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Turning to the Lord With the Whole Heart: The Doctrine of Repentance in the Bible and the Book of Mormon

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Source: *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture*, Volume 20 (2016), pp. 177-246
Published by: The Interpreter Foundation

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INTERPRETER

A Journal of Mormon Scripture

Volume 20 · 2016 · Pages 177-246

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Loren & Tina Spendlove

Offprint Series

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ISSN 2372-1227 (print)
ISSN 2372-126X (online)

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Turning to the Lord With the Whole Heart: The Doctrine of Repentance in the Bible and the Book of Mormon

Loren & Tina Spendlove

Abstract: *Repentance is considered one of the foundational principles of the gospel. As demonstrated in this article, there is a harmony in how repentance is portrayed in the Old Testament, New Testament, and Book of Mormon. In all three books the principle of repentance is shown to be a two-part process of turning away from sin and returning to the Lord through good works. Just as faith has been called "active belief," repentance could be called "active remorse," and must be accompanied by good works to be effective in our lives. The goal and end result of sincere repentance is a turning to the Lord with the whole heart, enabling us to return to the presence of God.*

As children in our LDS Primary classes we were taught that repentance was a four-step process, also known as the 4-Rs: 1. *Recognize* the sin, 2. Feel *remorse*, 3. Make *restitution*, and 4. *Resolve* not to do it again. While this may serve a valuable purpose in teaching the doctrine of repentance to the children of the Church, as we progress in our knowledge of the gospel it is important that we develop a deeper understanding of this principle. This paper addresses a broader definition of repentance and demonstrates the doctrinal agreement of the principle of complete repentance as taught in the Bible and the Book of Mormon.

The word *repent*, in its various forms (repenting, repented, repentance, etc.) shows up with differing rates of recurrence within the scriptures. *Repent* appears with much greater frequency in the Book of Mormon than it does in the Old or New Testaments. If one places all three books on the same footing by normalizing the data[1], the disparity

1 Normalizing the data creates a common denominator by assigning the same number of pages as the current version of the LDS Old Testament (1,184 pages), to the New Testament and the Book of Mormon. The "Normalized" column in Appendix 1 shows how many occurrences of *repent* would theoretically occur.

between the Book of Mormon and the Bible becomes even more apparent. Appendix 1 shows that the normalized usage of *repent* in the Book of Mormon is four times greater than in the New Testament and nearly eighteen times greater than in the Old Testament.

Several factors contribute to this disparity in usage, including that the King James translators did not provide us with the *best* translations for Hebrew and Greek words rendered as *repent* in the Old and New Testaments. The Oxford English dictionary (OED) defines *repent* merely as a feeling — primarily one of contrition, regret, or sorrow for something that one has done or omitted to do, including sins.[2] What is missing from this definition is any hint of restitution — righting the wrong — or even a resolution to abandon the act, the final two Rs of the 4-Rs. Webster's 1828 dictionary agrees with the OED's definition.[3]

The cause of this deficiency is a fundamental flaw at the root of the word *repent*. It is derived from the Latin *repoenitet* and simply means "to be sorry again."[4] "The Vulgate has it 'do penance' [*paenitentiam agite*], and Wycliff has followed that,"[5] which led to the defective word continuing into the KJV. Biblical commentators have long agreed that *repent* is a very unfortunate choice — a mistranslation — for the original Hebrew and Greek words.[6], [7] John A. Broadus added:

> This Latin word, penitence, apparently connected by etymology with pain, signifies grief or distress, and is rarely extended to a change of purpose, thus corresponding to the Hebrew word *[nacham*] which we render 'repent,' but not

2 *Oxford English Dictionary*, http://oed.com, s.v. "Repent."

3 Noah Webster, *American Dictionary of the English Language, Noah Webster 1828, Original Facsimile Edition* (San Francisco: Foundation for American Christian Education, 2010), s.v. "repent." Webster did not paginate this text, but the volume and signature numbers are printed at the bottom of every fourth leaf.

4 Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary, Volume 1: The Christbook, Matthew 1–12* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), 86.

5 Wesley J. Perschbacher, *Word Pictures of the New Testament, Volume 1: The gospel according to Matthew, The gospel according to Mark* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2004), 41.

6 J. Glentworth Butler, *Topical Analysis of the Bible: A Re-Statement of its Moral and Spiritual Truths, Drawn Directly from the Inspired Text* (New York: Butler Bible Work Company, 1897), 443.

7 Liz Disley, *Hegel, Love and Forgiveness* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 15.

> corresponding to the terms employed in Old Testament and New Testament exhortations.[8]

To simplify the narration and navigation of this paper we have divided the material into three principal sections: Old Testament, New Testament, and Book of Mormon. We have allowed for some crossover of scriptural passages within each section to enable a more fluid discussion of the subject matter.

Section I — Repentance in the Old Testament

Nacham נחם — "Repent" in the KJV Old Testament

The Hebrew verb *nacham* (נחם) is the word that is most often translated as *repent* in the KJV Old Testament. Among its varied connotations, *nacham* means to be sorry, to be moved to pity, to grieve, to console or comfort oneself, or to have compassion for others.[9] The word *repent* occurs only 45 times in the KJV Old Testament, and 42 of those are derived from *nacham*. However, "it should be noted that 'repent' is not always the best translation for the Hebrew verb nacham, but it is the translation used by the King James Version."[10] While *nacham* involves feelings of remorse, sorrow or grief, it does not suggest any corrective actions. In this sense it is a good fit for the OED's definition of repent and may explain why the KJV translators rendered it that way. But *nacham* does not measure up with the 4 Rs from our Primary lesson nor does it come close to adequately describing the complete Old Testament doctrine of repentance.

Another problem with the translation of *nacham* as *repent* is that 83% of the time (35 out of 42 occurrences), it is God who is doing the repenting in the Old Testament (See Appendix 2). "Can God repent? Can he change? This is the question. Virtually all Christian theologians would say, 'No. He is the Unchangeable One.' So what does this Hebrew expression mean?"[11]

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8 John A. Broadus, *Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Philadelphia, American Baptist Publication Society, 1888), 34.

9 Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, Charles A. Briggs, eds., *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), 636–637.

10 Daniele Pitts, *In God I Do Not Have a Past* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2010), 18.

11 *Holman Old Testament Commentary* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), 182.

In its most basic sense, *nacham* only means to *grieve* or *regret*. The very first occurrence of the word *repent* in the KJV is in Genesis 6:6, where we read, "And it repented [*nacham*] the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." Concerning this verse, Ulmer explained, "The English word repented is actually not the most accurate translation of the Hebrew word. The word translated as 'repented' in the King James Version is best translated as grieved."[12] The New International Version (NIV) renders this verse as, "The LORD *regretted* that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled."

If Not *Nacham*, then What?

Of the 45 total occurrences of *repent* in the KJV Old Testament, three are derived from a different Hebrew verb — *shuv* (שוב).[13] Among its several definitions, *shuv* primarily means to *turn back* or *return*.[14] The *Encyclopaedia Judaica* explains that true repentance is much more than mere remorse, or *nacham*. Real repentance involves concrete action on our part to abandon our error and transform our lives for the better:

> Inner contrition must be followed by outward acts; remorse must be translated into deeds. Two substages are involved in this process: first, the negative one of ceasing to do evil (Isaiah 33:15; Psalms 15; 24:4) and then, the positive step of doing good (Isaiah 1:17; 58:5ff.; Jeremiah 7:3; 26:13; Amos 5:14–15; Psalms 34:15–16; 37:27). Again, the richness of the biblical language used to describe man's active role in the process testifies to its centrality, e.g., incline the heart to the Lord (Joshua 24:23), make oneself a new heart (Ezekiel 18:31), circumcise the heart (Jeremiah 4:4), wash the heart (Jeremiah 4:14), and break one's fallow ground (Hosea 10:12) However, all these expressions are subsumed and summarized by one verb which dominates the penitential literature of the Bible, שוב (*shuv, shwv*).[15]

12 Kenneth C. Ulmer, *Passionate God* (Bloomington, MN: Chosen Books, 2013), not paginated (Chapter 5).

13 *Shuv* (שוב) is sometimes rendered *shuwb, shwv,* or *shub*.

14 Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, Charles A. Briggs, eds., *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 996.

15 *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Second Edition, Volume 7, 127, s.v. "Forgiveness."

While *nacham* plays a small role in the Hebrew definition of repentance, *shuv* is the lead actor. Indeed, *shuv* (turn or return) is the term that stands out in the repentance vocabulary of the Hebrew Bible, even though the KJV translators rarely rendered it so. "It is noticeable that the prophets nowhere exhort men to 'repent' (though telling them to mourn and weep over their sins), but use the simple and practical word 'turn.'"[16] The two substages of the repentance process — ceasing to do evil, and doing good — demonstrate that repentance is not just a single, but a double turn: *shuv* + *shuv*, hereafter shown as $shuv_2$. "This root [*shuv*] combines in itself both requisites of repentance: to turn from the evil and to turn to the good"[17] [bracketed text ours]. *Shuv* shows up with great frequency in the Old Testament, and carries with it many different connotations:

> The root-verb שוב (*shub*) generally means to turn back or to return. This very common verb (*HAW Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* says it's the twelfth most frequently occurring verb in the Old Testament) is used in the regular, expectable sense of physically turning around and going back to some place (Numbers 23:5, Judges 3:19). But [most significantly] it refers to a mental or spiritual returning, away from evil and vice, and towards virtue and God (Numbers 14:43, Hosea 6:1).[18]

Although *shuv* is used more than one thousand times in the Hebrew Bible, the great majority of those do not represent repentance in any way. For example, "they returned [*shuv*] from searching of the land after forty days" (Numbers 13:25). We excluded all such passages from our study. Even so, we were able to identify 176 occurrences of the use of *shuv* (or one of its derivatives) in which the usage reflects either turning toward sin and away from God, or turning away from sin and toward God. Some of the important derivatives of *shuv* include *meshuvah* (משובה, backsliding), *shovav* (שובב, backsliding), and *teshuvah* (תשובה, answer or return).

Numerous passages from the Hebrew Bible could be cited to demonstrate the $shuv_2$ principle, but we have limited our selection to only a small sampling:

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16 Broadus, *Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*, 34.

17 *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Second Edition, Volume 17, 221, s.v. "Repentance."

18 *Abarim Publications' Biblical Dictionary*, Retrieved from: http://www.abarim-publications.com/Dictionary/si/si-w-b.html#.Vj37H_mrSM_.

> Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return [shuv] unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. (Isaiah 55:7)
>
> And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return [*shuv*] unto me with their whole heart. (Jeremiah 24:7)
>
> It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return [*shuv*] every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin. (Jeremiah 36:3)
>
> Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Repent [*shuv*], and turn [*shuv*] yourselves from your idols; and turn away [*shuv*] your faces from all your abominations. (Ezekiel 14:6)

Returning to God

There are several verbs in the Hebrew language that involve the idea of *turning*, including *panah* (פנה), and *sur* (סור,) but it is *shuv* that most properly expresses the idea of returning to God from our sinful ways.[19] The first occurrence of *shuv* in the Bible is in Genesis 3:19, following the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. In this verse, Adam was told that because of his transgression he would "*return* unto the ground" from where he was "taken," and "unto dust shalt thou *return*." Newman provided a wonderful explanation of this verse:

> The metaphor that most fully captures the process of repentance is that of returning, most often expressed in the verb shuv. In its most basic sense, this designates the process of going back to our origins or returning to our proper, natural place. Powerful examples of this concept are found throughout the Bible.
>
> > By the sweat of your brow
> >
> > Shall you get bread to eat,
> >
> > Until you return [*shuvkha*] to the ground—

19 Louis E. Newman, *Repentance: The meaning and practice of teshuvah* (Woodstock, VT, Jewish Lights Publishing, 2010), 71.

> For from it you were taken.
> For dust you are,
> And to dust you shall return [*tashuv*]. (Genesis 3:19)
> As it was,
> And the lifebreath returns [*tashuv*] to God
> Who bestowed it. (Ecclesiastes 12:7)
>
> This idea of something being restored to its primary or original location is frequently extended in the prophetic writings to the idea of the people of Israel being returned by God to their land[20] [bracketed text in original].

Pamela Gottfried skillfully added to this notion of returning to our place or origin:

> In the context of repentance, it would not be logical to return to one's previous behavior. *Teshuvah* [repentance, derived from the verb *shuv*] cannot be about returning to repeat our mistakes. Instead, its essence could be to return to a more pure state of being, to return to the Garden of Eden before mistakes were ever invented. We long to return to a simpler time, when we were free to be human beings yet unburdened by the need to repair a broken world and our broken selves. *Teshuvah* is a return to the beginning when the world was whole, when we were first created, blameless and without sin. It is a return to a wholeness of the spirit; it is a rebirth of the soul.[21]

Hugh Nibley contributed to the idea of a metaphorical return to the Garden — of going back to the presence of God:

> Zion is a *return* to a former state of excellence. The gospel message today is that we must prepare ourselves to *return* to the Garden again, by the wisdom of hard experience. But he [Adam] *was* to *return*. It is in that state and in those paradisiacal surroundings that he is to spend the eternities. The saints in every dispensation have always worked and prayed for the day when God "shall open the gates of paradise, and [he] shall remove the threatening sword against Adam, and he shall

20 Newman, *Repentance: The meaning and practice of teshuvah*, 74.

21 Pamela Jay Gottfried, *Found in Translation, Common Words of Uncommon Wisdom* (Lulu.com, 2010), 62.

> give to the saints to eat from the tree of life, … and all the saints shall clothe themselves with joy."[22] [emphasis added]

Regarding the eventual return of Adam and Eve to the Garden, Nibley also observed:

> One commonly thinks of "Cherubim and the flaming sword" as posted to keep Adam and Eve from returning to the garden — that may be so, temporarily, but eventually they *are* to return; Paradise must be regained; indeed, the purpose of the ordinances, especially of the Opening of the Mouth, is to make the return to the garden possible.[23] [emphasis original]

Nibley further explained that according to the Pistis Sophia, the time will come "when the sword will be removed for Adam and he may reach forth his hand and partake of the fruit of the tree of life."[24] Joseph Fielding McConkie added that the Garden of Eden is "the archetype of our temples," and that it was from there that Adam and Eve "ventured into the lone and dreary world that they and their posterity might prove themselves worthy to *return again to that divine presence*."[25] [emphasis added]

Returning to God from our wicked ways — often expressed as a return to the Garden of Eden — is at the heart of the principle of repentance, and is embodied in the word *shuv*. "Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return [*shuv*] unto me, and I will return [*shuv*] unto you, saith the LORD of hosts" (Mal 3:7). Transgression drove our parents from the Garden, and it is only through repentance that we, their posterity, can return. It is striking that $shuv_2$ incorporates the whole of the fall and the redemption of mankind — *shuv* is both the problem (turning to sin) and the solution (turning back to God). Our personal fall is the result of our turning toward transgression, while redemption becomes effective in our lives only when we turn from sin back to God: "Return [*shuv*] unto me; for I have redeemed thee" (Isaiah 44:22). It is only by applying the principle of $shuv_2$ (complete repentance) in our lives that we can return to the presence of God — to our place of origin.

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22 Hugh Nibley, *Approaching Zion* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1989), 11.

23 Hugh Nibley, *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1975), 181.

24 Ibid., 181.

25 Joseph Fielding McConkie, *Gospel Symbolism* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1985), 258.

Teshuvah תשובה

Teshuvah is the Hebrew term which perfectly embodies the concept of *shuv*$_2$ — turning from sin and turning back to God.

