

Book of Mormon 14
For a Wise Purpose
(Enos, Jarom, Omni, Words of Mormon)
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(This material shows the Lord's ultimate "wise purpose." That purpose is being fulfilled today).

I. Enos shows that the words of the Fathers can change lives.

- A. He *hungered and sought truth because of words spoken by his father* (Enos 1-3).
- B. He prayed day and night and received The Pearl of Forgiveness.

II. The forgiveness of his sins aroused a desire to bring such a mighty blessing to all.

- A. Enos longed for all Lehi's children to *find forgiveness through the words of their fathers*.
- B. The Lord promised *their words* would indeed be kept and handed down in records, to *change lives in the future* (Enos 13-20; Words of Mormon 2).

III. The Lord guided Mormon, for a *wise purpose*, to include the small plates of Nephi.

- A. Only part of the purpose was to thwart schemes of Joseph Smith's enemies.
- B. Because they contained the most spiritual parts of the records, the *ultimate purpose was that the records would have great power on their descendants, that "they may once again be a delightful people"* (W. of M 6-8).
 - 1. "They contained prophesyings and revelations" (Words of Mormon 6).
- C. Mormon gives all the records to his son Moroni to complete and to hide up that they "may profit [future generations]" (W. of M 2).

IV. The *ultimate wise purpose* of the small plates of Nephi and all Book of Mormon scriptures is being fulfilled every day.

- A. There are myriads of examples.
 - 1. "As a young man, Adrian Paz Zambrano of Honduras wondered why the Bible mentions only the area around Jerusalem and wondered if Jesus Christ visited other nations. "Years later two missionaries of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints came to my house," wrote Adrian. "They showed me the Book of Mormon and invited me to read in 3 Nephi, which tells about Christ visiting the Americas. As I read, I remembered the questions I had when I was young. I had found the answers. Because of the Book of Mormon, I learned that Jesus Christ visited the Americas after His Resurrection. I was filled with joy because *I knew that God loved all His children regardless of location or circumstance.*" (Emphasis added)
Adrian and his wife prayed together to know if the Church was true, and both received a testimony. They were baptized and confirmed, and one year later their family was sealed in the temple. (*The Ensign*, January 2012, p. 46).

B. Elder Gene R. Cook in "Miracles among the Lamanites," November 1980, *The Ensign*, told how the people of Latin and South America are today leading lives which are great examples of "humility, meekness, teachableness." He gave one example of "a Lamanite missionary baptizing eighteen souls in a matter of three weeks...." And of multitudes of others he wrote:

“Their lives teach the basics of prayer, fasting, priesthood blessings. A sister unable to have children has a daughter, receiving that gift indirectly through a blessing given to her husband in which the promise was extended to her. A sick sister is raised at the very moment from her sick-bed by a priesthood blessing. The devil openly opposes the work and as needed is controlled by the priesthood. Servants of the Lord partake of food and water that is poison to them and receive no harm. **A sister ... is promised in a patriarchal blessing that one day General Authorities will be served at her humble table. Today she is married to a Lamanite stake president with the prophetic statement fulfilled.** (Emphasis added).

V. The promised miracle of the Book of Mormon extends to far more than Lehi’s descendants.

A. Remember the promises in introductory pages to **“all men everywhere.”**

Elder Gerald Lund recounted a miracle shared by former missionaries in the MTC.

The missionaries once served in Chicago. A door they knocked on, when opened, emitted such a strong, repulsive smell it nearly knocked them over. The woman inside was filthy, as was her apartment, which was littered with whisky bottles and with flies crawling over rotting food.

They were eager to leave, so they apologized and tried to do so. To their dismay, the woman invited them inside. However, the situation was so awful that one struggled to keep from throwing up. He hurriedly reached into his bag, offered her a Book of Mormon, saying, “Here, read this. It will change your life. We’ll come back later.” They then plunged out the door.

A week later one reminded the other they should go back and get their Book of Mormon. After all it had cost them a dollar. The other replied, “No way. It’s not worth it.”

A month passed. Finally, because they were in the area, they decided they would, after all, go and get their book back. When the door opened they had no time to speak before the woman grabbed them and said, “You missionaries. Where have you been?”

Then they noticed a huge difference.

