
Alma 11 — Every Joint to Its Proper Frame — The Nephite Money System, Zeezrom's Six Onties, and the Master Resurrection Discourse

Alma 11: still the tenth year of the reign of the judges (c. 82 BC), still inside Ammonihah, the people still gathered around Alma and Amulek. The chapter opens with what looks like an editorial intrusion — Mormon pausing to lay out the Nephite monetary system — but the pause is load-bearing: it explains why the lawyer class of Alma 10 had so much to gain. The judges are paid by the senine per day; Zeezrom now offers Amulek six onties of silver, the largest single unit, to deny the existence of God. Amulek, perceiving his thoughts by the Spirit, turns the bribe into a public exposure of priestcraft and then delivers the Book of Mormon's most developed pre-Pauline articulation of the resurrection — every joint to its proper frame, every hair to its head, the spirit and the body restored. The chapter ends with Zeezrom astonished and the people divided.

Alma 11 is the Book of Mormon's master resurrection chapter and one of the most doctrinally dense texts in the record. It does three things at once. First, it lays out the Nephite economy in detail, which is not editorial decoration but the load-bearing context for the bribe that follows. Second, it stages the confrontation between Amulek and Zeezrom — bribe offered, bribe refused, the most expert lawyer cross-examining a prophet under the Spirit's discernment. Third, it delivers the precise anatomical resurrection doctrine that will anchor Latter-day Saint eschatology for two centuries.

Hebrew Word Studies

senine / senum / onti / sheqel (סֵנִינָה / סֵנוּמָה / אֲוֲנִי / שֶׁקֶל) — **Nephite gold base unit (one day judge-wages) / Nephite silver base unit / Nephite highest silver unit (seven days judge-wages) / OT Hebrew shekel vv. 3–19.** The chapter's four monetary anchors. *Senine* is the smallest named gold unit, equal to a judge's daily wage (v. 3). The Nephite economy is pegged to the judge's labor: every other unit is defined relative to the senine, and the senine is itself defined by the judge's day. *Senum* is the smallest named silver unit, also a judge's daily wage — the gold and silver have parity at the base, providing bimetallic stability. *Onti* is the highest named silver unit, equal to seven senums (v. 13). Zeezrom's six onties of silver therefore amount to forty-two senums — forty-two days of judge wages, about six weeks of elite civil income, calibrated as the largest unit a man could reasonably pocket without raising suspicion. The chapter quietly notes that the tempter knew the price. *Sheqel* is the pre-Lehite Hebrew standard, the weight and coin behind the half-shekel temple tax of Ex. 30:13. The chapter explicitly distances itself from the shekel system: the Nephites have no temple tax built into their currency, because their economy serves a civil order, not a Jerusalem-style sanctuary economy.

From the Chapter's Architecture

And the chapter is the hinge into the densest doctrinal sequence in the Book of Mormon. Alma 11 leaves Zeezrom trembling; Alma 12 will open with Alma reading his conscience and pressing the doctrine of the Fall and the plan of redemption; Alma 13 will rise to the priesthood after the order of the Son of God. Three of the most cited and most studied chapters in Latter-day Saint scripture stand in a row, and Alma 11 is the chapter that sets the table for both of them.