in the lesson:

A. Alma 8–9. After preaching in Melek, Alma calls the people of Ammonihah to repentance, but they reject him. He leaves but is commanded by an angel to return. Alma is received by Amulek, and both are commanded to preach in Ammonihah.

B. Alma 10. Amulek preaches to the people of Ammonihah and describes his conversion. The people are astonished that there is another witness to Alma’s teachings. Amulek contends with unrighteous lawyers and judges.

C. Alma 11. Amulek contends with Zeezrom and testifies of the coming of Christ, the judgment of the wicked, and the plan of redemption.

D. Alma 12. Alma further explains Amulek’s words, warning against hard-heartedness and wickedness and testifying of the fall and the plan of redemption.

To keep the study materials to a usable length, I will concentrate on chapters 11 and 12, with brief questions for chapters 8–10. Perhaps the above outline will help keep things in context.
Alma 8

Verse 1: What does “order of the church” mean? Alma is said to have established it also in Zarahemla. There he did so by ordaining priests and elders (surprising that they didn’t already have them), baptizing repentant converts, and excommunicating unrepentant members (Alma 6:1–4). What kind of order does that suggest?

Verse 10: Alma communes with angels from time to time. Why, then, does he also have to “wrestle with God in prayer” (italics added)?

Alma 9

Verses 8–11: Prophets in the Book of Mormon often begin their calls to repentance by reminding the people of what the Lord has done for their ancestors (e.g., Alma the Younger did this in his sermon in Alma 5). Why?

Were a modern prophet delivering a sermon like this, to what might he refer to remind us of what the Lord has done?

Verse 17: Alma says that someday the Lamanites will learn the truth and, therefore, of the falsity of their fathers’ traditions. To what traditions is he referring? Does this mean that Native Americans will give up their cultural traditions when they are converted? Why or why not?

Verses 19–24: Why would the Lord prefer to have all the Nephites destroyed rather than allow them to continue in sin after he has blessed them? To unbelievers the Lord may sound petulant, like a “martyr-mother” who says, “Since
you are ungrateful after all I’ve done for you, I’ll show you.” How would you explain this to someone who saw these verses that way?

**Verse 26:** How does this description of the Savior square with verses 19–24?

### Alma 10

**Verses 1–6:** Does this fit with the pattern of preaching we have seen Alma use? (See the questions for Alma 8:9–11.)

**Verse 12:** In what sense has more than one person testified of the things that the people of Ammonihah are accused of? Alma accused them and mentioned things to come, but Amulek didn’t.

**Verses 13–15, 27, 32:** Might these verses say anything to us about our own day?

### Alma 11

**Verses 4–19:** Why do you think the Book of Mormon includes these monetary units? Why are they put here in the middle of the story of Alma and Amulek’s preaching? Why do you think the compilers of the Book of Mormon chose to include them? What purpose might this account of money serve in the latter days?

**Verse 21:** What does “devices of the devil” mean?

**Verse 22:** Why might Zeezrom begin with such an obvious and insulting temptation? Why not begin with something more subtle?
**Verse 25:** For what sin does Amulek say Zeezrom will be destroyed? For tempting him?

**Verse 34:** What does it mean to save the people in their sins?

**Verse 37:** This verse speaks of something that God cannot do. How does it explain that limitation on his power?

**Verse 38ff.:** Notice how Zeezrom’s one question brings a long, detailed response from Amulek. Why does Amulek answer as he does? Why not give Zeezrom a shorter, more simple answer?

**Verses 38–39:** What does it mean to say that Christ is the Eternal Father? What does it mean to say that he is the beginning and the end? What does it mean to say that he is the first and the last? Given our understanding of the eternal nature of spirits, how do you make sense of these statements about God?

**Verses 42–45:** Why does Alma tell them of the redemption of the body? How does this function in his call to repentance?

**Alma 12**

**Verse 1:** Zeezrom has become conscious of his guilt. What in particular might have brought about that consciousness? In what sense is Alma “unfolding the scriptures”?

**Verses 3–6:** Satan laid a trap for Zeezrom by getting Zeezrom to lay a trap for Alma. How is Satan’s trap similar to Zeezrom’s?

**Verse 8:** How has Zeezrom changed? (How can you tell?)

The most common synonym for mystery is secret. If many know the mysteries of God, how are they a secret? Notice that these words occur much more often in Restoration scriptures than in the Bible. Why do you think that is?

Verses 9–15: Here Alma indirectly explains why he told Zeezrom about temporal death and the resurrection. What is his explanation? What does it have to do with the mysteries of God?

Verse 9: What does “they shall not impart only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of men, according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him” mean in contemporary, ordinary English?

Verses 12–13: Verse 12 says we are brought to be judged of our works. Then verse 13 says that our hearts are judged to see whether they contain the word. What does the judgment of our hearts have to do with the judgment of our works? What does it mean to have the word in our hearts?
Verse 16: What does it mean to die in sin? Does the word in carry any particular weight?

Verses 17–18: Why is it a punishment to continue to live in our sins? How does this square with the discussion of everlasting punishment in Doctrine and Covenants 19? Do you think Alma knew of the explanation we see in the D&C?

Verses 20–21: Do you think Antionah’s questions are sincere? Why or why not?

Verse 24: What does it mean to say that life is probationary? Is the word being used as it is when we speak of criminals on probation? If so, is the implication that we have already been convicted?

Alma teaches here that life is the time given us to repent. How do we avoid a belief in original sin given these teachings?

Verses 26–27: These verses seem to answer the immediately previous questions. How?

Verse 31: Why is Gods capitalized in this verse? Usually it is capitalized only when it is used as the name of Deity, not when it is used to refer to an office or position. In what ways are we like Gods? Why is that significant?

Verses 32–34: Both verses 31 and 32 begin in the same way, with “Wherefore . . .” in one case and “Therefore . . .” in the other, but the two mean the same. That suggests that they logically follow from verse 30. How so? What things has the Lord done to make it possible for us to return to him?
Verse 37: What does “the rest of God” mean? How do we enter into it? Consider reading chapter 13 with this lesson. Is it a chapter on “the rest of God”? 