> Sin requires repentance, which in Hebrew is תשבה (*teshuvah* — literally "return," from the verb שוב – *shuv*, meaning "to turn"). In Hebrew thought, therefore, the whole person turns from the path of sin and is redirected toward God.[26]

Although the word *teshuvah* is found eight times in the Hebrew Bible, it is never used as a reference to repentance. It is used almost exclusively as a way of alluding to the passing of one year to the next (see 1 Kings 20:26). Even though the usage of *teshuvah* to denote *repentance* is extra-biblical, "it is derived from the vocabulary of the Bible," and it "echoes the opinion of Talmudic authority."[27] Over time, the term *teshuvah* developed into such an important principle in Judaism that the phrase *Baal Teshuvah* (master of return) came to signify a repentant sinner, although today it is mostly used to refer to those who were "formerly estranged from or ignorant of full Jewish observance, who have now returned to the fully Orthodox way of life."[28]

It is remarkable that in the Hebrew Bible the noun *repentance* is not found "but merely the verb,"[29] underscoring that *teshuvah* is a process rather than an outcome:

> This grammatical preference transmits the idea that teshuvah is not "a quality which man could possess as his own; there are no converted men in the Old Testament but only men who are forever being converted."[30]

In other words, we can repent, but while in this life we can never be fully *repented*. Since we are continually turning away from God through sins of omission and commission, in both large and small ways, our challenge is to live our lives in a constant state of *returning back* toward God. Each of us when baptized made a covenant to serve God and keep

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26 John D. Garr, *Christian Fruit—Jewish Root: Theology of Hebraic Restoration* (Atlanta: Golden Key Press, 2015), 73–74.

27 *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1907, Volume 10, 376, s.v. "Repentance."

28 Luis Jacobs, *The Jewish Religion: a Companion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 43.

29 Martin Buber, *Two Types of Faith* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), 26.

30 Danielle Celermajer, *The Sins of the Nation and the Ritual of Apologies* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009), 89.

his commandments (see Mosiah 18:10). "A transgressor who violates the covenant with God ruptures the God-person relationship. *Teshuvah* is the process by which this break is mended and the covenant renewed."[31] In addition to mending the broken covenant, sincere *teshuvah* makes the atonement effective in our lives:

> Repentance demands a sincere determination to change one's mind and behavior — transformation, not just lip service. Teshuvah, one of the Hebrew words for repentance, literally means "return," describing an experience that's meant to bring about a return to one's true self. With this recognition of our atonement — our "at-one-ment" — with God, the letting go of sins becomes a daily process of reconciliation and renewal.[32]

Meshuvah — The Antithesis of *Teshuvah*

Meshuvah (משובה), also derived from the root *shuv* (שוב), is a Hebrew noun with the exact opposite meaning from *teshuvah*. Instead of returning to God, it means to be turned away from God, and is most frequently translated as *backsliding* in the KJV. This word is used twelve times in the Old Testament, and Jeremiah is responsible for nine of those. Predictably, Jeremiah often paired *meshuvah* with *shuv* in his exhortations: "Return [*shuv*], thou backsliding [*meshuvah*] Israel, saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 3:12). Whenever Jeremiah uses *meshuvah,* it always "denotes a negative action of faithlessness, treachery and apostasy."[33] As we previously noted, the noun *teshuvah* is not used in the Old Testament repentance vocabulary, indicating that in our weakened mortal state we cannot be in a state of "complete return" to God, but only of "returning." However, the fact that *meshuvah* is used shows that we can exist in a "turned away," or apostate condition.

Teshuvah and Good Works

Many Old Testament passages plainly teach us that turning away from sin is an important step in *teshuvah* but that as a solitary act it is

31 Rabbi Leon Klenicki, "Jonah's Challenge," *America* 195/9 (2006), 14–16.

32 "Returning to God moment by moment," *Christian Science Monitor* 97/223 (2005), 18.

33 Blazenka Scheuer, *The Return of YHWH: The Tension Between Deliverance and Repentance in Isaiah 40–55* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 111.

insufficient. We must also incorporate good deeds or good works into our lives to fully activate the atonement.

> Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets. (2 Kings 17:13)
>
> Return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good. (Jeremiah 18:11)
>
> But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. (Ezekiel 18:21)

Talmudic authority tells us that "redemption is dependent upon repentance and good deeds."[34] Buber explained that turning back to God is an action, not just an intellectual or emotional event – it is "something concrete and actual."[35] Good actions show that our *teshuvah* is sincere and real because they are at the heart of our return to God:

> Teshuvah through *maasim tovim*, literally "returning through good deeds." Teshuvah is often translated as "repentance," but its literal meaning, "turning" or "returning," is far more revealing. "Repent" means to feel remorse, but teshuvah means to use that feeling of remorse to return to God and godliness. The way of returning to God is through acts of godliness, *maasim tovim*, especially acts of selfless kindness.[36] [emphasis original]

Genuine *teshuvah* is an holistic approach to repentance (turning away from sin) and reformation (turning back to God). Without the reformation, *teshuvah* is at best half complete, and we remain lost in our spiritual wilderness.

> [*Teshuvah*] does not mean merely a recommitment to "good values" that are so abstract that they function only to make us feel good when we espouse them. Real teshuvah means

34 The Jewish Encyclopedia, 1907, Volume 17, 152, s.v. "Redemption."

35 Buber, *Two Types of Faith*, 26.

36 Rami Shapiro, *Tanya, the Masterpiece of Hasidic Wisdom* (Woodstock, VT: Skylight Paths Publishing, 2010), 100.

> determining in considerable detail exactly what we are going to do differently in our lives.[37]

Turning to God with the Whole Heart

Whether turning toward God (*teshuvah*) or away from him (*meshuvah*), both Jeremiah and Ezekiel often use the heart as a symbol for the internal transformation accompanying these actions. Jeremiah accused the people of having a "revolting and a rebellious heart" (Jeremiah 5:23), and implored them to "wash thine heart from wickedness" (Jeremiah 4:14). The Lord told his people that after a period of rebellion "ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13). He also promised his people that if they sought him with their whole heart he would "give them an heart to know me" (Jeremiah 24:7), and that he would "give them one heart, and one way" (Jeremiah 32:39).

Referring to the last days, the Lord further promised with an oath that He would put His "law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Jeremiah 31:33). The Lord also promised that He would "give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh" (Ezekiel 11:19). Ezekiel encouraged the people to turn away from sin and to prepare themselves to return to God with a new heart: "Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit" (Ezekiel 18:31).

> The reason why these texts are relevant is that the transformation of the heart of the people effects the reestablishment of their relationship with YHWH in the same manner as their repentance does.[38]

Returning our heart to its natural state parallels our return to the Garden of Eden, our place of origin. This turning or transformation of the heart is a valuable metaphor because it effectively conveys the feeling of reconnectivity with God for those who return to Him. Ezekiel spoke of changing our heart of stone back to flesh (Ezekiel 36:26). This "transformation is described as a change from an unnatural state of existence, characterised by a heart of stone, into the natural state,

37 Michael Lerner, *Jewish renewal: A path to healing and transformation* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1994), 367.

38 Scheuer, *The Return of YHWH*, 105.

characterised by a heart of flesh."[39] This restoration to the heart's natural state is essential because it represents turning away from an "unnatural state" and returning to the God-given fleshy heart that is receptive to the feelings of love that God has for his children.

This "concept of a wholehearted turning to God is widespread in the preaching of the OT prophets,"[40] and is evidence of real *teshuvah*. Modern prophets, including Joseph Smith, have taught this same principle:

> Thus you see, my dear brother, the willingness of our heavenly Father to forgive sins, and restore to favor all those who are willing to humble themselves before Him, and confess their sins, and *forsake them*, and *return to Him* with *full purpose of heart*, acting no hypocrisy, to serve him to the end.[41]

Agency and the Power of *Teshuvah*

In the LDS canon of scripture, the first recorded words of the Lord to Adam after placing him in the Garden of Eden were:

> Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, nevertheless, *thou mayest choose for thyself*, for it is given unto thee. (Moses 3:16-17)

Adam was free to follow God's course or choose some other way. Couched in this communication is the unspoken idea that as well as the ability to turn away from God, man was also given the ability to turn back to him. "The motion of turning implies that sin is not an ineradicable stain but a straying from the right path, and that by the effort of turning, a power God has given to all men, the sinner can redirect his destiny."[42]

Teshuvah is central to the principle of agency. Without the power to turn back, our ability to turn away from God would counteract God's work and glory "to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Moses 1:39). Only with sincere *teshuvah* can God's mercy and grace become effective in our lives through the act of divine forgiveness. "Man has been endowed by God with the power of 'turning.' He can turn from

39 Scheuer, *The Return of YHWH*, 120.

40 *Holman Illustrated Pocket Bible Dictionary* (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers Nashville, 2004), 304, s.v. "Repentance."

41 Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, volume 2, 315.

42 Encyclopaedia Judaica, Second Edition, Volume 17, 221, s.v. "Repentance."

evil to the good, and the very act of turning will activate God's concern and lead to forgiveness."[43]

Moses implored the Israelites "to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live" (Deuteronomy 30:16). But, he also acknowledged their right to "turn away" their hearts and perish. "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life" (Deut 30:19). *Teshuvah* is the path that leads to life, while *meshuvah* is the path that leads to death. *Teshuvah* is a wonderful gift from God and is an integral part of agency, another divine gift (Doctrine & Covenants 104:17).

Summary

Old Testament repentance — embodied principally in the word teshuvah (or $shuv_2$) — means to turn away from our sins and return to God with our whole heart, and demonstrating this turning by a sincere commitment to good works. The purpose of repentance is to enable us to return to God — to our place of origin.

Section II — Repentance in the New Testament

Metanoeo (μετανοέω) and *Metanoia* (μετάνοια)

Two words that stand out in the repentance vocabulary of the New Testament are *metanoeo* and *metanoia*. *Metanoeo* is used 34 times, and is always translated in the KJV as the verb *repent*. The word's prefix — *meta* (μετα) — is a Greek preposition meaning *after, against, among or with*. The suffix — *noeo* (νοέω) — is derived from the noun for *mind* (νοῦς) and means "to *exercise* the *mind*,"[44] or think. *Metanoeo* can be defined as to *think again*, *reconsider*, or *change one's mind*. *Metanoia* is the substantive form of *metanoeo*. It occurs 24 times and is always translated as the noun *repentance* in the KJV. From here out, where possible, we refer to the two words collectively as *metanoia*. *Metanoia* is "a word which is often mistranslated into English as 'repentance.'"[45] William Howard encapsulated this idea with these words:

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43 Encyclopaedia Judaica, Second Edition, Volume 7, 127, s.v. "Forgiveness."

44 James Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, 50 (of the Dictionary of the Greek Testament accompanying the Exhaustive Concordance).

45 Joshua T. Searle and Mykhailo N. Cherenkov, *A Future and a Hope: Mission, Theological Education, and the Transformation of Post-Soviet Society* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2014), 84.

> It is evident that repentance is a mistranslation of metanoia. This fact was never more apparent than during the English and American revisions of the King James version of our Bible. Frequent debate centered around this word and it was the opinion of many that a suitable English equivalent should be sought for the Greek expression. It was agreed, however, that no one English word was sufficient to convey all that lay in the Greek. And, although it was admitted that the translation was poor, it was felt that the common term should be retained in the hope that it would come to convey all that its Greek derivative expressed.[46]

Much discussion has surrounded the original meaning of *metanoia*. Some have claimed that it was meant to be understood as merely a mental exercise — a "change of mind"[47] about past actions and events, a "Change of Mind about Christ,"[48] or a "turning of the mind,"[49] without any required change of personal behavior or conduct. "But what is repentance, anyway? Is it merely to change one's mind about Christ, as some argue? Or is it more than that?"[50]

Many Bible commentators are much more expansive in their definition of *metanoia*, enlarging it beyond its etymological roots, and arriving at the same general definition as *teshuvah*[51] — a "complete 'turning,' a total reorientation of attitude or action"[52] toward God. Butler, who regards *metanoeo* and *metanoia* as one unified expression, commented:

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46 William Howard, as cited by R. Larry Moyer, *Free and Clear: Understanding and Communicating God's Offer of Eternal life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1997), 86. Note: the "revisers" could have used *teshuvah* as a suitable translation of *metanoia*.

47 Garr, *Christian Fruit—Jewish Root*, 74.

48 Robert N. Wilkin, "Part 4: New Testament Repentance: Repentance in the Gospels and Acts," *Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society* 3/1 (1990), 4.

49 Man Brill, *Judaism and World Religions: encountering Christianity, Islam, and Eastern traditions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 60.

50 Leo (Jake) Hebert III, *Garbling the Gospel* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2005), 94.

51 James H. Olthuis, *Religion with/out Religion: The Prayers and Tears of John D. Caputo* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 66.

52 Philip A. Cunningham, *Seeking Shalom: The journey to right relationship between Catholics and Jews* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2015).

> The word signifies *Change of Mind*, a change in the trend and action of the whole inner nature, intellectual, affectional and moral, of the man, a reversal of his controlling estimates and judgments, desires and affections, choices and pursuits, involving a radical revolution in his supreme life aims, purposes and objects.[53] [emphasis original]

Butler continued:

> The Scriptural terms applied to man's action in this radical change are *Metanoia* (misrendered Repentance), meaning *change of mind, heart, will, life* and Conversion, or *turning back* to God, both of which, the inward change and the actual turning, are demanded by God from man as his own willing act.[54] [emphasis original]

This concept of likening *metanoia* with *teshuvah* is held by a significant number, if not a majority, of scholars and biblical commentators. Below are a few supporting citations:

> μετανοέω (*metanoeoo*): To change one's *thinking and way of life* as a result of a change of attitude with regard to sin and righteousness.[55]

> The words for repentance in Greek (*metanoia*), Hebrew (*teshuvah*), and Arabic (*tawbah*) are all associated with turning or returning. To repent is to reorient oneself with respect to the good through a transformation in one's emotions, attitudes, dispositions, and values. In repenting, one both accepts responsibility for the past action and repudiates that action as wrongful. One adopts the sincere intention to act better in the future if presented with similar choices.[56] [ítalics original]

> In Biblical Hebrew the idea of repentance is represented by two verbs — "shub" (to return) and "niḥam" (to feel sorrow

53 J. Glentworth Butler, *Vital Truths Respecting God and Man in Systematic Arrangement with Clear Concise Statements* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1904), 75.

54 Butler, *Vital Truths Respecting God and Man*, 183.

55 *The Theology Notebook — Soteriology* (Dallas: Biblical Studies Press, 2004), 104.

56 Linda Radzik, *Making Amends: Atonement in morality, law, and politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 55–56.

> …) — but by no substantive. The underlying idea has been adequately expressed in Greek by μετάνοια [*metanoia*], a word which denotes "change of mind and heart."[57] [bracketed text ours]

In 1971, Kenneth Taylor released a new paraphrased Bible called *The Living Bible* (TLB). It quickly became an acclaimed edition, especially among evangelical Christians. When Taylor died in 2005, *Christianity Today* published a glowing tribute to him and TLB:

> A bestseller after its 1971 release, it has sold more than 40 million copies. Noting that Billy Graham has called the Bible the world's best evangelist, American Bible Society president Gene Habecker said Taylor's work made a massive impact. "It may be greater than Billy Graham," Habecker said.[58]

Displayed below are two side-by-side passages from the KJV and TLB:

KJV **Luke 13:3**	**TLB**
I tell you, Nay: but, except ye *repent*, ye shall all likewise perish.	Not at all! And don't you realize that you also will perish unless you *leave your evil ways and turn to God?*

KJV **Acts 26:20 (partial verse)**	**TLB**
They should *repent* and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.	All must *forsake their sins* and turn to God — and *prove their repentance by doing good deeds.*

Although the KJV simply rendered the Greek *metanoeo* as *repent* in the verse from Luke, TLB greatly expanded the meaning to be the functional equivalent of *teshuvah* — "leave your evil ways and turn to God." Neither Jeremiah nor Ezekiel could have expressed it any better. In the verse from Acts, Taylor did not need to add the phrase *turn to God* because the apostle Paul had already included it. The end result — *forsake their sins and turn to God* — is a perfect example of *teshuvah*. Also interesting are Paul's final words which Taylor rendered "and prove their repentance by doing good deeds." As discussed previously, this concept

57 *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. 10 (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1907), 377, s.v. "Repentance."

58 "Living Bible Creator Dies: But Ken Taylor's legacy is even larger," *Christianity Today*, August (2005): 19.

of doing good deeds is an integral part of Old Testament *teshuvah*, and apparently of *metanoia* also.

Metamelomai (μεταμέλομαι)

Another Greek word related to *metanoia* — *metamelomai* — deserves mention here. This word is used six times in the New Testament, is always translated as *repent*, and means "to *care afterwards*, i.e., *regret*."[59] According to several commentators, *metamelomai* is virtually synonymous with *nacham*, and "as nearly as possible it is the exact equivalent of the word Repent or Repentance,"[60] in line with the OED definition of those words. Perschbacher added that "the Greek has a word meaning to 'be sorry' (μεταμέλομαι) [metamelomai]. This corresponds to the English *repent*"[61] [bracketed text ours]. Although both *nacham* and *metamelomai* meet the OED definition of *repent*, both fall far short of the comprehensive doctrine of sincere repentance that are taught by the words *teshuvah* and *metanoia*.

