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THE

# WITNESS

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The Book of Mormon Foundation

*Come unto Me  
with a broken heart  
and a contrite spirit.*



ISSUE 182 / 2023

# THE WITNESS

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## THE *Book of Mormon* FOUNDATION

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The Book of Mormon Foundation is pleased to add [www.bomstudy.org](http://www.bomstudy.org) to our website. This site was developed and is maintained by Elder Robert (Bob) Bobbitt. Bob, a teacher of religious studies at Center Place Restoration school, is well known for his study and passion for apologetics and defending the gospel of Jesus Christ as found in the scriptures. This curriculum for the Book of Mormon and its plain message, is a dynamic work in progress.

## BOOK OF MORMON STUDY

A Comprehensive Review of the Book of Mormon

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### I NEPHI 1 STUDY GUIDE (118 pts.)

#### HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

#### THREE GROUPS THAT MIGRATED TO THE AMERICAN CONTINENT

- The Jaredites.** The book of Ether tells us that a group we will call the Jaredites migrated from the plain of Shinar in lower Mesopotamia to the American continent. Our writing calculates an extremely long eastward migration crossing China and the Pacific Ocean, landing on the west coast of Central America. We also assume an alignment with the Olmec civilization of Mesamerica. Our date for the Tower of Babel would be in about the 2200s BC, much earlier than Ussher's chronology. This would allow more time for major civilizations to arise.
- Lahi.** The book of 1 Nephi informs us that a group, led by a man named "Lahi," left the city of Jerusalem 600 years before the birth of Christ and 54 years before Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. Our writing assumes an eastward migration in which Lahi landed on the west coast of Central America. We also assume an alignment with the Mayan civilization of Mesamerica.
- The People of Zarahemla or Mulekites.** The "Amalaki" section of the book of Omni tells us that King Mosiah 1 and the Nephites followed a northerly migration from the city of Nepht to the city of Zarahemla, where they discovered



# CUT, DIVIDE & GATHER

by Marlin Guin

Many of us have probably seen at least one episode of *The Chosen*, a popular series about the life of Christ. For those who have not, let me attempt to describe the animated graphic before each episode. It begins by displaying gray fish, all moving at the same speed and in the same direction, with no apparent urgency or destination. The gray fish sometimes

move in a straight line and sometimes in a circle. Their predictable movement reminds me of a school of fish moving with no thought of changing anything to alter the direction of their travelling. They seem to be content with continuing in a direction they have always gone before.

All of a sudden and at different times, some of the fish respond to something that gets their attention and changes them. I would say it even transforms them. This transformation causes their color to change from gray to blue, as if they become something totally different. They then quickly turn and travel in the opposite direction of the others, as if to seek out and follow whatever changed them. For a better description, I recommend you view *The Chosen* graphic video using the link at the end of this article. You can also see a similar example by visiting the Center Place Restoration School (CPRS) to observe the wall art in the hallway across from the administrative office.

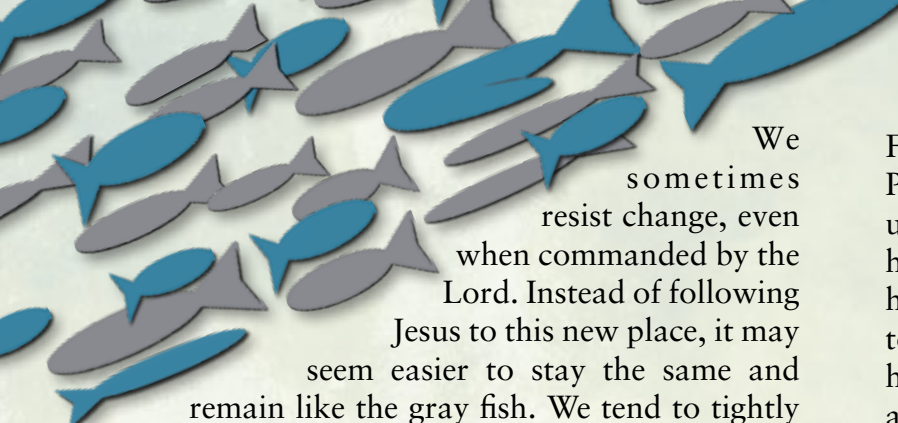
This graphic always catches my attention because it so clearly represents, in a symbolic way, how Christ calls forth people from the world. Some hearken unto His voice, and their lives are transformed by the power of God. They are born of the Spirit and respond by changing the direction of their lives and gathering to Him.

