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Title

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Abstract Review of *Moroni's Promise: The Converting Power of the Book of Mormon* (1995), by Glenn L. Pearson.

Glenn L. Pearson. *Moroni's Promise: The Converting Power of the Book of Mormon*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1995. xi + 116 pp., with subject and scripture indexes. $9.95.

Reviewed by Phillip R. Kunz

The title of this book was very intriguing to me. As a young missionary in the 1950s, before the standardized missionary plan was prepared, we had a discussion on the Book of Mormon, in which we told the people about the book and invited them to put Moroni's promise to the test. We did not teach from the Book of Mormon, nor did we really refer to it after that. We did not know how.

Since President Benson's emphasis on the Book of Mormon there has been more attention given to the converting power of this scripture. Pearson has written a very engaging narrative that makes his book interesting to read and ponder. Throughout the book he has used quotations from himself and others with whom he interacted. While the exact wording of these conversations is probably not totally accurate, although he relied on his journals and diaries, the nature of the conversations is probably accurate, and using the conversations does lend itself to showing the reader how to make use of the Book of Mormon as a tool for conversion.

While I recently presided as a mission president over more than six hundred missionaries, I found that a testimony of the Book of Mormon does indeed lead one to a testimony of Jesus Christ, of Joseph Smith, of the Church which he helped to restore upon the earth, and of a modern-day prophet. I believe that this book would have helped some of my missionaries learn how to use the Book of Mormon more effectively. For this reason I would recommend *Moroni's Promise*.

I found the use of one secondary source a bit disconcerting. On page 72 the account of Joseph and Sidney receiving section 76 of the Doctrine and Covenants is cited. The author quotes the *Juvenile Instructor* for the account "as quoted in Lyndon W.

Cook, *The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith.*" With the *Juvenile Instructor* so easily available in libraries, the author would have done well to cite the original source. If the author had checked the original source, he would have noticed that Cook, in his version, omitted the portion from the original quotation indicated by the italicized words below:

> Joseph would, at intervals, say: "What do I see?" *as one might say while looking out the window and beholding what all in the room could not see.* Then he would relate what had been seen or what he was looking at.

I liked the book, *except* for pages 97 through 110, in which the author discusses organic evolution. Here the book appears merely to add to comments left over from some previous encounters with this topic. Perhaps further development of the topic in terms of how it fits with Moroni's promise would have assisted me. I would have preferred that such statements as "The Book of Mormon teaches that Adam and Eve were our first parents" or "The Book of Mormon teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ created the earth" had been used to demonstrate that Christ did create the earth and that Adam and Eve were real persons and were the first parents.

I am not convinced that the Book of Mormon says or wants to say much more than this about evolution. I did not find this section to be of the same spirit as the rest of the book. The creation of the Grand Canyon and the reality of dinosaur fossils are on a back burner for me. I am not sure how they came about, but I know that Christ is the Redeemer. The evolution question does not concern me as much as the sacred nature of the Book of Mormon and how it can help bring about conversion. The early part of the book I found to be very stimulating and, in spite of the treatment of evolution, I would still recommend the book.