To their astonishment, she was clean and her hair combed. Her apartment was clean as well, with no signs of past addictive habits. She then told them that because she expected them to come back as promised, she felt she should read the book. Not only had she read it, but she had read it twice, and she had looked up every reference given at the foot of every page.

The Book of Mormon had changed her. Previously, not only had she smoked, drank, but even used hard drugs. She had completely given all that up, and she requested baptism.

As marvelous as this story is, it has many replicas: different persons, different sins, different circumstances. But they all have the same result --- a completely changed life!

VI. As with Enos, **true forgiveness creates a huge desire to share that miracle with others.**

A. While many in the world believe in some concept of redemption, that sense of salvation has engendered little effort to help others, except for a relatively few of their numbers.

B. **A surer and higher knowledge of salvation motivates millions** of Latter-day Saints to serve missions at great personal sacrifice, to labor in temples regularly to bring Celestial joy to the deceased, and to strive continually to spiritually bless those around them.

C. It is the Lord’s Latter-day records, beginning with the Book of Mormon, which leads to that surer and higher knowledge, and thus greater motivation to bring salvation to others.

1. While some say we need no more than the Bible, obviously, **the more words of the Lord men receive, the stronger becomes their faith and their testimony.**

D. Because of a written record, the former destruction of the Jaredites, due to their unrighteousness, was brought to light (Omni 20-22). Thus the Nephites, and **we in the Latter-days**, have additional warnings that those who dwell upon this land must obey or be swept off.

E. Note in contrast the results of *not* having the written word of the Lord.

1. Because of no written records, the Mulekites' language had become corrupt; and they even denied there was a Creator (Omni 1:17).

VII. **The value of records is shown in the Lamanites seeking to destroy them** (Enos. v. 14).

A. Since the Lamanites prevailed in the ultimate war, **they likely did destroy** records.

B. Moroni buried the most precious records so they would not be destroyed, and ironically **could bless the lives of the descendants of those very Lamanites who sought their destruction.**

VIII. Mormon testified that there were many records kept (Words of Mormon v. 11-12).

A. Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Wilford Woodruff and Oliver Cowdery all claimed, as recorded by many separate witnesses, that not only the gold plates, **but many other records do still exist, to come forth in some future day.**

Brigham Young wrote: "I believe I will take the liberty to tell you of another circumstance that will be as marvelous as anything can be. This is an incident in the life of Oliver Cowdery... I tell these things to you, and I have a motive for doing so. I want to carry them to the ears of my brethren and sisters, and to the children also, that they may grow to an understanding of some things that seem to be entirely hidden from the human family. Oliver Cowdery went with the Prophet Joseph when he deposited these plates. Joseph did not translate all of the plates; there was a portion of them sealed, which you can learn from the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. When Joseph got the plates, the angel instructed him to carry them back to the Hill Cumorah, which he did. Oliver says that when Joseph and Oliver went there, the hill opened, and they walked into a cave, in which there was a large and spacious room. He says he did not think, at the time, whether they had the light of the sun or artificial light; but that it was just as light as day. They laid the plates on a table; it was a large table that stood in the room. Under this table there was a pile of plates as much as two feet high, and there were altogether in this room more plates than probably many wagon loads; they were piled up in the corners and along the walls" (*Journal of Discourses*, 19:38).

B. The fact that so many of the early prophets spoke of these additional records, again as testified to by many separate witnesses, makes it difficult to reject the testimony as true.

IX. There are many evidences of ancient religious writings found in the Americas.

A. These include the Bat Creek Stone which experts translate as saying "for the Judeans."

B. The Decalogue Stone, found in Ohio, contains the Ten Commandments in block Hebrew [a type of writing now known to be contemporary with Lehi].

C. An ancient stone with writings is on display in Moundsville, West Virginia. Experts disagree as to their interpretation.

D. There are thousands of writings on slate found by multiple individuals in multiple locations in Michigan and other states, which contain pictures with texts of great events such as the Creation, the Fall, the Flood, and foreknowledge of Jesus Christ. They contain some material that could only have been known by people with true Gospel understanding.

E. Unfortunately some scholars **refuse to accept anything deviating from belief Native Americans came over the land bridge from Asia so automatically label all such items "frauds."**

1. This in spite of other scholars, not with less expertise but with less power, noting this is done with prejudice and without considering many evidences of their authenticity.

2. There have also been many religious writings found in Latin countries, showing ancient writing and gospel understanding existed on both continents.