And **be not conformed** to this world; but **be ye transformed** by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God is. (Romans 12:2)

For, said he, I have repented of my sins, and have been redeemed of the Lord; behold, I am **born of the Spirit**. (Mosiah 11:186)

We sometimes travel in the same predictable direction guided, by habits, personal beliefs, history, traditions, etc., without considering how the Lord wants to transform us and take us to a place we've never been before. This new place is a spiritual place, but can also be a temporal place. The scriptures remind us the restoration and gathering of His people in the last days is both spiritual and temporal.

And now it came to pass that after I, Nephi, had read these things which were engraven upon the plates of brass, my brethren came unto me and said unto me: What meaneth these things which ye have read? Behold, are **they to be understood according to the things which are spiritual, which shall come to pass according to the spirit and not the flesh?** And I, Nephi, said unto them: Behold, they were made manifest unto the prophet, by the voice of the Spirit: For by the Spirit are all things made known unto the prophets, which shall come upon the children of men according to the flesh. Wherefore, the things of which I have read, are **things pertaining to things both temporal and spiritual;** (1 Nephi 7:1-5)



We sometimes resist change, even when commanded by the Lord. Instead of following Jesus to this new place, it may seem easier to stay the same and remain like the gray fish. We tend to tightly hold on to the things we think we know, even when the Lord has something better for us. The good news is the Lord has provided a solution. We can become like the blue fish when we hearken unto the voice of Christ and have our lives transformed. Harkening to His voice empowers and inspires us to change and leave the habits, personal beliefs, history, traditions, etc. that prevent us from turning and travelling toward Him.

The scriptures tell us that, in the latter days, those who will not hearken unto the voice of Christ will be **cut off** from among the people. When we hear or read about people being **cut off**, our thoughts may center on things like elders courts, silencing, shunning, removing our fellowship, blotting out names, etc. It's not my intent to question the need for some of these things, as they are directed by the Lord, but instead to encourage us to consider how the Lord can use the process of **cutting off** to achieve a greater purpose in His perfect plan. Christ shows us how **cutting off** people who will not hearken unto His voice can actually help accomplish the final gathering of His people in the last days.

To understand how this is done, let's first consider the experience of Joseph Smith Jr., as he received instruction from Moroni, the last abridger of the Book of Mormon. On the evening of September 21, 1823, Moroni appeared as a heavenly messenger to Joseph. His experience is recorded in church history. Part of that experience includes Moroni quoting scriptures from Acts 3:22-23.

He (Moroni) quoted also the **third chapter of Acts, twenty-second and twenty-third verses** precisely as they stand in our New Testament. He said that **the prophet was Christ, but the day had not yet come when they who would not hear his voice should be cut off from among the people, but soon would come.** (Church History Vol 1, Chpt 2, Page: 13)

For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. (Acts 3:22-23)

Why was it necessary for Moroni to identify Christ as the prophet to be raised up? Also, what does hear His voice and being **cut off from among the people** mean, and how long is **soon would come**?



These are important and challenging questions, but we have some insights from the scriptures, especially the Book of Mormon.

