

Jarom 1 — Jarom — A Short Book on Purpose: Keeping the Law of Moses While Looking Forward to Christ, and the Prophets Who Kept a Hard People Alive

Jarom 1: Enos's son Jarom keeps the small plates and chooses, on purpose, to write very little; the Nephites keep the law of Moses while looking forward to the Messiah; the prophets, priests, and teachers stir the people to repentance; c. 421–361 BC; 238 years from Lehi's departure.

Jarom is one of the shortest books in scripture — fifteen verses, and Jarom tells you up front why. The plates are small. His fathers have already written the important things. So he is going to keep this brief and pass it on. That is the whole posture of the book, and it turns out to be a quiet lesson all by itself: sometimes the most faithful thing a person can do is not add more.

Hebrew Word Studies

me■a■ / dai / yeter (מַעַלְלֵי / דַּי / יֵתֵר) — **a little / enough, sufficient / surplus, excess v. 2.** Three Hebrew words sit underneath Jarom's restraint. *Me■a■* means "a little, a few" — the same word that runs through the Old Testament's slow-and-steady promises ("by little and little," Exodus 23:30). *Dai* means "enough, sufficient"; it's the word standing behind the divine name *El Shaddai*, God-who-is-enough. *Yeter* means "surplus, what's left over, excess." Put them together and you have Jarom's logic: he writes *me■a■* because what his fathers gave already amounts to *dai*, and anything past that risks being mere *yeter* — words for their own sake. Scripture warns about exactly that surplus: "add thou not unto his words" (Proverbs 30:6); "ye shall not add unto the word which I command you" (Deuteronomy 4:2). The Restoration knows the same restraint from the other side — there are things "not lawful for man to write" (D&C 76:115–119). Saying less can preserve more.

ta■at / kavvanah / ke■illu (תַּאֲת / קַבְּוָנָה / כְּעִלּוּ) — **in place of, for / intent, aim, purpose / as though, as if v. 11.** Three words to hold verse 11. *Ta■at* is the little preposition for "for which, in place of which" — the grammar behind "the intent *for which* it was given." *Kavvanah* is "intent, aim, direction"; the law isn't aimless, it leans toward something. And *ke■illu* — "as though, as if" — is the rabbis' own word for treating a thing not-yet-real as if it were already real. Put them together: the law's *kavvanah* is Christ, and faith treats the Christ-still-to-come *ke■illu* he is already here. Paul lands in the same place — "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Romans 10:4) — and so does the Restoration, which speaks of the dead having "faith in the redemption of Christ before he came" (D&C 138:35). Faith closes the distance between the shadow and the substance.

From the Chapter's Architecture

And he hands them on. Jacob gave them to Enos, Enos to Jarom, Jarom now to Omni — and Omni will pass them to Amaron, who passes them to Chemish, then Abinadom, then Amaleki. Count the chain back: Lehi, Nephi, Jacob, Enos, Jarom, Omni. Six generations of keepers, each one trusting the next with the record. The book that almost says nothing is, itself, a single faithful link holding the line.