Strepho (στρέφω) — Turning in the New Testament

As shown in Appendix 5, in the Septuagint, 82% of the time *shuv* is rendered as either *epistrepho* (ἐπιστρέφω) or *apostrepho* (ἀποστρέφω), both derivatives of *strepho* (στρέφω), *to turn*. As could be expected, these Greek words also show up frequently in the repentance vocabulary of the New Testament, and are used in the same manner as *shuv* in the Old Testament:

> The New Testament also frequently employs this general and practical term, variously translated into English by 'turn,' 'return,' 'be converted'; and in Acts 3:19; 26: 20, both are combined, 'repent and turn ' (comp. Acts 11:21, 'believed and turned'). It thus appears that the New Testament exhortation is substantially the same as that of the prophets.[62]

David Dilling also remarked on the connection between *shuv* in the Old Testament and *turn* in the New Testament:

> The Old Testament word from which we derive the New Testament doctrine of repentance is שוב, (*shuv*) which means

59 Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, 47 (of the Dictionary of the Greek Testament accompanying the Exhaustive Concordance).

60 Butler, *Topical Analysis of the Bible*, 443.

61 Perschbacher, *Word Pictures of the New Testament*, 41.

62 Broadus, *Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*, 34.

> "to turn back," or "to return." This is a crucial term in Old Testament theology which signifies a turning back from evil and a turning toward Yahweh.[63]

Just as the KJV translators nearly always avoided rendering *shuv* as *repent* in the Old Testament, they also consistently bypassed the word *repent* when translating *strepho* and its derivatives, opting instead for *turn* (20 times), *convert* (10 times), *return* (once), and *pervert* (once). Below are some examples of the New Testament usage:

> "And many of the children of Israel shall he [John the Baptist] turn [*epistrepho*] to the Lord their God." (Luke 1:16)[64]

> "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted [*epistrepho*], strengthen thy brethren." (Luke 22:32)

> Pilate "said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth [*apostrepho*] the people: and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him." (Luke 23:14)

> "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn [*epistrepho*] ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" (Galatians 4:9)

> "Let him know, that he which converteth [*epistrepho*] the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." (James 5:20)

The Old Testament concept of turning from sin and toward God has long been a staple of Christian preaching and theology. Butler commented that "the Old Testament is in harmony with the New as to the *meaning* of both metanoia and epistrepho"[65] [emphasis original]. In 1727, Joseph Sewall, pastor of Old South Church in Boston, preached that:

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63 David R. Dilling, *Hebrews: a Bible-Study Resource created for small-group Bible Study* (Lafayette, IN, Kensington Theological Academy, 2007), 120.

64 Regarding this verse, the marginal note for the 1599 Geneva Bible states: "Shalbe a meanes to bring many to repentance, and turne themselues to the Lord from whom they fell."

65 Butler, *Topical Analysis of the Bible*, 445.

> God hath made abundant Provision for the Salvation of His People in Christ Jesus, who hath offer'd a Sacrifice of Atonement for the Congregation of His People, who look to Him by Faith, mourn for their Sins, and turn from them unto the Lord.[66] [capitalization original]

In this same sermon, Sewall preached that turning from sin is more than mere outward acts of penance or expressions of remorse of conscience: "It is not enough that a degenerate People sanctify Fasts, confess their Sins, and promise Amendment. No! they must forsake them and reform, or they do not Repent"[67] [capitalization original].

Both *metanoia* and *strepho* can be considered continuances of the Old Testament doctrine of *teshuvah*. True biblical repentance requires abandonment of sin and amendment of life, as evidenced by a turning to God through improved behavior — by producing good fruit. Jesus taught his disciples that trees and people can both be identified by the same means — by the quality of fruit they produce (see Matthew 7:15–20).

The Turning Influence of Grace (*Charis* — χάρις)

Paul wrote to the Ephesians, "For by grace are ye saved through faith" (Ephesians 2:8). To truly comprehend the intended meaning of this verse we need to understand the words *grace* and *faith* as used in the New Testament. Grace (*charis* — χάρις) is a word used with great frequency in the KJV New Testament.[68] Thayer defined it as *pleasure*, *delight*, *good-will*, *thanks*, and:

> The merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, **turns them to Christ**, keeps, strengthens, **increases them in Christian faith**, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the **exercise of the Christian virtues**.[69][italics original, emphasis added]

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66 Joseph Sewall, *Repentance: The Sure Way to Escape Destruction. Two sermons on Jrr. 18. 7, 8. Preach'd December 21st on a Publick Fast occasioned by the Earthquake the Night after the LORD'S-Day Octob. 28th And on the LORD'S-Day December 24th 1727* (Boston: D. Henchman, 1727), 38.

67 Sewall, *Repentance: The Sure Way to Escape Destruction*, 18.

68 The 131 occurrences of *grace* in the KJV New Testament eclipse all of the other LDS Standard Works combined. There are 31 occurrences in the Book of Mormon, 29 in the Doctrine and Covenants, 7 in the Pearl of Great Price, and 39 in the Old Testament, for a total of 106 occurrences in these other books of scripture.

69 Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (New York: American Book Company, 1889), 666.

This definition stresses the fruits of grace — a turning to Christ (*teshuvah, strepho,* or *metanoia*), increased faith, and greater exercise of Christian virtues — but omits any sense of it being a "free gift" or God's unmerited favor.[70] If grace is preached as a "free gift,"

> 1. It can **devalue the severity of sin** and the necessity of preaching of God's righteousness. Sin is the reason why we need a Savior. Sin is the reason for the Cross. It is important that people are convicted of their sin so that they can place their faith in the right thing: Christ's sacrifice for sin.
>
> 2. It can **undermine the importance of repentance**. One cannot have faith without some degree of repentance from sin. When God opens our hearts to faith in the Gospel, He convicts us of sin. This conviction brings about repentance. This **repentance is a general turning from our sin** that begins the sanctification process.[71] [bolding ours]

Gillum identified the all-too-often Christian perception of "cheap grace" as an incorrect doctrine and a roadblock that impedes us from fully embracing and understanding the principle of true repentance.[72] Schmidt stated that *grace* in the New Testament "is not the free, one-way, permanent gift that some Christians say that it is."[73] On the contrary, it is a principle of restoration — one that helps restore our covenant relationship with God through sincere *teshuvah*.

Faith and Works — Their Role in the Process of Repentance

Faith, like grace, is a word that can be easily misunderstood. What does it mean to be "saved through faith (*pistis* πίστις)" (Ephesians 2:8)? Elements of *pistis* common to both Strong's and Thayer's definitions include: conviction, belief, fidelity, and faith. But, faith is more than just mere belief — real faith requires real action:

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70 Thayer defined *charisma* (χάρισμα), the root of our modern English word of the same spelling, as "*a gift of grace; a favor which one receives without any merit of his own*," but he does not define *charis* (χάρισ) in this way.

71 *The Theology Notebook — Soteriology*, 107.

72 Gary P. Gillum, "Repentance Also Means Rethinking," in *By Study and Also By Faith: Essays in Honor of Hugh W. Nibley*, volume 2, ed. John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1990), 406–437.

73 Brent J. Schmidt, "Grace in the Book of Mormon," in *BYU Studies Quarterly*, 54/4 (2015), 120.

> *Belief* exists; *faith* acts. Belief is a passive faith, and faith is an active belief. It has been said that "*faith will remove mountains*." We could not here substitute the word belief for faith, because belief is merely the passive quality. Faith impels us to action, and is grounded on our belief[74] [emphasis original].

Just as *cement* is only one of the ingredients in *concrete*, belief is merely an ingredient and must be mixed with action to produce faith. Some Christian commentators today have sounded a cautionary voice about what they perceive as "theological malpractice," or a system of watered-down Christianity — religion that requires little to nothing from its adherents. One might call this a religion of *Just add belief — No action required*. In her chapter entitled "Worshipping at the Church of Benign Whatever-ism," Dean wrote:

> We are doing an exceedingly good job of teaching youth what we really believe: namely, that Christianity is not a big deal, that **God requires little**, and the church is a helpful social institution filled with nice people focused primarily on "folks like us"–which, of course, begs the question of whether we are really the church at all.
>
> What if the blasé religiosity of most American teenagers is not the result of poor communication but the result of excellent communication of a **watered-down gospel** so devoid of God's self-giving love in Jesus Christ, so immune to the sending love of the Holy Spirit that it **might not be Christianity at all?** What if the *church* models a way of life that asks, **not passionate surrender but ho-hum assent?**[75] [emphasis added]

This observation of modern Christian practice stands in contrast to Joseph Smith's teaching: "Let us here observe, that a religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things, never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation."[76] We cannot expect "passionate surrender" — real *teshuvah* (or *metanoia*) — if mere "ho-hum assent" is all that is required of us. Jesus taught, "For unto whomsoever

74 G.F. Graham, *English synonyms classified and explained; with practical exercises designed for schools and private tuition* (New York: American Book Company, 1845), 113.

75 Kenda Creasy Dean, *Almost Christian: What the Faith of our Teenagers is telling the American Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 12.

76 Joseph Smith, Jr., *Lectures on Faith*, 6:5.

much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke 12:48). Paul taught that the "doers of the law" and not the "hearers of the law" are those who are just (or justified) before God (Romans 2:13). James also taught that we must be "doers of the law," and that those who are "hearers only" deceive themselves (James 1:22).

The apostle James is a well-known defender of the mutualistic relationship between faith and works. The Geneva Bible, also known as the Bible of the Puritans[77], was a precursor to the KJV and contained very enlightening marginal notes. Listed below are three verses from the second chapter of James from the `, with the marginal notes to the right of each verse:

14 [8] What auaileth it my brethren, though a man saith he hath faith, when he hath no workes? Can that faith saue him?	[8] The fifth place which hangeth verie well with the former treatise, touching a true and liuely faith. And the proposition of this place is this: faith which bringeth not fourth workes, is not that faith whereby we are iustified, but an image of faith: or else this, they are not iustified by faith, which shewe not the effects of faith.
22 Seest thou not that the faith wrought with his workes? and through the workes was the faith made [m]perfect.	[m] Was effectuall and fruitfull with good workes. That the faith was declared to bee a true faith, and that by workes.
24 [12]Ye see then how that of workes a man is iustfied, and not of faith onely.	[12] The conclusion: he is onely iustified that hath that faith which hath workes following it.

These marginal notes make it very clear that the Geneva Bible translators understood the message of James as a union of faith and works. Faith must be accompanied by work (*ergon* ἔργον), or it is "but an image of faith." The Bishop of Durham made an interesting distinction between salvation through *faith — without works*, and salvation through *faith which is without works*:

> For we are saved by faith — without works; but not by *the* faith which is without works. The former sense, by admitting that we are saved not by works (for our best works are far short of our duty), but by an atonement of infinitely greater value, does not exclude the necessity of good works; but the latter

77 Olive Classe, *Encyclopedia of Literary Translation into English*, Volume 1 (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 2000), 149.

> supposes the validity of a faith unproductive of good works — a sense contrary to the whole tenor of Scripture.[78]

Neal A. Maxwell observed:

> One of the great blessings of **real faith in Jesus Christ** is that it gives us enough **strength and courage to repent**. This is called "faith unto repentance" (Alma 34:16–17). The sad truth is that many do not have enough **faith to repent**, not enough trust in God to **change their life-styles** in order to meet emancipating gospel requirements. The process of repentance involves not only avoiding certain things or desisting from certain practices but also **doing positive things**. For the latter, we need faith in order to initiate and to sustain **better behavior**, such as learning to love those we do not like. **The life which remains unrefined is evidence of a lack of faith** (1 John 5:18; Moroni 8:16).[79] [bolding ours]

Just as an unrefined life, one that has not been enriched through *better behavior*, evidences our lack of faith, a refined life, one that includes turning to God through good works, is "the evidence of our faith, for it is by our good works that we show our faith."[80] Erskine described the value of works as the evidence of our faith:

> Works are profitable, as the fruits and evidences of true faith. We know that there is sap and life in the tree by the fruits, the leaves, and blossoms, that it puts forth; so we know our faith to be a true faith, by the fruits of holiness and good works. Yea, our good works will be brought forth, at the last day, as the evidence of our faith; and therefore it is said, Revelations xx. 12; "They were judged according to their works."[81]

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78 *Tracts of the Anglican Fathers: Doctrinal*, Volume 2 (London: William Edward Painter, 1841), 112.

79 Neal A. Maxwell, *Not My Will, But Thine* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988), 59.

80 Thomas Maguire, *Authenticated report of the Discussion which took place between The Rev. Thomas Maguire, and the Rev. T.D. Gregg, in the round room of the Rotunda* (New York: G. Mitchell, 1840), 117.

81 D. Fraser, *The Whole Works of the Rev. Ebenezer Erskine, Minister of the Gospel at Stirling. Consisting of Sermons and Discourses, on important and interesting subjects. To which is added, an enlarged memoir of the author* (Philadelphia: Wm. S. & A. Young, 1836), 198.

Confidence in any endeavor, whether mental, spiritual, or physical requires experience and practice. In other words, confidence requires work. In order for our confidence to "wax strong in the presence of God," (D&C 121:45) we need sincere *teshuvah/metanoia* which is always accompanied by good works. Without this confidence, we will likely find ourselves naked, and "ashamed before him at his coming" (1 John 2:28).

Henry observed that the apostle James directed his epistle on faith and works principally toward the antinomians[82] of his day, who did not recognize the importance of works:

> St. James had to do with those who cried up faith, but would not allow works to be used even as evidences; they depended upon a bare profession, as sufficient to justify them; and with these he might well urge the necessity and vast importance of good works.[83]

Like faith, repentance (*teshuvah*/*metanoia*) requires good works, but these good works must be performed as a natural outflowing of our faith, and not as a separate, mechanical action. Just as "faith without works is dead," works without faith are equally dead. A barren tree — one that does not produce fruit — is worthless. "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Matthew 7:19). While journeying with his disciples, Jesus came across a fig tree "and found nothing thereon, but leaves only," and he cursed it "and presently the fig tree withered away" (Matthew 21:19). For our faith and repentance to be sincere, we cannot be like this fig tree — full of the "leaves" of the gospel, yet barren of its fruit.

Naked or Robed?

Job, after describing his deeds among the poor, the widowed, and the fatherless exclaimed, "I *put on righteousness, and it clothed me*" (Job 29:14). Paralleling Job's affirmation, the Lord said that his apostles would also be "clothed with *robes of righteousness*" (D&C 29:12). While glorying in his God, Isaiah declared "for [the Lord] hath clothed me

82 Derived from the Greek ἀντί (anti) + νόμος (law), or "against the law." Often a pejorative term, antinomians are those who believe that as "saved" Christians they are no longer under obligation to obey the laws of God.

83 Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testament: Wherein each chapter is summed up in its contents; The sacred text inserted at large, in distinct paragraphs; Each paragraph reduced to its proper heads; The sense given, and largely illustrated; With practical remarks and observations*, volume 6 (Philadelphia: Haswell, Barrington & Haswell, 1838), 770.

with the *garments of salvation*, he hath covered me with the *robe of righteousness*" (Isaiah 61:10). Describing the marriage of the Lamb of God, John explained that the bride of Christ (the righteous saints) wore "fine linen, clean and white: for the *fine linen is the righteousness of saints*" (Revelation 19:8).

A very poignant example of the love and mercy which God has for his children is found in the parable of the prodigal son. When the repentant and contrite young man *returned* to his father, the father immediately called to "bring forth the *best robe*, and put it on him" (Luke 15:22). This robe was not just the "best" available to this earthly father. The Greek word (*stole*, στολή) used here was a robe "worn by kings (Jon. iii. 6), priests, and persons of rank."[84] This passage demonstrates two great desires of our Father: to accept all who willingly *turn* from wickedness and *return* to him through true repentance, and to clothe us in robes of righteousness.

What can we understand by these robes of righteousness? The Zohar, "the central work in the literature of the Kabbalah,"[85] explains that "the garments in which a man ascends to the other world are made out of 'those days in which he acted virtuously and did not sin.'"[86] Jesus taught a parable of a wedding feast for a king's son:

> And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. (Matthew 22:11–12)[87]

Concerning the speechless man, Bruce R. McConkie wrote:

> He had accepted the invitation (the gospel); joined with the true worshipers (come into the true Church); but had not put on the robes of righteousness (that is, had not worked out his salvation after baptism).[88]

Connected to this parable of the wedding party, Nibley shared this additional insight:

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84 Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 589.

85 *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Second Edition, Volume 21, 647, s.v. "Zohar."

86 Nahum N. Glatzer, *Essays in Jewish Thought* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2009), 89.

87 Perhaps the cause of this man's speechlessness was his sudden and alarming realization that he was naked at the wedding feast.

88 Bruce R McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, Volume 1 (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1973), 598.

> A Coptic missal published in 1915 says in effect: "Let us put on splendid apparel, suitable to the honor that befits this great event this day [that is to say, righteousness and charity and judgment and every good quality, for this is the apparel that pleases God]. Let us never permit ourselves to be stripped bare through carelessness. Woe unto those whom the bridegroom shall see without the wedding garment when he comes."[89] [bracketed text in original]

If the robes of righteousness represent our virtuous acts while in mortality (working out our salvation after baptism), does nakedness represent the opposite — our wickedness? Although we are told that the wicked will be found naked in God's presence at the judgment day, there is another possible explanation for their lack of clothing. Adam and Eve, in their naked state, enjoyed regular communion with God while in the garden, "and were not ashamed" of their condition (Genesis 2:25). This nakedness preceded their transgression and evidenced a state of innocence. Therefore, their pre-transgression nakedness could not have represented their sinful acts or even their sinful nature. When placed in the garden, Adam and Eve were "in a *state of innocence*, having no joy, for they knew no misery; *doing no good*, for they knew no sin" (2 Ne 2:23). They were not ashamed of their nakedness because they were unaware of their condition — they were innocent. And, they were unable to clothe themselves in robes of righteousness because they were *incapable of doing good* — "*doing no good*, for they knew no sin." There was no fabric or cloth — righteousness, in this case — with which they could clothe themselves.

Satan wanted Adam and Eve to feel uncomfortable in their nakedness. "'Ho, ho,' said he, 'you are naked. You had better run and hide, or at least put something on. How do you think you look to your Father?'"[90] After they ate the fruit of the forbidden tree, the two became engulfed with feelings of shame and guilt — new experiences for them. The feelings of guilt are obvious — they had been disobedient, and in all likelihood knew that they would need to explain themselves to the Father. However, the couple's state of undress had no correlation with their behavior, so why the sudden feelings of shame when there had been none previously? Chaim Navon proposed that "as long as the man had

89 Hugh Nibley, *Temple and Cosmos: Beyond This Ignorant Present* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1992), 122.

90 Hugh Nibley, *Old Testament and Related Studies* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1986), 88.

ruled over his desires, he felt no shame in his nakedness. When he lost control, his nakedness began to symbolize his shame, his inability to control himself."[91]

Jeffery R. Holland remarked that "in the imagery of the gospel of Jesus Christ, it is always better to be clothed than unclothed, to be robed rather than naked."[92] At the last day, like Adam and Eve, the wicked will find themselves unrobed, being void of righteousness. However, unlike our first parents, they will not be in a "state of innocence," so their guilt and shame will be understandable. Through true repentance — *teshuvah*/*metanoia* — our nakedness can be clothed, but only when we turn to God in righteousness, with good works.

Summary

Repentance in the New Testament is a rich combination of the Old Testament doctrine of turning (*teshuvah*), along with new teachings involving the principles of faith and grace. *Metanoia* is understood to be the functional equivalent of *teshuvah*, while *metamelomai* is substantially the same as *nacham*. *Strepho*, a Greek word that is equal to *shuv* in its meaning, is also often used in the New Testament repentance vocabulary, although never translated as *repent* in the KJV.

Faith, like *teshuvah*, was shown to always include good works, lest it be rendered "dead." While works do not produce or lead to salvation, they serve as an evidence — a proof — of our faith in the atonement of Christ. Grace was demonstrated to be a divine influence which turns us to Christ, increases our faith, and motivates us to improve our conduct.

The righteous will be clothed with the "robes of righteousness" — made from the fabric of good works — at the last day, while the wicked will be ashamed at their nakedness before God. Repentance — turning away from sin and toward God, as embodied in the words *teshuvah* and *metanoia* — always requires that we, through faith and the grace of God, clothe ourselves with righteousness — with good works.

Section III — Repentance in the Book of Mormon

Rebellion and Repentance are central themes in the Book of Mormon. The prophets constantly testified of the people's rebellion, of their turning away from God:

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91 Chaim Navon, *Genesis and Jewish Thought* (Jersey City: KTAV Publishing House. Inc., 2008), 138.

92 Jeffrey R. Holland, *Christ and the New Covenant: The Messianic Message of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1997), 244.

> And now behold, [Satan] had got great hold upon the hearts of the Nephites, yea, insomuch that they had become exceedingly wicked. Yea, the more part of them had *turned out of the way of righteousness* and did trample under their feet the commandments of God and did *turn unto their own ways* and did build up unto themselves idols of their gold and their silver. (Hel 6:31)

Book of Mormon prophets consistently admonished the people to turn from their rebellion — from their wicked ways — and return to their God:

> There came also in the days of Com many prophets and prophesied of the destruction of that great people except they should *repent* and *turn unto the Lord* and *forsake their murders and wickedness*. (Ether 11:1)

Sorrow and Grief in the Process of Repentance

Sorrow and Grief — often exemplified by *nacham* in the Old Testament and *metamelomai* in the New Testament — are terms that are used extensively in the Book of Mormon, and represent an important first step in the process of repentance. The prophet Mormon witnessed what he thought was the beginning of the repentance of his people — "their lamentation and their mourning and their sorrowing before the Lord" (Mormon 2:12).[93] Sadly, his hope for the Nephites was in vain:

> For their *sorrowing was not unto repentance* because of the goodness of God, but it was rather the *sorrowing of the damned* because the Lord would not always suffer them to take happiness in sin. And they *did not come unto Jesus* with *broken hearts* and *contrite spirits*. (Mormon 2:13–14)

In these verses, Mormon spoke of two types of sorrow — that which is *unto repentance* and the *sorrowing of the damned*. This parallels Paul's words to the Corinthians when he spoke of "godly sorrow" which "worketh repentance to salvation," and "the sorrow of the world" which "worketh death" (2 Corinthians 7:10).

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93 The text in this verse differs from that published by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. For all of our Book of Mormon citations, we have used The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text, edited by Royal Skousen (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009). All references to this edition are cited as The Earliest Text.

Sorrow and grief, while important in the process of repentance, are insufficient as a means of salvation. A change of heart brought on by sorrow, but without a corresponding change in behavior inevitably creates a state of *cognitive dissonance* — a misalignment of belief and behavior. "Cognitive dissonance can be seen as an antecedent condition which leads to activity oriented toward dissonance reduction."[94] Since "most individuals have a deep desire to have their beliefs and behaviors aligned and in harmony,"[95] we often try to reduce internal dissonance by altering beliefs to agree with behaviors, or by changing behaviors to match beliefs. Choosing the first option — altering beliefs to agree with behaviors — is how we could define apostasy, or *meshuvah*. Repentant persons, however, always change their errant behaviors to agree with their beliefs. Sorrow can be a great aid to beginning this process of change.

The scriptures also often describe God as sorrowing or grieving over his children. In the book of Genesis, we read that "it repented [*nacham*] the Lord that he had made man on the earth." However, as stated earlier, *grieved* is a better translation for *nacham* than *repented*:

> And it **grieved** the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it **grieveth** me that I have made them. (Genesis 6:6–7) [We replaced the KJV *repent* with *grieve*.]

In the book of Jacob we find very similar language to these verses from Genesis. In chapter five, the Lord *grieved* that he should lose the trees of his vineyard:

> And now behold, notwithstanding all the care which we have taken of my vineyard, the *trees thereof have become corrupted*, that *they bring forth no good fruit.* And these I had hope to preserve, to have laid up fruit thereof against the season unto mine own self. But behold, they have become like unto the *wild olive tree*, and they are of *no worth but to be hewn down* and *cast into the fire.* And it *grieveth me that I should lose them*. (Jacob 5:46)

94 Leon Festinger, A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957), 3.

95 Sara Truebridge, *Resilience Begins with Beliefs: Building on Student Strengths for Success in Schools* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2014), 59.

Four times in the chapter the Lord *grieved* that he should lose the *tame olive tree,* and four times he *grieved* that he should lose *all* of the trees of the vineyard. The source of this grief is

- the trees thereof have become corrupted — Israel has turned from the Lord;
- they bring forth no good fruit — Israel refuses to return to the Lord through sincere *teshuvah* and good works; and,
- they have become like unto the wild olive-tree — Israel is in a state of *meshuvah*.

The results of Israel's apostasy are:

- the trees are of no worth but to be hewn down and cast into the fire; and
- the Lord is grieved at their loss.

The solution to the Lord's grief, of course, is *teshuvah*. We, the people of Israel, must turn from our sins — from our state of *meshuvah* — and return to the Lord with our whole hearts, through good works. The Lord does not want to lose us, the trees of his vineyard. Lehi's dying words to his rebellious sons echo this same sentiment:

> And now that my *soul might have joy in you* and that my *heart might leave this world with gladness* because of you, that I might not be *brought down with grief and sorrow* to the grave — *arise from the dust*, my sons, and be men, and be determined in *one mind* and in *one heart*, united in all things, that ye may *not come down into captivity.* (2 Nephi 1:21)

Unlike the KJV translation, the word *repent* in the Book of Mormon does not carry a sense of sorrowing or grieving.[96] Rather, its usage indicates a forsaking or turning from sin. Of the 360 uses or *repent* in the Book of Mormon, more than 70 specifically mention repenting of sins, iniquities, wickedness or evil doings. Mormon, citing the words of Christ, wrote:

> **Turn**, all ye Gentiles, **from your wicked ways** and **repent of your evil doings**, of your **lyings** and **deceivings**, and of your **whoredoms**, and of your **secret abominations** and your **idolatries**, and of your **murders** and your **priestcrafts** and your **envyings** and your **strifes**, and from **all your wickedness**

96 We analyzed all 360 uses of *repent* in the Book of Mormon and were able to identify fewer than 20 occurrences where the word *repent* could realistically be replaced by *grieve* or *sorrow.*

> **and abominations**, and **come unto me** and be baptized in my name, that ye may receive a remission of your sins and be filled with the Holy Ghost, that ye may be numbered with my people who are of the house of Israel. (3 Nephi 30:2)

In this verse, there exists a clear link between repentance and turning from sin, but no overt sense of sorrowing. This does not minimize the role of sorrow or grief in repentance, but highlights the importance of turning, of forsaking our sins as the heart of the repentance process.

Mormon, who served as the leader of the Nephite army, "did utterly refuse from this time forth to be a commander and a leader of this people because of their wickedness and abomination" (Mormon 3:11). However, after seeing that the people were headed for physical annihilation, Mormon wrote that he "did **repent of the oath"** which he had made (Mormon 5:1). It is clear from this usage that he did not *sorrow* or *grieve* because of the oath. Rather, Mormon's usage of *repent* here would be much better understood as *turn* (*shuv*) — "did *turn* from the oath" — in line with the Book of Mormon's common usage of *repent*.

Turning and *Teshuvah*

In the Old Testament we read, "as a dog **returneth** [*shuv*] to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly" (Proverbs 26:11). In this verse, "returneth to his vomit" is a clear reference to returning to one's wicked ways. The apostle Peter, taking his inspiration from this verse in Proverbs, said that "the dog is **turned** [*epistrepho*] to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (2 Peter 2:22). Mormon, apparently drawing from the same source as Peter, wrote that "the people had **turned** from their righteousness like the dog to his vomit, or like the sow to her wallowing in the mire" (3 Nephi 7:8). These three verses show a positive link between the use of *shuv* in the Old Testament, *epistrepho* in the New Testament, and *turn* in the Book of Mormon.

The following three parallel verses show how *shuv* from the Old Testament and *epistrepho* from the New Testament were rendered as *convert* by the KJV translators. The Book of Mormon translation is also *convert*, but the original wording must be *turn,* in agreement with the verse's Hebrew origin. Interestingly, the current edition of the LDS Book of Mormon has the final line of this verse as "and be converted and be healed," while *The Earliest Text* has "and convert and be healed," in line with the KJV Old Testament text, and a better translation than "be converted." However, the NIV renders this line from Isaiah even more accurately: "and *turn* and be healed."

Isaiah 6:10	Matthew 13:15	2 Nephi 16:10
Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and *convert* [*shuv,* or *turn*], and be healed.	For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be *converted* [*epistrepho*, or *turn*], and I should heal them.	Make the heart of this people fat and make their ears heavy and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and *convert* and be healed.

As with the Old Testament, the Book of Mormon is rich in the language of turning, or *teshuvah*. While numerous examples could be given of this powerful teaching in the Book of Mormon, we have limited our discussion to the following examples.

Nephi, the son of Helaman, while praying upon his tower in the agony of his soul, observed that the people of Zarahemla had gathered to listen to his prayer, and were marveling at his words. Addressing the people, Nephi said, "Why have ye gathered yourselves together? That I may tell you of your iniquities?" He then censured the people, telling them that they would "not hearken unto the voice of the Good Shepherd," but that the "devil hath got so great hold upon your hearts." In earnest Nephi plead with the people, "O *repent ye*, *repent ye*! Why will ye die? *Turn ye*, *turn ye* unto the Lord your God. Why hath he forsaken you?" (Helaman 7:13–18). Nephi's message to the people was to repent (turn from their sins), and turn back to God. In other words, to perform *teshuvah*.

Amulek taught the Zoramites to "not procrastinate the day of your *repentance* until the end," and that "if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be *no labor performed* [that is, no work performed]." He continued by teaching them that if they delayed their repentance too long, they would be brought to an "awful crisis." In that crisis, they would not be able to say "I will *repent*, that I will *return* to my God" — *teshuvah* would no longer be a possibility (Alma 34:33–34).

Jacob preached to the people of Nephi concerning "the merciful plan of the great Creator," (2 Nephi 9:6) and of the "cunning plan of the evil one" (2 Nephi 9:28). He also taught them about the fall, the atonement of Christ, and the consequences of sin. Jacob further instructed the people to "*turn away from your sins. Shake off the chains* of him that would bind you fast. *Come unto that God who is the rock of your salvation*" (2 Nephi 9:45). This combination of turning away from sin and coming unto Christ — *teshuvah* — frustrates the "cunning plan of the evil one," and makes possible "the merciful plan of the great Creator" in our lives.

Speaking of Nephi's rebellious brothers, the Lord told him that "in that day that they shall rebel against me, I will curse them even with a sore curse" (1 Nephi 2:23). Mormon, citing the words of the Lord to Nephi, wrote that the Lamanites had indeed been cursed by the Lord, "from this time henceforth and forever except they *repent of their wickedness* and *turn to me,* that I may have mercy upon them" (Alma 3:14). The condition that the Lord set for the removal of the curse was *teshuvah* — forsaking wickedness and turning to the Lord.

Following the death of Jesus, great destruction and death transpired in the Americas, leaving the land in profound darkness. Out of the darkness, the voice of Christ was heard:

> O all ye that are spared because ye were more righteous than they, will ye not now *return unto me* and *repent of your sins* and *be converted*, that I may heal you? Yea, verily I say unto you: if ye will *come unto me* ye shall have eternal life. Behold, mine arm of mercy is extended towards you. And whosoever *will come*, him will I receive. And blessed are they which *cometh unto me*. (3 Nephi 9:13–14)

In these two verses the Lord implored the people to repent of their sins and return to him — to perform *teshuvah*.

Reproving Corianton for his behavior among the Zoramites, Alma counseled his son to "*repent and forsake your sins* and go no more after the lusts of your eyes." (Alma 39:9) He also directed him to "*turn to the Lord* with all your *mind, might, and strength,* that ye lead away the hearts of no more to do wickedly" (Alma 39:13). Alma then added the additional exhortation that Corianton "*return unto them* and acknowledge your faults and *repair that wrong* which ye have done" (Alma 39:13).[97]

97 Note the presence of the word *repair* in *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text* which does not appear in the current LDS text.

Although we have divided *teshuvah* into two separate actions — *turning from sin* and *turning to the Lord* — these two are really one unified activity. How can we turn to the Lord without also turning from sin? Alma understood this principle and taught it to Corianton:

> And now the Spirit of the Lord doth say unto me: *Command thy children to do good*, lest they lead away the hearts of many people to destruction. Therefore *I command you*, my son, in the fear of God, *that ye refrain from your iniquities*. (Alma 39:12)

The Lord instructed Alma to *command* his children *to do good*. Interestingly, though, Alma *commanded* Corianton to *refrain from his iniquities*, which on the surface appears to be a somewhat different message. However, since *teshuvah* encompasses both *refraining from iniquity* and *doing good*, Alma, in essence, covered the whole of *teshuvah* in this short sermon.

Returning to God

The Lord caused that Adam "should be *cast out from the Garden of Eden, from my presence*, because of his transgression, wherein he became spiritually dead" (D&C 29:41). Along with this spiritual death came a physical death. Samuel, the Lamanite prophet taught that "the resurrection of Christ redeemeth mankind, yea, even all mankind, and bringeth them back into the presence of the Lord" (Helaman 14:17). Samuel explained that the resurrection of Christ "bringeth to pass the conditions of repentance," so that those who repent are "not hewn down and cast into the fire. But whosoever repenteth not is hewn down and cast into the fire. And there cometh upon them again a spiritual death, yea, a second death" (Helaman 14:18).

The wicked are "hewn down and cast into the fire" because they are barren trees, devoid of good fruit. For this reason, the wicked will be cut off from the Lord's presence a second time. On the other hand, the righteous — those who are "found guiltless before him at the judgment day" — will not be cut down, but will return to "dwell in the presence of God in his kingdom" (Mormon 7:7).

Lehi's dream, in the initial chapters of the Book of Mormon, focuses on Lehi's desire that his family members come to the Tree of Life — to that same tree that was in the center of the Garden of Eden, our place of origin. It is interesting to observe Lehi's persistent desire that his family "come unto me and partake of the fruit" (1 Nephi 8:15, 16, and 18). Lehi's

words echo those of Christ himself as he spoke through the prophet Alma: "Repent and I will receive you. Yea, he saith: *Come unto me* and ye shall *partake of the fruit* of the tree of life; yea, ye shall eat and drink of the bread and the waters of life freely. Yea, *come unto me* and *bring forth works of righteousness*, and ye shall *not be cut down and cast into the fire*" (Alma 5:33–35). These words spoken by the Lord, "Repent," "Come unto me," and "bring forth works of righteousness," testify of the importance of *teshuvah* in our journey back to the Lord's presence.

Grace, After All that We Can Do

While the word *grace* is found much less frequently in the Book of Mormon than in the New Testament, its meaning in both books is the same. Jacob instructed,

> Reconcile yourselves to the will of God and not to the will of the devil and the flesh. And remember that after ye are reconciled unto God that it is only in and through the grace of God that ye are saved. (2 Nephi 10:24)

A key word in this verse — *reconcile* — can be defined as:

> To conciliate anew; to call back into union and friendship the affections which have been alienated; **to restore to friendship or favor after estrangement**; as, to *reconcile* men or parties that have **been at variance**.[98] [emphasis added]

Thayer described grace as a powerful influence that "turns [souls] to Christ."[99] Reconciliation is synonymous with the act of *teshuvah*, or turning to Christ. Sin creates *variance* with God, and *teshuvah*, working alongside with grace, is the agent that helps restore our *friendship* with God *after estrangement*. Although reconciliation with God through *teshuvah* is imperative, salvation is not the result of our reconciliation. "For by grace are ye saved through faith" (Ephesians 2:8). Extending our understanding of this principle, Nephi explained that it is "by grace that we are saved after all that we can do" (2 Nephi 25:23). And "all that we can do" is to reconcile ourselves to God — through active faith — by the performance of sincere *teshuvah*.[100]

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98 Webster, *American Dictionary of the English Language*, s.v. "reconcile."

99 Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 666.

100 Speaking to his people, Anti-Nephi-Lehi said: "And now behold, my brethren, since it has been **all that we could do**, as we were the most lost of all mankind, to **repent of all our sins** and the many murders which we have committed

The Book of Mormon also helps us understand the power of God's grace in staying the course — enduring through faith — even in the face of difficulty and hardship. In a letter to his son, Mormon gave all the encouragement he could while his world was falling apart around him:

> I am mindful of you always in my prayers, continually praying unto God the Father in the name of his Holy Child, Jesus, that he, through his infinite goodness and **grace**, will keep you **through the endurance of faith** on his name to the end. (Moroni 8:3)

Again, this principle taught by Mormon ties in perfectly with Thayer's other definition of grace — a power that "keeps, strengthens, [and] increases them in Christian faith."[101] Moroni ended the Book of Mormon with a beautiful explanation of the interplay between grace and *teshuvah* (see Moroni 10:32–33). In these verses he counseled us how to perform *teshuvah*:

- Deny yourselves of all ungodliness (turn from our sins); and,
- Come unto Christ (return to God)

Once we perform this *teshuvah* — after reconciling ourselves to God — Moroni explained that:

- then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and,
- then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God.

Moroni finished his message explaining that the combined result of our *teshuvah* and God's intervening grace is the "remission of your sins, that ye become holy, without spot" (Moroni 10:33). The Book of Mormon teaches that grace enables truly repentant disciples to "restore broken covenant relationships by finding their way back into God's presence."[102]

The Relationship between Faith, Works and Repentance

Faith is a precursor and a necessary component of true repentance. Four times while preaching to the Zoramites Amulek taught that we must "exercise" our "faith unto repentance" (see Alma 34:15–17). According to Gillum, the Book of Mormon teaches us that faith must be always

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and to get God to take them away from our hearts – for it was **all we could do to repent** sufficiently before God that he would take away our stains" (Alma 24:11).

101 Thayer, *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament*, 666.

102 Brent J. Schmidt, "Grace in the Book of Mormon," in *BYU Studies Quarterly*, 54/4 (2015), 119.

present in the process of repentance.[103] In fact, Samuel the Lamanite explained that it is the combination of faith and repentance that brings about a change in our hearts (Helaman 15:7).

Together with the Bible, the Book of Mormon clarifies that faith is more than naked belief — belief must be clothed with action to be counted as real faith. Tyndale taught that "as good works naturally follow faith, so eternal life followeth faith and good living."[104] As written in Acts 26:20 that we "should repent and turn to God, and do *works meet for repentance,*" Alma likewise instructed the Nephites to "humble yourselves before God and bring forth *fruit meet for repentance*" (Alma 9:30). To evidence their faith in the atonement of Christ, and their complete repentance, the Anti-Nephi-Lehites made a complete life change:

> Rather than to shed the blood of their brethren, they would give up their own lives; and rather than take away from a brother, they would give unto him; and rather than to spend their days in idleness, they would labor abundantly with their hands. (Alma 24:18)

As a testimony before God and others, these converted Lamanites abandoned their evil deeds and replaced them with good works. Like the Bible, the Book of Mormon teaches us that we will be judged according to the evidence of our faith — our works:

> It is requisite with the justice of God that men should be *judged according to their works*; and if their works were good in this life, and the desires of their hearts were good, that they should also, at the last day, be restored unto that which is good. And if their works are evil they shall be restored unto them for evil. (Alma 41:3–4)

Citing the words of Isaiah, Nephi wrote, "Say unto the righteous that it is well with them, for they shall *eat the fruit of their doings*" (2 Nephi 13:10). The English Standard Version (ESV) renders Isaiah's words as, "Tell the righteous it shall be well with them, for they shall *eat the fruit of their deeds* [maalal מעלל]" (Isaiah 3:10).[105] Commenting on this verse, Barnes wrote:

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103 Gillum, "Repentance Also Means Rethinking," 406–437.

104 Thomas Russell, *The Works of the English Reformers: William Tyndale and John Frith*, Volume 1 (London: Ebenezer Palmer, 1831), 108.

105 Maalal (מעלל) is "an *act* (good or bad):—doing, endeavour, invention, work." Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, 70. (of the Hebrew and Chaldee

> That is, they shall receive the appropriate *reward* of their works, and that reward shall be happiness. As a husbandman who sows his field and cultivates his farm, eats the fruit of his labour, so shall it be with the righteous.[106] [emphasis in original]

This instruction from Isaiah merits comparison with Alma's sermon to the people of Zarahemla, which we have formatted as an extended alternate below:

> Come unto me
> and ye shall *partake of the fruit of the tree of life*; yea,
> ye shall eat and drink of the bread and the waters of life freely. Yea,
> come unto me
> and *bring forth works of righteousness*,
> and ye shall not be cut down and cast into the fire. (Alma 5:34–35)[107]

In these verses, "ye shall partake of the fruit of the tree of life" parallels the phrase "bring forth works of righteousness." In the end, the righteous will "eat and drink of the bread and the waters of life freely" rather than be "cut down and cast into the fire" as barren trees.

The scriptures often speak metaphorically of our works being the fruit that we *bring forth*, or produce. However, Isaiah 3:10 (2 Nephi 13:10) also connects the good works that we produce with the fruit that we eat. To the contrary, Alma taught his son Corianton that rather than "partake of the fruit of the tree of life," which fruit represents works of righteousness, the wicked will instead be "consigned to partake of the fruits of their labors — or their works which have been evil" (Alma 40:26). And, rather than drink of "the waters of life freely," as the righteous will do, the wicked will "drink the dregs of a bitter cup" (Alma 40:26).

During his preaching to the Zoramites (Alma 32), Alma presented an allegory comparing the word of God to a seed which eventually

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dictionary accompanying the exhaustive concordance).

106 Albert Barnes, *Notes, Critical, Explanatory, and Practical, on the book of the Prophet Isaiah*, Volume 1 (New York: Leavitt & Allen, 1853), 111.

107 See Donald W. Parry, *Poetic parallelisms in the Book of Mormon: the complete text reformatted* (Provo, Utah: The Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2007), xxiii. Note: Our formatting of this extended alternate differs from Parry's formatting.

grows into a "tree of life" (verse 40). The steps in this process can be summarized as:

1. Planting the seed in our heart (verse 28);
2. The seed swells and becomes "delicious" to us (verse 28);
3. The seed sprouts and begins to grow into a tree (verse 30);
4. If we "**neglect** the tree and **take no thought for its nourishment**," it withers away and dies (verse 38);
5. If we "**nourish the tree** as it beginneth to grow by your **faith with great diligence** and **with patience**, **looking forward to the fruit** thereof, it shall take root. And behold, it shall be a tree springing up unto everlasting life" (verse 41);
6. "And because of your **diligence** and your **faith** and your **patience** with the word in **nourishing** it that it may take root in you, behold, by and by ye shall pluck the fruit thereof, which is most precious, which is **sweet above all that is sweet**, and which is white above all that is white, yea, and pure above all that is pure; and ye shall **feast upon this fruit** even until ye are filled, that ye hunger not, neither shall ye thirst" (verse 42);
7. "Then, my brethren, ye shall **reap the rewards of your faith and your diligence and patience and long-suffering**, waiting for the tree to bring forth fruit unto you" (verse 43).

As Alma explained in this allegory, the fruit of the tree of life that the righteous "feast upon" is the result or "rewards" of their *faith*, *diligence*, *patience*, and *long-suffering* in planting the seed and nourishing the tree. In other words, the fruit is the result of their righteous works. This may help explain why Adam and Eve were forbidden to partake of the fruit of the tree of life following their transgression in the Garden — the fruit of that tree was not the product of their own labors. They needed a "space for repentance" (Alma 42:5) — a time to plant the seed and nourish the tree. They needed time to do the work of sincere *teshuvah*.

Lehi, recounting his vision of the tree of life, told his family: "I beheld a tree, whose fruit was desirable to make one happy." (1 Nephi 8:10) Lehi also spoke of a group of people that arrived at the tree of life, but then left because they were ashamed: "And after they had tasted of the fruit they were ashamed, because of those that were scoffing at them; and they fell away into forbidden paths and were lost" (1 Nephi 8:28). Ashamed of the tree and its fruit, they abandoned the Lord (symbolized by the tree of

life),[108] and left behind the fruit (their good works) for "forbidden" paths. Proverbs tells us that the wicked will "eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices" (Proverbs 1:31).

Joseph Smith taught that faith is "the principle of power," and that all things, including salvation, "exist by reason of faith."[109] As demonstrated previously, real faith, like sincere repentance, is always partnered with good works.

> Therefore blessed are they who will *repent and hearken unto the voice of the Lord* their God, for these are they that shall be saved. And may God grant in his great fullness that men might be brought unto *repentance and good works*, that they might be restored unto grace for grace *according to their works*. (Helaman 12:23–24)

Echoing the words of Paul, Amulek and Mormon both taught that we need to "work out" our salvation before God (Alma 34:37, Mormon 9:27, Philippians 2:12). The Greek word for "work out" in Philippians is κατεργάζομαι (katergazomai), and means to "to *work fully*, i.e., *accomplish*; by implication, to *finish, fashion*: –cause, to (deed), perform, work (out)."[110] Thus, the concept of working out our salvation ties in harmoniously with the principles of faith and repentance.

Turning with the Whole Heart

The heart is a powerful symbol of rebellion and repentance in the Book of Mormon. Frequently used as a metaphor for apostasy and rebellion (hard, or proud heart), it is also used to express repentance and turning to the Lord (soft, or broken heart). The most common condition of the heart in the Book of Mormon is a "hard heart," occurring 97 times, and accounting for 41% of all descriptions of the heart (see Appendix 6). Nephi constantly struggled with the hardness of his brothers' hearts: "Being grieved because of the hardness of their hearts, I cried unto the Lord for them" (1 Nephi 2:18). Hardness of the heart is a sure indicator of apostasy or *meshuvah*:

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108 John Bunyan wrote that "the tree of Life" is "the Christ and Saviour." George Offor, Esq., *The Whole Works of John Bunyan, accurately reprinted from the author's own editions. With editorial prefaces, notes, and life of Bunyan* (London: Blackie and Son, 1862), 456.

109 Joseph Smith, Jr., *Lectures on Faith*, 1:15.

110 Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, 41 (of the Dictionary of the Greek Testament accompanying the Exhaustive Concordance).

> Therefore thus saith the Lord: Because of the *hardness of the hearts* of the people of the Nephites, *except they repent*, I will take away my word from them and I will withdraw my Spirit from them. And I will suffer them no longer, and I will *turn the hearts of their brethren against them*. (Helaman 13:8)

The heart is also used as a symbol of sincere *teshuvah* in the Book of Mormon. Limhi, the grandson of Zeniff and king over a group of captive Nephites, promised his people that the Lord would free them from bondage if they would return to him:

> But if ye will *turn to the Lord* with *full purpose of heart* and put your trust in him and serve him with all diligence of mind – and if ye do this, he will, according to his own will and pleasure, deliver you out of bondage. (Mosiah 7:33)

The Lord told the Nephites that he would gather them "as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings if ye will *repent* and *return unto me* with *full purpose of heart*" (3 Nephi 10:6).

While ministering to the remaining Nephites after his resurrection, the Lord taught them how to deal with repentant and unrepentant members of the church. They were told to "minister unto" and "pray for" the wayward sinner. If the individual repented, the people were to "receive him." But, "if he repenteth not, he shall not be numbered among my people" (3 Nephi 18:30–31). However, an important counsel followed this instruction:

> Nevertheless ye shall not cast him out of your synagogues, or your places of worship, for unto such shall ye continue to minister. For ye know not but what they will *return and repent* and *come unto me with full purpose of heart* and I shall heal them, and ye shall be the means of bringing salvation unto them. (3 Nephi 18:32)

We should continue to minister to the unrepentant because they may "return and repent, and come unto me with full purpose of heart" — they may perform sincere *teshuvah*.

The *turning* of our hearts needs to be not just to God, but also to our fathers, to our progenitors. The final verse of the KJV Old Testament reads:

> And he shall turn [*shuv*] the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse. (Malachi 4:6)

This same verse from Malachi was repeated by the Lord in the Americas, underscoring the importance of turning our hearts to our ancestors as well as to the Lord. In fact, Malachi's message of *turning our hearts* to our fathers is cited in every book of LDS scripture, highlighting the importance of this principle (see Luke 1:17, 3 Nephi 25:6, D&C 110:15, and Joseph Smith – History 1:39).

Agency Makes Repentance Possible

Agency, like faith and *teshuvah*, is a word that requires action. Agency has been defined as "the quality of moving or of exerting power; the state of being in action; action; operation; instrumentality."[111] The Lord said that "in the Garden of Eden, gave I unto man his agency" (Moses 7:32), or in other words, his ability to act for himself. With agency comes choice, and God expressed his desire that his children "should choose me, their Father" (Moses 7:33). However, knowing that mankind would not always choose him or his ways, along with agency God gave us the ability to repent and return to him through *teshuvah*. "Remember that ye are *free to act for yourselves*, to choose the way of everlasting death or the way of eternal life" (2 Nephi 10:23).

Corianton's sins were a hindrance to the missionary effort among the Zoramites, and his father seized upon this as a teaching moment. Alma taught Corianton about the role of Adam and Eve in bringing about moral agency. After being removed from the Garden of Eden, they were "cut off, both temporally and spiritually, from the presence of the Lord. And thus we see they became subjects to *follow after their own will*" (Alma 42:7). From that time forward mankind has existed in a fallen state. However, as Lehi explained, our merciful Father had created a plan whereby we could *act for ourselves* and return to him:

> The Messiah cometh in the fullness of time that he might redeem the children of men from the fall. And because that they are redeemed from the fall, they have become *free forever*, knowing good from evil, *to act for themselves and not to be acted upon*, save it be by the punishment of the law at the great and last day, according to the commandments which God hath given. (2 Nephi 2:26)

The redemption of Christ made agency possible — it is what made us "free forever." Alma further clarified this principle:

111 Webster, *American Dictionary of the English Language*, s.v. "agency."

> Wherefore he gave commandments unto men, they having first transgressed the first commandments as to things which were temporal and becoming as Gods, knowing good from evil, placing themselves in a *state to act*, or being placed in a *state to act according to their wills and pleasures*, whether to do evil or to do good. (Alma 12:31)

Being a perfect and loving Father, God has given us, by his grace, the gift of agency. This gift, made possible through the redemption of Christ, allows us to turn from sin and return to him. Without this ability to act for ourselves, *teshuvah* would not be possible.

Will We be Naked or Robed?

Hans Christian Anderson wrote the story of The Emperor's New Clothes (Kejserens nye Klæder). In this parable, we learn of a king who placed a very high premium on his appearance, particularly on his clothing. Two "weavers" boasted that clothes made of their "fabric possessed the wonderful peculiarity of being invisible to every one [sic] who was either unfit for his situation, or unpardonably stupid."[112] Confident of his own worthiness, the king employed the two swindlers to make a suit of clothing for him to wear in a grand procession. All of the barons, advisors and even his minister, raved about the color, the patterns of the fabric, and the wonderful fit of the suit. Only one innocent child told the truth — that the emperor was naked.

Nephi saw in vision that "the silks and the scarlets and the fine-twined linen and the precious clothing and the harlots are the desires" of a "great and abominable church" (1 Nephi 13:8). As with the king in Anderson's story, the clothing of this church represents the pride of the world. And just as the king was revealed to be naked, the wicked will also discover their "nakedness before God" (Mormon 9:5) at the judgment day — a nakedness resulting from their absence of righteous works — their failure to perform *teshuvah*.

Jacob taught that if we are wicked, we will have "a perfect knowledge of all our guilt and our uncleanness and our *nakedness*" before God. On the other hand, "the righteous shall have a perfect knowledge of their enjoyment and their righteousness, being *clothed with purity*, yea, even with the *robe of righteousness*" (2 Nephi 9:14). In order to not be found naked in the presence of the Lord we must clothe ourselves "with the robe

112 Hans Christian Anderson, *Andersen's Tales for Children*. Translated by Alfred Wehnert (London: Bell and Daldy, 1869), 45.

of righteousness." In other words, we must put off our "uncleanness" and put on good works — we must turn away from sin and turn to God through *teshuvah*.

The Book of Mormon makes an interesting parallel between righteousness, prosperity and earthy attire. In Zeniff's record, he created a thought-provoking link between clothing the people's nakedness and their prosperity in the land:

> And I did cause that the women should *spin and toil and work all manner of fine linen, yea, and cloth of every kind, that we might clothe our nakedness*. And thus we did *prosper in the land*; thus we did have *continual peace* in the land for the space of twenty and two years. (Mosiah 10:5)

On several other occasions in the Book of Mormon the prosperity of the people is linked with their manufacture of cloth and clothing to cover their nakedness (see Alma 1:27–29, Helaman 6:13, and Ether 10:24–28). The Book of Mormon also instructs us to clothe those in need, beginning in our own homes (see Mosiah 4:14). We find similar directives throughout the Book of Mormon (see Jacob 2:19, Alma 1:30, Alma 34:28, and Helaman 4:12).

At the dedication of the Kirtland temple, Joseph Smith prayed, "that our garments may be pure, that we may be clothed upon with *robes of righteousness*" (D&C 109:76). These *robes of righteousness* can only be woven on the *looms of righteousness living*. This is an imperative of *teshuvah*. In a final act of sanctification, our robes also must be "washed white" — "cleansed from all stain through the blood of him of whom it hath been spoken by our fathers which should come to redeem his people from their sins" (Alma 5:21).

Summary

We have demonstrated that the doctrine of repentance as taught in the Book of Mormon is consonant with both the Old and New Testaments. The Book of Mormon also adds incremental insights into the principles of faith, grace and good works.

The Book of Mormon teaches us that we must turn from our wicked ways and return to God with real intent — with our whole heart. Agency — a gift given to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, and a product of the redemption of Christ — makes repentance possible. We need to clothe ourselves in righteousness through good works in order to fully

activate the redeeming power of the atonement of Christ, through which our robes will be "washed white."

Conclusion

In 1757, Robert Robinson penned these words to the hymn *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing*:

> Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, Prone to leave the God I love;
>
> Here's my heart, O take and seal it, Seal it for Thy courts above.[113]

Like Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Mormon, Robinson acknowledged our tendency to turn from the God that we love toward a state of apostasy, or *meshuvah*. The solution to this apostasy is a sincere turning away from sin and turning to God — best exemplified by the words *teshuvah* of Old Testament origin, and *metanoia* in the New Testament.

Sincere sorrow and grief — *nacham* in the Old Testament and *metamelomai* in the New Testament — are an important part of repentance, and must always be followed by a sincere turning to the Lord with the whole heart — by *teshuvah*:

> **Turn** [*shuv*] ye even to me **with all your heart**, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And **rend your heart**, and not your garments, and **turn** [*shuv*] unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth [*nacham*] him of the evil. (Joel 2:12–13)

The purpose of repentance is to activate the atonement in our lives and enable us to return to the presence of God — to our place of origin — clothed in the robes of righteousness that are woven from the fabric of righteous living. Although our good works cannot save us, they are powerful proof of our faith in the atonement of Christ, and will be used as evidence in the final judgment. Joseph Smith taught that "through the atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel" (Article of Faith 3). "Faith is an act of obedience. … [F]aith gives law to us, and we must be obedient to it."[114]

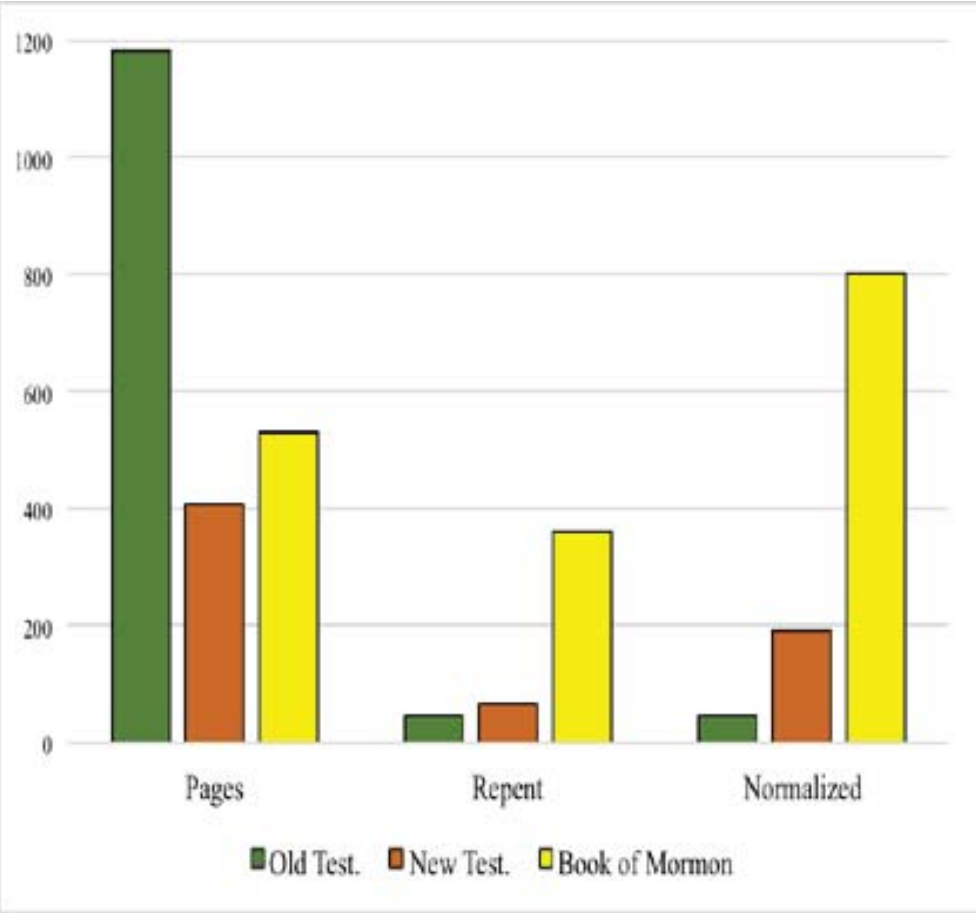
Repentance is an amazing gift — one that enables us to "have eternal life, which gift is the greatest of all the gifts of God" (D&C 14:7). Agency and grace, additional gifts from God, make repentance possible by

113 Retrieved from: http://cyberhymnal.org/htm/c/o/comethou.htm.

114 Henry, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testament*, 61.

allowing and empowering us to turn from our sins and return to God through *teshuvah*.

Appendix 1 — Occurrences of "Repent" in the Scriptures



The LDS version of the KJV Old Testament, containing nearly 1,200 pages, is relatively sparse in its use of *repent*, with only 45 occurrences of the word. By contrast, the New Testament, with only a third of the pages of the Old Testament, uses the word nearly 1½ times as often. Nevertheless, the Book of Mormon tops them both, using the word eight times more often than the Old Testament, and five times more than the New Testament. Even if the Old and New Testaments are combined, the Book of Mormon still uses the word three times more often than the entire Bible, and with far fewer total pages. Normalizing the data creates a common denominator by assigning the same number of pages as the current version of the LDS Old Testament (1,184 pages), to the New Testament and the Book of Mormon. The "Normalized" column shows how many occurrences of repent would theoretically occur.

	OT	NT	BoM
Pages	1,184	406	531
Repent	45	66	360
Normalized	45	192	803
Book of Mormon Ratio	17.8	4.2	

Appendix 2 — Nacham in the Old Testament

	Nacham	
Verse	God	People
Gen 6:6	X	
Gen 6:7	X	
Ex 13:17		X
Ex 32:12	X	
Ex 32:14	X	
Num 23:19	X	
Deut 32:36	X	
Judges 2:18	X	
Judges 21:6		X
Judges 21:15		X
1 Sam 15:11	X	
1 Sam 15:29	X	
1 Sam 15:29	X	
1 Sam 15:35	X	
2 Sam 24:16	X	
1 Chr 21:15	X	
Job 42:6		X
Ps 90:13	X	
Ps 106:45	X	
Ps 135:14	X	
Jer 4:28	X	
Jer 8:6		X
Jer 15:6	X	
Jer 18:8	X	

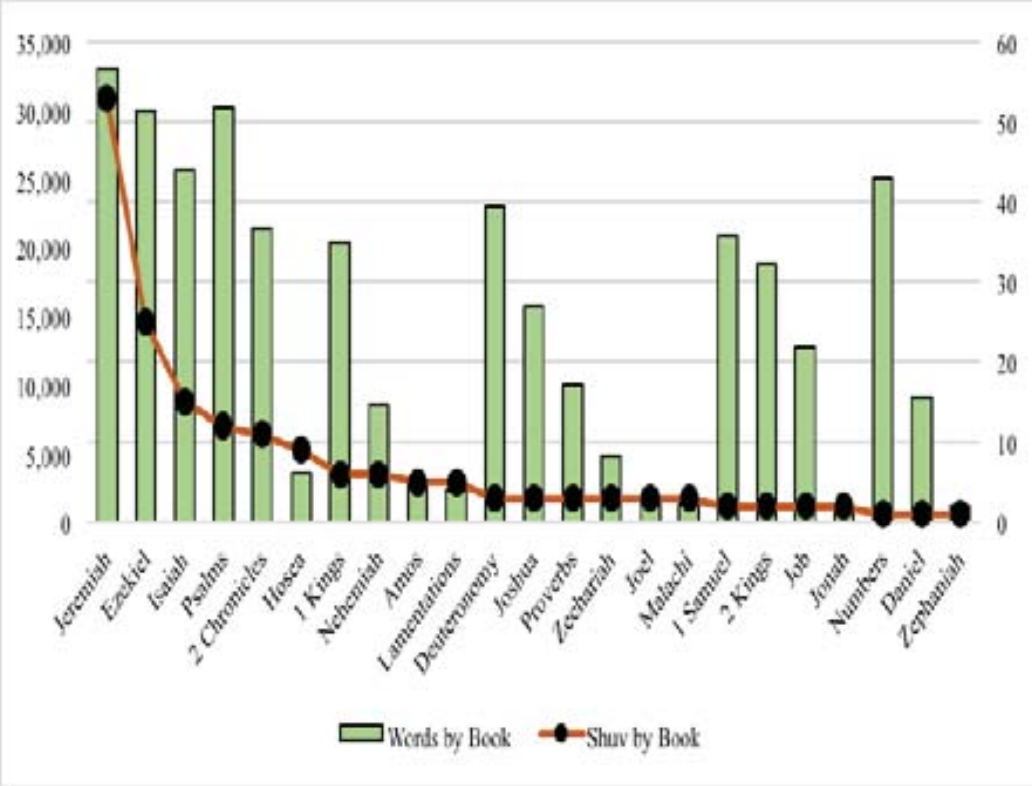
	Nacham	
Verse	God	People
Jer 20:16	X	
Jer 26:3	X	
Jer 26:13	X	
Jer 26:19	X	
Jer 31:19	X	
Jer 42:10	X	
Ezek 24:14	X	
Hosea 11:8	X	
Hosea 13:14	X	X
Joel 2:13	X	
Joel 2:14		X
Amos 7:3	X	
Amos 7:6	X	
Jonah 3:9	X	
Jonah 3:10	X	
Jonah 4:2	X	
Zech 8:14	X	
Nacham Total	35	7

	Shuv	
	God	People
1 Kgs 8:47		X
Ezek 14:6		X
Ezek 18:30		X

Jer 18:10	X		Shuv Total	0	3

Verses in which the word *repent* (and its derivates) appear in the KJV.

Appendix 3 — Shuv in the Old Testament[115]



Jeremiah used the word *shuv* — denoting both repentance and apostasy — more than any other Old Testament author. He was responsible for 30% of the total Old Testament usage. "In his study of the use of the root שוב [*shuv*] in Jeremiah, Krašovec concludes that 'it occurs here in a richer variety of nuances than in any other book of the Hebrew Bible'"[116] [bracketed text ours].

Born into a priestly tradition in the city of Anathoth around 645 BCE[117], Jeremiah lived during the same time and in the same general location as Lehi and his family. He spent his life warning the people of Jerusalem's impending destruction, and was a personal witness to

115 The left axis of the graph measures the total words per book (in Hebrew), while the right axis indicates the number of occurrences of *shuv* and its derivates by book. Books without at least one occurrence were omitted.

116 Scheuer, *The Return of YHWH*, 106.

117 Encyclopaedia Judaica, Second Edition, Volume 1, 126, s.v. "Jeremiah."

the Babylonian captivity. Jeremiah's preaching underscored the "cause and effect relationship between YHWH's[118] mercy and the people's repentance."[119] If Israel would turn from her sins and return to God, he would also return to her, and spare her from destruction. Jeremiah was the first to proclaim God's oath to the Israelites that he will "be their God, and they shall be my people" if they will perform sincere *teshuvah* and return to him (Jeremiah 31:33). Scheuer added that:

> The Book of Jeremiah offers a great variety of exhortations to improved conduct, or to return to YHWH. The addressees are instructed to a repentance-like action in a number of ways. The vocabulary used comprises the verbs יטב, "to be good," (Jeremiah 7:3; 18:11; 26:13), כבס, "to wash," (Jeremiah 4:14), and most frequently, the verb שוב, "to return."[120]

Appendix 4 — *Nacham* in the Septuagint

The Septuagint provides us with a valuable insight into an ancient understanding of the words *nacham* and *shuv*. When the Septuagint was translated from the Hebrew more than 2,000 years ago, *nacham* was expanded to 13 different Greek words (see below). The three Greek words most frequently preferred by the translators were *metanoeō* (14 times), *metamelomai* (8 times), and *parakaleō* (8 times), accounting for 30 of the 42 occurrences of *nacham*. At their root, all three of these words are "feeling" rather than "action" words. Strong's Concordance uses phrases like "to think differently or afterwards," "reconsider," "to care afterwards," or "to be of good comfort" to define them.[121] Like *nacham*, technically speaking, none of these definitions transmits any sense of turning from evil or turning toward God.

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118 The tetragrammaton YHWH (יהוה) is one of the Hebrew names for God in the Old Testament, and is commonly rendered Jehovah in English.

119 Scheuer, *The Return of YHWH*, 109.

120 Scheuer, *The Return of YHWH*, 106.

121 Strong, The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, 47 (metanoeo and metamelomai), 54 (parakaleō), (of the Dictionary of the Greek Testament accompanying the Exhaustive Concordance).

Qty	Septuagint	Strong's Number & Definition	Verses
14	μετανοέω metanoeō	3340 — To think differently or afterwards, i.e., reconsider (morally, feel compunction): — repent.	1 Sam 15:29 (2), Jer 4:28, Jer 8:6, Jer 18:8, Jer 18:10, Jer 31:19, Joel 2:13, Joel 2:14, Amos 7:3, Amos 7:6, Jonah 3:9, Jonah 4:2, Zech 8:14
8	μεταμέλομαι metamelomai	3338 — To care afterwards, i.e., regret: —rrepent (self).	Gen 6:7, Exodus 13:17, 1 Sam 15:11, 1 Sam 15:35, 1 Chr 21:15, Psalms 106:45, Psalms 110:4, Jer 20:16
8	παρακαλέω parakaleō	3870 — To call near, i.e., invite, invoke (by imploration, hortation or consolation): — beseech, call for, (be of good) comfort, desire, (give) exhort(-ation), intreat, pray.	Deut 32:36, Judges 2:18, Judges 21:6, 2 Sam 24:16, Psalms 90:13, Psalms 135:14, Ezekiel 24:14
3	παύω pauō	3973 — To stop (transitively or intransitively), i.e., restrain, quit, desist, come to an end: — cease, leave, refrain.	Jer 26:3, Jer 26:13, Jer 26:19
1	ἀναπαύω anapauō	373 — (reflexively) to repose (literally or figuratively (be exempt), remain); by implication, to refresh: — take ease, refresh, (give, take) rest.	Jer 42:10
1	ἀνίημι aniēmi	447 — To let up, i.e., (literally) slacken or (figuratively) desert, desist from: — forbear, leave, loose.	Jer 15:6

Qty	Septuagint	Strong's Number & Definition	Verses
1	ἀπειλέω apeileō	546 — To menace; by implication, to forbid: — threaten.	Num 23:19
1	ἐνθυμέομαι enthymeomai	1760 — To be inspirited, i.e., ponder: — think.	Gen 6:6
1	ἡγέομαι hēgeomai	2233 — To lead, i.e., command (with official authority); figuratively, to deem, i.e., consider: — account, (be) chief, count, esteem, governor, judge, have the rule over, suppose, think.	Job 42:6
1	ἱλάσκομαι hilaskomai	2433 — To conciliate, i.e., (transitively) to atone for (sin), or (intransitively) be propitious: — be merciful, make reconciliation for.	Exodus 32:14
1	ἵλεως hileōs	2436 — Cheerful (as attractive), i.e., propitious; adverbially (by Hebraism) God be gracious!, i.e., (in averting some calamity) far be it: — be it far, merciful.	Exodus 32:12
1	μεταλλάσσω metallassō	3337 — To exchange: — change.	Hosea 11:18

Qty	Septuagint	Strong's Number & Definition	Verses
1	παράκλησις paraklēsis	3874 — Imploration, hortation, solace: — comfort, consolation, exhortation, intreaty.	Hosea 13:14

Appendix 5 — *Shuv* in the Septuagint

For the 176 occurrences of *shuv* (and its derivatives), the Greek supplied 21 different words in the Septuagint (see below). The two words that dominate the Greek usage are epistréphō (87 times) and apostréphō (58 times), accounting for 82% of the total usage. Both of these words are derived from the root strephō (στρέφω), meaning to twist, turn around, reverse or convert.[122] In this sense, these two Greek words very closely reflect the meaning of *shuv*, and represent a good translation from the Hebrew.

122 Strong, The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, 67 (of the Dictionary of the Greek Testament accompanying the Exhaustive Concordance).

Qty	Septuagint	Strong's Number & Definition	Verses
87	ἐπιστρέφω epistréphō	1994 - To revert (literally, figuratively or morally):—come (go) again, convert, (re-)turn (about, again).	1 Kgs 12:27, Deut 4:30-31, Deut 30:2, 1 Sam 7:3, 1 Kgs 8:47-50, 2 Kgs 23:25, 2 Chr 15:4, 2 Chr 19:4, 2 Chr 30:62, Chr 30:9, 2 Chr 6:26, 2 Chr 6:37, 2 Chr 6:38, Neh 1:9, Neh 9:26, Neh 9:28-29, Job 22:23, Job 36:10-11, Ps 119:59, Ps 119:79, Ps 19:7, Ps 22:27, Ps 51:13, Ps 80:3, Ps 80:7, Ps 80:19, Ps 85:8, Ps 90:3, Isa 6:10, Isa 19:22, Isa 31:6, Isa 44:22, Isa 55:7, Jer 3:9-14, Jer 3:22, Jer 4:1, Jer 5:3, Jer 8:5, Jer 11:10 , Jer 15:19, Jer 18:8-10, Jer 24:7, Jer 31:18, Jer 34:13-16, Lam 2:14, Lam 3:40, Lam 5:21, Ezek 14:6, Ezek 18:20-22, Ezek 18:30-32, Ezek 8:17, Hosea 5:4, Hosea 6:1, Hosea 7:10, Hosea 12:6, Hosea 14:1-3, Hosea 14:5-7, Joel 2:12-14, Amos 4:6-11, Zech 1:3, Zech 10:9, Mal 2:6, Mal 3:7

Qty	Septuagint	Strong's Number & Definition	Verses
58	ἀποστρέφω apostréphō	654 - To turn away or back (literally or figuratively):—bring again, pervert, turn away (from).	Num 14:43, Josh 22:16, Josh 22:18, 1 Sam 15:11, 1 Kgs 8:35, 1 Kgs 9:6-7, 2 Kgs 17:13, 2 Chr 7:14, 2 Chr 7:19-20, Neh 9:35, Ps 85:1-4, Isa 9:13, Isa 30:15, Isa 37:29, Isa 51:11, Isa 58:13-14, Isa 59:20, Jer 5:6, Jer 8:4-5, Jer 15:6-7, Jer 18:11, Jer 23:14, Jer 23:21-22, Jer 26:3, Jer 31:21, Jer 31:23, Jer 35:15, Jer 36:3, Jer 36:7, Jer 44:4-5, Lam 1:8, Ezek 3:18-20, Ezek 13:22, Ezek 14:6, Ezek 18:23-31, Ezek 33:7-20, Dan 9:13, Hosea 7:16, Jonah 3:8-10, Zech 1:4-5
6	ἀναστρέφω anastréphō	390 - To overturn; also to return; by implication, to busy oneself, i.e. remain, live:—abide, behave self, have conversation, live, overthrow, pass, return, be used.	Prov 2:19, Jer 3:7, Jer 8:4, Jer 15:19, Jer 33:26, Jer 46:27

Qty	Septuagint	Strong's Number & Definition	Verses
5	κατοικία katoikía	2733 - Residence (properly, the condition; but by implication, the abode itself):—habitation.	Jer 3:6, Jer 3:8, Jer 3:12, Hosea 11:7, Hosea 14:4
2	ἀφίστημι aphístēmi	868 - To remove, i.e. (actively) instigate to revolt; usually (reflexively) to desist, desert, etc.:—depart, draw (fall) away, refrain, withdraw self.	Josh 22:23, Jer 3:14
1	αἰχμαλωσία aichmalōsía	161 - Captivity	Jer 31:19
1	ἁμαρτία hamartia	266 - a sin (properly abstract):—offence, sin(-ful).	Jer 14:7
1	ἀνακάμπτω anakámptō	344 - To turn back:—(re-)turn.	Jer 3:1
1	ἀτιμόω atimóō	821 - To maltreat:—handle shamefully.	Jer 31:22

Qty	Septuagint	Strong's Number & Definition	Verses
1	δέχομαι déchomai	1209 - Middle voice of a primary verb; to receive (in various applications, literally or figuratively):—accept, receive, take.	Deut 30:1
1	διαλείπω dialeípō	1257 - To leave off in the middle, i.e. intermit:—cease.	Jer 8:6
1	ἐξωθέω exōthéō	1856 - To expel; by implication, to propel:—drive out, thrust in.	Jer 50:6
1	ἐπέρχομαι epérchomai	1904 - To supervene, i.e. arrive, occur, impend, attack, (figuratively) influence:—come (in, upon).	Prov 26:11
1	Ἰταλικός Italikós	2483 - Italic, i.e. belonging to Italia:—Italian.	Jer 49:4

Qty	Septuagint	Strong's Number & Definition	Verses
1	κακία kakía	2549 - Badness, i.e. (subjectively) depravity, or (actively) malignity, or (passively) trouble:—evil, malice(-iousness), naughtiness, wickedness.	Jer 2:19
1	καταλείπω kataleípō	2641 - To leave down, i.e. behind; by implication, to abandon, have remaining:—forsake, leave, reserve.	Isa 10:21
1	οἰκέω oikéō	3611 - To occupy a house, i.e. reside (figuratively, inhabit, remain, inhere); by implication, to cohabit:—dwell.	Isa 21:12
1	πάλιν pálin	3825 - Anew, i.e. (of place) back, (of time) once more, or (conjunctionally) furthermore or on the other hand:—again.	Neh 9:28

Qty	Septuagint	Strong's Number & Definition	Verses
1	σύντριμμα syntrimma	4938 - Concussion or utter fracture (properly, concretely), i.e. complete ruin:—destruction.	Jer 3:22
1	σώζω sṓzō	4982 - To save, i.e. deliver or protect (literally or figuratively):—heal, preserve, save (self), do well, be (make) whole.	Isa 10:22
1	ὑπερῷον hyperōion	5253 - A higher part of the house, i.e. apartment in the third story:—upper chamber (room).	Prov 1:32
2	removed	none	Isa 1:27, Jer 3:11

Appendix 6 — Conditions of the Heart in the Book of Mormon

Qty	Heart Condition	Verses
97	Hard	1 Ne 2:18, 1 Ne 7:8, 1 Ne 7:8, 1 Ne 12:17, 1 Ne 13:27, 1 Ne 14:2, 1 Ne 14:6, 1 Ne 14:7, 1 Ne 15:3, 1 Ne 15:4, 1 Ne 15:10, 1 Ne 15:11, 1 Ne 16:22, 1 Ne 17:19, 1 Ne 17:30, 1 Ne 17:41, 1 Ne 17:42, 1 Ne 17:46, 1 Ne 22:5, 1 Ne 22:18, 2 Ne 1:17, 2 Ne 5:21, 2 Ne 6:10, 2 Ne 25:10, 2 Ne 25:12, 2 Ne 25:27, 2 Ne 33:2, Jacob 1:15, Jacob 6:4, Jacob 6:6, Jarom 1:3, Mosiah 3:15, Mosiah 10:14, Mosiah 11:29, Mosiah 12:1, Mosiah 13:32, Mosiah 26:3, Alma 1:24, Alma 8:11, Alma 9:5, Alma 9:30, Alma 9:31, Alma 10:6, Alma 12:10, Alma 12:11, Alma 12:13, Alma 12:13, Alma 12:33, Alma 12:34, Alma 12:35, Alma 12:36, Alma 12:37, Alma 13:4, Alma 13:5, Alma 14:11, Alma 15:15, Alma 21:3, Alma 21:12, Alma 22:22, Alma 23:14, Alma 30:29, Alma 30:46, Alma 33:20, Alma 33:21, Alma 34:31, Alma 34:31, Alma 35:15, Alma 37:10, Alma 48:3, Hel 6:35, Hel 7:18, Hel 10:13, Hel 10:15, Hel 12:2, Hel 13:8, Hel 13:12, Hel 16:15, Hel 16:22, 3 Ne 1:22, 3 Ne 2:1, 3 Ne 7:16, 3 Ne 20:28, 3 Ne 21:6, 3 Ne 21:22, 4 Ne 1:31, 4 Ne 1:34, Morm 1:17, Morm 1:17, Morm 3:12, Morm 4:11, Ether 4:15, Ether 8:25, Ether 11:13, Ether 15:19, Moro 9:4, Moro 9:10
27	Proud	2 Ne 19:9, 2 Ne 28:15, Jacob 2:13, Jacob 2:16, Jacob 2:20, Mosiah 11:5, Mosiah 11:19, Alma 1:6, Alma 5:53, Alma 6:3, Alma 7:6, Alma 15:17, Alma 31:27, Alma 45:24, Hel 3:33, Hel 3:36, Hel 4:12, Hel 7:26, Hel 13:22, Hel 13:27, 3 Ne 16:10, 4 Ne 1:43, Morm 8:28, Morm 8:28, Morm 8:36, Morm 8:36, Morm 8:36
11	Soft	1 Ne 2:16, 1 Ne 7:5, 1 Ne 7:19, 1 Ne 18:19, 1 Ne 18:20, 2 Ne 10:18, Mosiah 21:15, Mosiah 23:28, Mosiah 23:29, Alma 24:8, Hel 12:2
10	Lowly	1 Ne 2:19, Alma 32:8, Alma 32:12, Alma 37:33, Alma 37:34, Moro 7:43, Moro 7:44, Moro 7:44, Moro 8:26, Moro 8:26
9	Changed	Mosiah 5:2, Mosiah 5:7, Alma 5:7, Alma 5:12, Alma 5:13, Alma 5:14, Alma 5:26, Alma 19:33, Hel 15:7

Qty	Heart Condition	Verses
8	Pure	2 Ne 25:16, Jacob 2:10, Jacob 3:1, Jacob 3:2, Jacob 3:3, Mosiah 4:2, Alma 5:19, 3 Ne 12:8
8	Sorrowful	2 Ne 4:17, Alma 31:2, Alma 31:31, Hel 7:6, Hel 7:14, 3 Ne 1:10, 3 Ne 28:5, Ether 15:2
6	Broken	2 Ne 2:7, 2 Ne 4:32, 3 Ne 9:20, 3 Ne 9:20, 3 Ne 12:19, Moro 6:2
6	Joyful	Mosiah 4:20, Alma 2:8, Alma 17:29, Alma 26:11, Alma 30:35, 3 Ne 4:33
4	Purposeful	Mosiah 7:33, 3 Ne 10:6, 3 Ne 12:24, 3 Ne 18:32
4	Sincere	Mosiah 4:10, Mosiah 26:29, Hel 3:27, Moro 10:4
3	Angry	1 Ne 16:38, 3 Ne 11:29, 3 Ne 11:30
3	Poor	2 Ne 28:13, Alma 32:3, Alma 32:4
3	Thankful	Jacob 4:3, Alma 37:37, Alma 48:12
3	Turned aside	1 Ne 19:13, 1 Ne 19:14, 1 Ne 19:15
2	Holy	Mosiah 18:12, 3 Ne 4:29
2	Rejoicing	Alma 22:8, Morm 2:12
2	Stout	2 Ne 19:9, 2 Ne 20:12
2	Uncircumcised	2 Ne 9:33, Hel 9:21
2	Wicked	Jacob 2:6, Alma 10:6
1	Boasting	Alma 31:25
1	Corrupted	Ether 9:6
1	Depressed	Alma 26:27
1	Faint	2 Ne 17:4
1	Fat	2 Ne 16:10
1	Full	Alma 34:27
1	Glad	Alma 51:13
1	Grieved	Alma 31:24
1	Groaning	2 Ne 4:19
1	Loving	4 Ne 1:15
1	Moved	2 Ne 17:2
1	Murderous	1 Ne 17:44

Qty	Heart Condition	Verses
1	Open	3 Ne 19:33
1	Pained	1 Ne 17:47
1	Puffed up	2 Ne 28:9
1	Real intent	Moro 7:9
1	Removed	2 Ne 27:25
1	Sick	Alma 31:1
1	Stolen away	Alma 31:22
1	Stubborn	Alma 32:16
1	Turned from Lord	3 Ne 7:14
1	United	Mosiah 18:21
1	Unsteady	Hel 12:1
1	Weeping	2 Ne 4:26
1	Willful	Moro 9:23
237	Total	

Appendix 7 — Meshuvah in the Septuagint and Peshitta

On a curious note, the Septuagint and the Peshitta[123] often remove any sense of apostasy from the Hebrew word *meshuvah* by substituting the words for *house* or *inhabitant*, giving the translated texts a neutral meaning.[124] For example, Jeremiah 3:12 in the KJV reads, "Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD." The same verse from the Septuagint reads "be returned to me, O house[125] of Israel, says the Lord!"

In the preceding verse, Jeremiah 3:11, the Septuagint completely removed the word *meshuvah* without replacing it with any alternate wording. Thus, "the backsliding Israel" is rendered as simply "Israel." The translators of the Septuagint apparently wanted to avoid expressing the idea that Israel was in an apostate or backsliding state, and tried to soften the language. In the Peshitta, the translator sometimes changed the word *meshuvah* to a neutral meaning, swapping the Hebrew root *shuv* (שוב) for the Syriac cognate of *yashav* (ישב), which means "to sit

123 A Syriac translation of the Hebrew Bible completed around the third century CE.

124 Gillian Greenberg, "A kindly interpretation of משובה and שובב?" *Journal for the Aramaic Bible* 2/2 (2000): 203–212.

125 κατοικία (Katoikía), meaning residence or habitation, is the most common replacement for meshuvah in the Septuagint, being used five times.

or dwell" in Hebrew. While the two Hebrew words (שוב and ישב) are visually similar, they are not known to share a common etymology, showing that the Peshitta "translator felt free to exercise a considerable degree of literary initiative."[126]

Appendix 8 — Extended discussion of the relationship between Faith, Works and Repentance

According to Buber, the Hebrew word that embodies the Jewish concept of faith is *Emunah* (אמונה) — a "great trust in God."[127] *Emunah* is further defined as firmness, security, and "*faithfulness*, in fulfilling promises."[128]

> It seems clear that the Pauline/Johannine/Christian conception of faith represents a distinctly thinner conception of human relationship with God than its more robust Jewish counterpart. For Buber sees Christian understanding of Pistis less as 'Here I stand' than as 'I acknowledge something to be the case', which diminishes, even if it does not entirely lose, existential engagement and trust (and when Judaism moves in this direction, as Buber acknowledges has often been the case, it is always, in Buber's judgement, a falling away).[129]

The scriptures teach us plainly that the *telos* [aim or purpose] of our faith is the salvation of our souls (1 Peter 1:9). We are also instructed that "faith [is] unto salvation" (1 Peter 1:5), and that we are "saved through faith" (Eph 2:8). Additionally, we are counseled to become "wise unto salvation through faith" (2 Timothy 3:15). Clearly, real faith — an active belief that is always accompanied by action — is essential to salvation.

Motyer, commenting on the second chapter of James, summarized James's teachings on the interplay between faith and works:

> 1. *Faith promotes works*: works are not an exercise by themselves. Faith co-operates with them as a senior partner with a junior.
> 2. *Faith needs works*: by engaging in the activity of 'works' faith grows to maturity.

126 Greenberg, "A kindly interpretation of משובה and שובב?" 205.

127 Buber, Two Types of Faith, 154.

128 *Gesenius's Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures* (London: Samuel Bagster and Sons, 1846), 58.

129 R. W. L. Moberly, "*Knowing God and Knowing About God: Martin Buber's Two Types of Faith Revisited*," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 65/4 (2012), 406.

> 3. *Faith precedes works*. Faith is the first and basic reality in Abraham's relationship with God.[130] [emphasis added]

Matthew Henry also commented on these verses from James, explaining that faith (rather, bare faith that is devoid of fruit) alone cannot justify or save us:

> The apostle shews the error of those who rested in a bare profession of the Christian faith, as if that would save them, while the temper of their minds and the tenor of their lives were altogether disagreeable to that holy religion which they professed. To let them see, therefore, what a wretched foundation they built their hopes upon, it is here proved at large, *that a man is justified, not by faith only,* but *by works*.[131] [emphasis original]

Henry followed these comments about James's teachings of faith and works with observations about possible conflicts with the writings of Paul:

> Now upon this arises a very great question, namely, how to reconcile St. Paul and St. James? St. Paul, in his *epistles to the Romans* and *Galatians*, seems to assert the directly contrary thing to what St. James here lays down, saying it often, and with a great deal of emphasis, *that we are justified by faith only, and not by the works of the law.*[132] [emphasis original]

Henry explained that there exists a very "happy agreement" between the teachings of James and Paul on the subject of faith and works:

> When St. Paul says, that *a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law*, (Romans 3. 28.) he plainly speaks of another sort of works than St. James does, but not of another sort of *faith*. St. Paul speaks of works wrought in obedience to the law of Moses, and before men's embracing the faith of the gospel; and he had to deal with those who valued themselves so highly upon those works, that they rejected *the gospel*; (as Romans 10. at the beginning, most expressly declares;) but St. James speaks of works done in obedience to the gospel, and as the proper and necessary effects and fruits of a sound believing

130 J.A. Motyer, *The Message of James* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1985), Chapter 9, unpaginated.

131 Henry, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testament*, 770.

132 Henry, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testament*, 770.

> in Christ Jesus. Both are concerned to magnify *the faith of the gospel*, as that which alone could save us, and justify us; but St. Paul magnifies it, by shewing the insufficiency of any works of the law before faith, or in opposition to the doctrine of justification by Jesus Christ; St. James magnifies the same faith, by shewing what are the genuine and necessary products and operations of it.[133] [emphasis original]

Finally, Henry summarized his examination of the teachings of James and Paul concerning faith and works with the following:

> Those who cry up the gospel, so as to set aside the law, and those who cry up the law, so as to set aside the gospel, are both in the wrong; for we must take our work before us; there must be both *faith* in Jesus Christ, and *good works* the fruit of *faith*.[134] [emphasis original]

Martin Luther, a devoted proponent of salvation through faith alone, wrote the following regarding faith and works:

> Faith is God's work in us, that changes us and gives new birth from God. (John 1:13). It kills the Old Adam and makes us completely different people. It changes our hearts, our spirits, our thoughts and all our powers. It brings the Holy Spirit with it. Yes, it is a living, creative, active and powerful thing, this faith. Faith cannot help doing good works constantly. It doesn't stop to ask if good works ought to be done, but before anyone asks, it already has done them and continues to do them without ceasing. Anyone who does not do good works in this manner is an unbeliever.[135]

As we can see, Luther and Henry agreed that real faith always leads to works; works are the "fruit of faith." Faith must produce works, and as Luther wrote, "Faith cannot help doing good works constantly." Faith is the agent and works are the action — faith is the tree and works are the fruit. Luther continued:

> It is just as impossible to separate faith and works as it is to separate heat and light from fire! Therefore, watch out for your

133 Henry, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testament*, 770.

134 Henry, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testament*, 770.

135 Martin Luther, An excerpt from "*An Introduction to St. Paul's Letter to the Romans*." Retrieved from: http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/luther/luther-faith.txt.

> own false ideas and guard against good-for-nothing gossips, who think they're smart enough to define faith and works, but really are the greatest of fools.[136]

We are all familiar with the teachings from the "Sermon on the Mount." During this sermon, Jesus taught his disciples:

> Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But **lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven**, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (Matt 6:19–21)

In his New Testament commentary, Charles John Ellicott, Lord Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, published this explanation of "treasures in heaven":

> Treasures in heaven. — These, as in the parallel passage of Luke xii. 33, are the good works, or rather the character formed by them, which follow us into the unseen world. (Revelations xiv. 13), and are subject to no process of decay. So men are "rich in good works" (1 Timothy vi. 18), "rich in faith" (Jas. ii. 5), are made partakers of the "unsearchable riches of Christ and His glory" (Ephesians iii. 8, 16).[137]

Ellicott equated being "rich in good works" with being "rich in faith." Many, including various Latter-day Saint leaders, have spoken in favor of works as an evidence of our faith: "Works are the evidence of our faith, works alone cannot save us, but works are the evidence that we have been saved."[138] George Albert Smith declared, "Let me say to you that the best evidence of our faith in [the word of wisdom], that we believe it came from God, is a consistent observance of it in our lives"[139] [bracketed text ours]. Anthony W. Ivins taught:

> Strange as it may seem to some, [observance of the law of tithing] is one of the most potent means by which we evidence

136 Luther, An excerpt from "*An Introduction to St. Paul's Letter to the Romans*."

137 Charles John Ellicott, *New Testament Commentary for English Readers*, Volume 1 (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1878), 37.

138 Michael Juckett, *Serenity of James* (Mustang, Oklahoma: Tate Publishing & Enterprises, 2010), 137.

139 George Albert Smith, in Conference Report, April 1907, 18.

> our real faith in the Lord and in his work; for we give evidence of our faith by our works.[140] [bracketed text ours]

In Hebrews 11:1 we read that "faith is the *substance* of things hoped for, the *evidence* of things not seen." In order for faith to be *evidence* (*elegchos*, ἔλεγχος) there must be something "which manifests or makes evident" the faith[141] — there must exist some type of *substance* (*hupostasis*, ὑπόστασις). Paul counseled, "Let every man prove his own work" (Gal 6:4). The apostle John, envisioning the final judgement, said that he saw that the dead "were judged every man according to their works" (Revelations 20:13). Paying tithing, living the word of wisdom, and giving service — in summary, keeping the commandments of God — "are profitable, as they are the fruits and evidence of a true and lively faith.[142] Ever the pragmatist, Brigham Young taught the saints:

> When I exhort the brethren to have faith, I really had rather that they would have good works; I do not care half so much about their faith as I do about their works. Faith is not so obvious a principle, but in good works you see a manifestation, an evidence, a proof that there is something good about the person who is in the habit of doing them.[143]

The author of Hebrews described hope as "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast" (Heb 6:19). The prophet Ether greatly expanded on this idea, explaining that:

Hope "cometh of" or is the product of faith;

- which "maketh an anchor to the souls of men;"
- rendering "them sure and steadfast;" and,
- causing them to be "always abounding in good works." (Ether 12:4)

Good works, like hope, are the product of faith, and evidence that we are anchored, sure and steadfast in Christ. Without this anchor, we will be "led about by Satan, even as chaff is driven before the wind, or as a vessel is tossed about upon the waves without sail or anchor or without any thing wherewith to steer her" (Morm 5:18).

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140 Anthony W. Ivins, in Conference Report, April 1928, 19.
141 *Oxford English Dictionary*, http://oed.com, s.v. "Evidence."
142 Fraser, *The Whole Works of the Rev. Ebenezer Erskine*, 198.
143 Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 3:154.

Appendix 9 — Dead Works

The phrase *dead works* occurs only twice in the New Testament, and both times it is found in the book of Hebrews (6:1 and 9:14). In the New Testament literature, at least three basic views exist about the meaning of dead works: 1. Any and all works we perform to try to gain salvation; 2. Good works performed without real intent; and 3. Evil works, or in other words, sin.

Representative of the first position — that all attempts to gain salvation through works are dead works — is this:

> "Repentance from dead works", therefore, is the doctrine that says we must repent from trusting in our own works to save us, which are dead works. Instead, we must trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation.[144]

This belief that salvation comes through *divine grace alone (faith that is without works* rather than *faith — without works)* is often referred to as antinomianism, and was strongly rejected by Martin Luther and others. Luther accused the antinomians "of both teaching and denying Christ."[145] Many were good preachers, according to Luther, but in rejecting the severity of sin and the necessity of repentance, they denied the atonement of Christ. According to the Jewish Encyclopedia, "repentance is the prerequisite of all atonement."[146]

Liddon expressed well the second opinion — that dead works are those which we perform without real intent:

> "Dead works:" works that are not good, in that their motive is good, nor bad, in that their motive is bad, but dead in that they have no motive at all "in that they are merely outward and mechanical," affairs of propriety, routine, and form, to which the heart and spirit contribute nothing.[147]

In other words, anything that we do out of tradition, habit or even necessity, but that does not spring from a desire to glorify and serve God

144 Retrieved from: http://www.africanaquatics.co.za/_christian/_articles/deadworks.htm.

145 Mark U. Edwards, Jr., *Luther and the False Brethren* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 170.

146 *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. 10 (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1907), 377, s.v. "Repentance."

147 Henry Parry Liddon, *Passiontide Sermons* (London: Forgotten Books, 2013), 80. (Originally published in 1889).

are dead works. The Lord may have been speaking of this type of dead works in this revelation concerning baptism:

> Wherefore, although a man should be baptized an hundred times it availeth him nothing, for you cannot enter in at the strait gate by the law of Moses, neither by your *dead works*. For it is because of your *dead works* that I have caused this last covenant and this church to be built up unto me, even as in days of old. (D&C 22:2–3)

The Lord wants our sincere and heartfelt commitment rather than mere routine observance. How many of our own efforts are performed because of cultural, family, or even church traditions? "How many acts in the day are gone through without intention, without deliberation, without effort, to consecrate them to God!"[148]

The third category of dead works — literally, works which lead to spiritual death, or in other words, sins that we commit — is supported by many commentators:[149]

> Agreably [sic], Repentance is called Repentance *from dead works*, Heb 6. I. i.e., Sins, which are dead Works; for they proceed from the body of Death in us, and if persisted in, end in Death. Sin when it is finished bringeth forth Death.[150] [emphasis original]

MacArthur commented that "**Repentance from dead works** is turning away from evil deeds, deeds that bring death"[151] [bolding original]. He also explained that in addition to turning from our dead works, we also need to turn toward God through Jesus Christ. The 1599 Geneva Bible contains this wording and marginal note for dead works from Hebrews 9:14:

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148 Liddon, *Passiontide Sermons*, 80.

149 Matthew Henry commented that "repentance from dead works" is "conversion and regeneration" – *teshuvah*. He continued, "The sins of persons unconverted are dead works; they proceed from persons spiritually dead, and they tend to death eternal." (*An Exposition of the Old and New Testament*, 717.) Adam Clarke referred to dead works as "works of those who were dead in trespasses, and dead in sins." *The New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, volume 2 (New York: B. Waugh and T. Mason, 1833), 687.

150 Sewall, *Repentance: The Sure Way to Escape Destruction*, 18.

151 John F. MacArthur, *Hebrews: an Expository Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 138.

14. How much more shall the blood of Christ which through the eternall Spirit offered himselfe without fault to God, purge your conscience from [l]dead works, to serue the liuing God?	[l] From sinnes which proscede from death, and bring fourth nothing but death.

This final concept of dead works — evil works — brings with it the invitation to come to God through repentance. Henry commented that "repentance from dead works, and faith towards God, are connected, and always go together; they are inseparable twins, the one cannot live without the other."[152] This combination of repentance from dead works — turning from sin — and faith towards God (which always includes good works) is the Old Testament definition of sincere *teshuvah*.

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152 Henry, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testament*, 717.