## I AM HE

Moroni, as a heavenly messenger, identified this prophet as Jesus Christ because Acts 3:22-23 does not specifically mention Christ as the prophet in those verses. The Lord knew Joseph needed to know the identity of this prophet to help prepare him for the work to which he was being called. It would be a work with a purpose to restore and gather God's people. (D&C 83:1b) Moroni was preparing the way, even before the translation of the Book of Mormon, for the coming forth of a **great and marvelous work** that would be founded upon Jesus Christ, the Rock. It would be a work that is everlasting, either **on the one hand or on the other**. We can see in this scripture the plan of the Lord to move toward a **final division** of the people, for the purpose of separating the righteous from the wicked.

For the time cometh, saith the Lamb of God, that I will work a **great and a marvelous work** among the children of

men; A work which shall be everlasting, either **on the one hand or on the other; Either to the convincing of them unto peace and life eternal, or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds,** unto their being brought down into captivity and also unto destruction, **both temporally and spiritually,** according to the captivity of the devil, of which I have spoken.  
(1 Nephi 3:214-216)

We can also go directly to the words of Jesus in the Book of Mormon for further insights. Jesus left no doubt concerning the identity of the prophet mentioned in Acts 3:22-23, as He made this proclamation to the people in this land:

Behold, **I am he** of whom Moses spake, saying, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me, **him shall ye hear in all things** whatsoever he shall say unto you.  
(3 Nephi 9:60)

Why is the identity of this prophet so important, especially for the prophetic events of the last days? It's because Jesus Christ is the standard of truth by which all things are measured. Those who hearken unto the voice of Christ gather to Him, and those who do not remain separated or **cut off** from among the people. It's all about the voice of Jesus and our response to it! Moroni reminds us: **the day had not yet come when they who would not hear his voice should be cut off from among the people, but soon would come.** It's important to know this scripture is founded upon the response of each person to the voice of Christ. It's a personal choice!

## HEARING HIS VOICE

Just hearing the voice of Jesus Christ is not enough and not what these scriptures really mean. Many have heard His voice and rejected Him. The scriptures tell us there are people whose eyes are open, but they do not see; and whose ears listen, but they do not hear. Hearing the voice of Christ means to hear and follow Him with a total conviction of

our hearts. The scriptural word for that response is to **hearken**. It's a whole soul response, even when His voice speaks of things unfamiliar to our traditional thinking and preconceived beliefs. Aaron and King Lamoni's father give us some insights into what it means to hearken unto the voice of Christ with our whole soul.

...the king said, **What shall I do, that I may have this eternal life** of which thou hast spoken? Yea, **what shall I do that I may be born of God,** having this wicked spirit rooted out of my breast, and receive his Spirit, that I may be filled with joy, that I may not be cast off at the last day? Behold, said he, **I will give up all that I possess; yea, I will forsake my kingdom, that I may receive this great joy.** But Aaron said unto him, If thou desirest this thing, **if thou wilt bow down before God, yea, if thou wilt repent of all thy sins, and will bow down before God, and call on his name in faith, believing that ye shall receive, then shalt thou receive the hope which thou desirest.**  
(Alma 13:48-51)

I want to emphasize again how the Lord wants to take His people to a place we have never been before. Each of us must decide whether we are willing to go there. I believe the times in which we live and the hastening of prophetic events are demanding our urgent and prayerful response. As we consider our response, these questions press heavily upon us: are we willing to give up everything that's keeping us from the kingdom of God? Likewise, are we willing to receive everything from Jesus that will bring us into the kingdom of God? The answers to these questions provide a true picture of our relationship with the Lord and our desire to hearken unto His voice. Once again, Moroni told Joseph Smith: **the day had not yet come when they who would not hear his voice should be cut off from among the people, but soon would come.**

# CUTTING OFF AND A GREAT DIVISION

Hopefully, we see how the gathering of His people comes through the separation that occurs between those who will hearken unto His voice, those who partially hear and those who will not hear at all.

For the time surely must come, that **all they who fight against Zion, shall be cut off**. And the Lord will surely prepare a way for his people, unto the fulfilling of the words of Moses, which he spake, saying: A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that **all those who will not hear that prophet, shall be cut off from among the people**. And now I, Nephi, declare unto you, that **this prophet of whom Moses spake, was the Holy One of Israel**; Wherefore, he shall execute judgment in righteousness; (1 Nephi 7:42-47)

Nephi said the time surely must come when all they who fight against Zion shall be **cut off**. Who is it that will fight against Zion and be **cut off**? The obvious answer is those who want to remove the name of Christ from the earth. We certainly can easily see that happening today. However, we must also consider those who want to remove the covenants God made with the House of Israel. We can also easily see how that is happening today, even within the Christian church. Even further, I wonder if it's possible for someone to fight against Zion while believing they are building it up? Is it possible for people who are unwilling to become one with the Lord and each other, as commanded by Him, to be actually fighting against Zion? Jesus did say: **if you are not one you are not mine**. (D&C 38:6a)

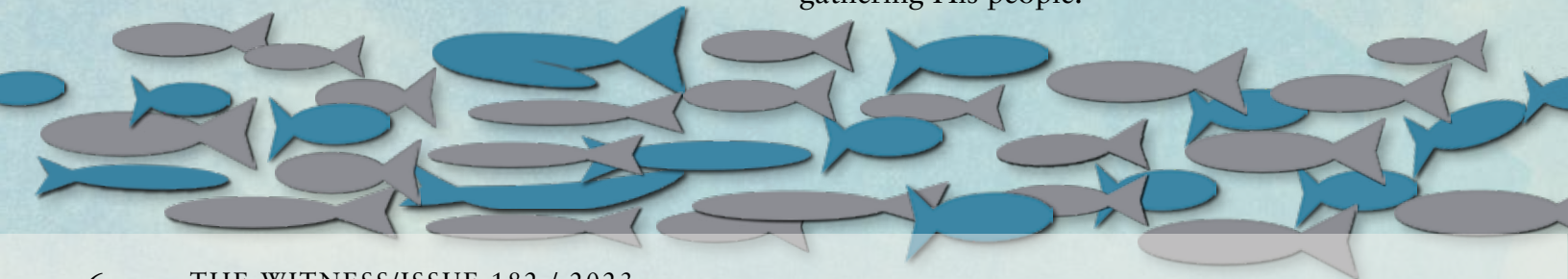
I've never heard any scripture quoted so often in the Restoration and believed so little. It seems we sometimes believe this scripture really doesn't mean what it says, or it doesn't apply to us individually. Perhaps it's because we think when everyone agrees with us, then we will be one. The oneness mentioned in the scriptures and commanded by God for His people can only be found at the feet of Jesus. He is the way, **the truth** and the life. He is the source of all truth! Could falling down at the feet of Jesus be the place He wants to take us that we've never been before?

The scriptures tell us that **cutting off** those who will not hearken unto the voice of Christ will eventually contribute to and culminate in what is called a **great division**.

For the time speedily cometh, that the Lord God shall cause a **great division** among the people; and the wicked will he destroy; and he will spare his people, yea, even if it so be that he must destroy the wicked by fire. (2 Nephi 12:90)

There's a significant difference between being **cut off** from among the people and a **great division**. Notice the scriptures describe how being cut off is a personal choice, while the **great division** is actually caused by Christ. Each person decides to hearken or be **cut off**, and Jesus decides whether each person is righteous or wicked in the **great division**. For that reason, we should be very thankful that Jesus is in charge of determining the final outcome of the **great division**. Who else but Christ can execute righteous judgement and truly know the difference between the repentant and unrepentant, the wise and the foolish virgins, the sheep and the goats, and the wheat and the tares?

Isn't it amazing how the Lord uses things like **cutting off** and a **great division** to ultimately gather His people into one fold with one Shepherd? At first, it may sound contradictory but it's not when seen in the light of God's great and perfect plan for gathering His people.



# SOON WOULD COME AND SPEEDILY COMETH

What about the prophetic timeline for these things? Is **cutting off** already in progress? When will the great division come? Moroni said **cutting off would soon come**, and Nephi prophesied the **great division speedily cometh**. We should realize these prophecies are not open-ended. They have a beginning and an end on God's prophetic timeline. I believe the **cutting off** of those who will not hearken to the voice of Christ has already begun at some level, and it will reach its final conclusion in the **great division** caused by Christ. Like many of the signs of the last days, they will become clearer over time.

Even though it might seem we have the luxury of being complacent and think there is no urgency to respond, the Lord will not wait forever for a people to hearken unto His voice. This great and marvelous work must be completed and all of God's word fulfilled according to His timeline. Understanding that urgency helps us see how the ultimate purpose of **cutting off and a great division** is to gather His sheep into **one fold and one shepherd**, so they can prepare and participate in the final chapter of this earth.

Some may admit it makes us uncomfortable to consider how prophecy has an end date and how the time of that end could be now, or maybe even in our lifetime. We sometimes feel uneasy when we see all the things happening today and realize the scriptures have suddenly become more real to us. It gets our attention when we realize the fulfillment of prophecy is not always delayed until some distant, future time or generation. Sometimes our comfort and complacency in life tempts us to think that all the scriptures which make us uncomfortable are going to be fulfilled somewhere down the road. Some may even think those scriptures are not

even relevant for today. Perhaps you have heard or read something similar to this vain and foolish statement: the Book of Mormon is the product of a 19th century agrarian society and is no longer relevant for our day.

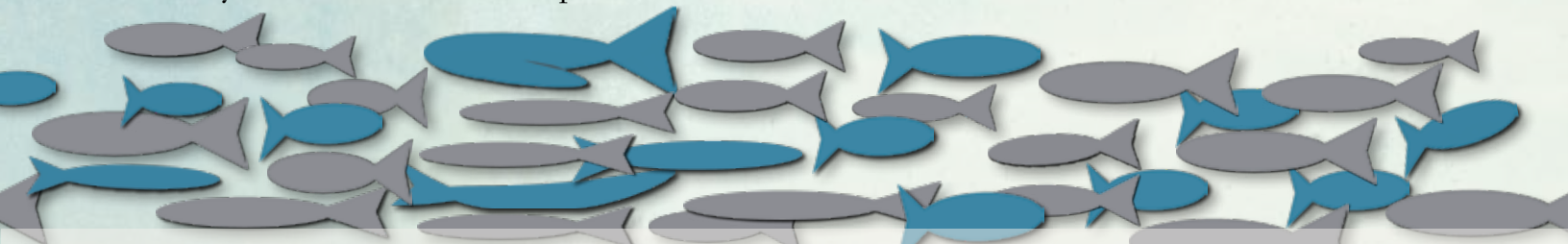
The words of Christ will become more real as they take their rightful place in our lives, but especially the Book of Mormon. According to the covenants of God, it must take its rightful place in the restoration of the House of Israel in the last days, beginning with the remnant of Jacob. I believe the people who follow the Lord to that place we've never been before will be a people who believe the words written in the book and not just a belief in the coming forth of a book. (2 Nephi 12:80)

When His word becomes real to us, the Lord wants us to look up and rejoice with hope and assurance. He wants us to have confidence in knowing Christ is now moving toward the conclusion of this great work, and He will orchestrate the final gathering of His people.

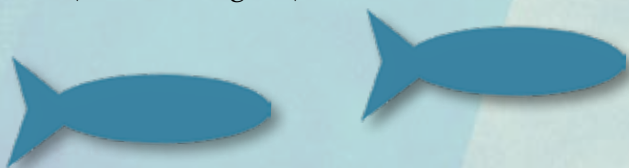
The Lord speaks with different voices to get our attention. We all know parents also do the same thing to get their children's attention. When giving them instructions, they speak much differently the first time than they do the second or third time. Therefore, it should be no surprise that Jesus first speaks as the sacrificial lamb, but in the last days He will speak as the lion of Judah.

And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. (Revelation 5:5)

Repent ye, for the great day of the Lord is come. And again, the Lord shall utter his voice out of heaven, saying: Hearken, O ye nations of the earth, and hear the words of that God who made you. O, ye nations of the earth, how often would I have gathered you together as a hen gathereth her chickens



under her wings, but ye would not? How oft have I called upon you by the mouth of my servants, and by the ministering of angels, and by mine own voice, and by the voice of thunders, and by the voice of lightnings, and by the voice of tempests, and by the voice of earthquakes, and great hailstorms, and by the voice of famines and pestilences of every kind, and by the great sound of a trump, and by the voice of judgment, and by the voice of mercy all the day long, and by the voice of glory and honor, and the riches of eternal life, and would have saved you with an everlasting salvation, but ye would not? Behold, the day has come, when the cup of the wrath of mine indignation is full.  
(D&C 43:5g-6d)

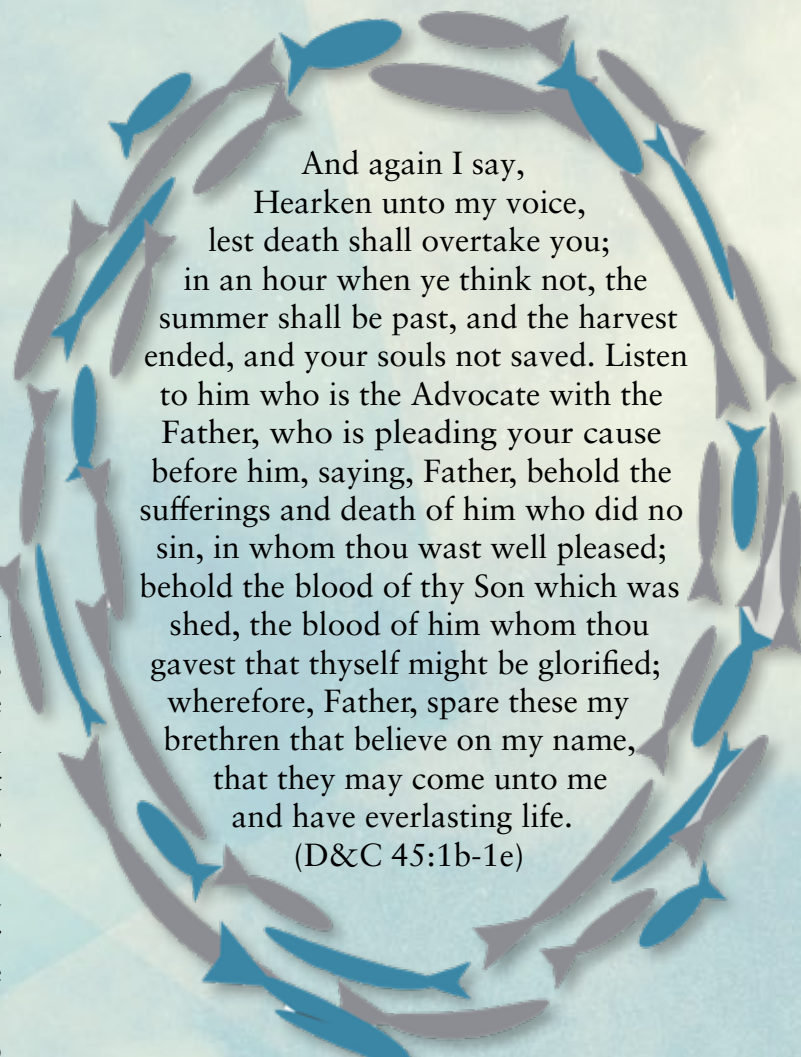


God loves us so much, and that never changes! However, if we will not listen when He speaks with the voice of blessings, then He will speak with the voice of judgments. