



# Books in Review

## THE BIBLE VS. THE BOOK OF MORMON

by Living Hope Ministries

66-minute video, \$19.95

The folks responsible for the impressive presentation using DNA evidence against *The Book of Mormon* have delivered another excellent video production. Mormons have long claimed that *The Book of Mormon*, their most well-known scripture, is superior to the Bible. Living Hope Ministries, in their latest undertaking, examines whether *The Book of Mormon* is really greater than — or even comparable to — the Bible. Enlisted are the testimonies of archaeologists, anthropologists, geographers, and linguists in response to that question. The effort comprises about 40 interviews in the United States and six foreign countries.

The presentation begins with a brief historical background and timeline of both the Bible and *The Book of Mormon*. The viewer is then confronted with fact after fact as to the lack of evidence for the Mormon scripture. Among the facts presented:

- No maps of the lands and locations described in *The Book of Mormon* are available because they cannot be established. The Latter-day Saints church is silent on the geography of its scripture.
- It is impossible that the vast civilizations portrayed in *The Book of Mormon* could have existed without leaving an archaeological trace.
- *The Book of Mormon* is wrong in its details of the agriculture, animals, and weaponry of the early American continent.
- *The Book of Mormon* is lacking any manuscript evidence, thereby revealing itself to be a 19th-century creation. Likewise, linguists discount “Reformed Egyptian,” the language from which Joseph Smith, Jr. is said to have translated his scripture.

When these findings are contrasted with what scholars know about the Bible, it is confirmed as authentic, while *The Book of Mormon* is discredited as a fraud. *The Book of Mormon* is ultimately asked to be taken on faith, but faith

is not a belief *against* the evidence, but a *response* to it. As one scholar noted, *The Book of Mormon* has absolutely no authority or integrity whatsoever.

The video also contrasts the Jesus of the Bible with the Jesus of *The Book of Mormon*. The conclusion is that the Jesus of *The Book of Mormon* is a product of Joseph Smith, Jr., and does not relate to the Jesus Christ of the Bible. This statement is denied by most Mormons, but is sanctioned by current LDS prophet and president Gordon B. Hinckley.

This is a wonderful presentation, not only to entreat Mormons to consider and weigh the facts, but also for Christians to ponder and comprehend. It is available in both DVD and VHS formats.

—MKG

## WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH WICCA?

by Steve Russo

Bethany House Publishers, 192 pages, \$11.99

Wicca, or witchcraft, is increasingly attracting teens across the country. Television shows such as *Sabrina* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*; movies such as *The Craft* and *Harry Potter*; “Goddess” t-shirts, jewelry, and other pop-culture items all make it possible for a person to become immersed in the witchcraft theme. Celebrities such as Tori Amos, Stevie Nicks, Sarah McLachlan, Cybill Shepherd, Roseanne, Chrissie Hynde, Olympia Dukakis, Marianne Williamson, Deepak Chopra, Erica Jong, Camille Paglia, and Fairuza Balk all add to the saturation.

Gone is the black-hatted, pointy-nosed wicked woman riding into the night sky on a broomstick. Now it is the attractive, sensible teenagers portrayed as either Sabrina or Buffy or the clever Samantha of *Bewitched*. These characters, with the help of a complete shift through various media images, have given Wicca a positive appeal. Wicca has become the girl-friendly religion of magic and psychic powers, which emphasizes feelings and experiences.

Russo points out the differences between Wicca and Christianity, and throughout his work brings the reader back to what the Bible teaches regarding various issues

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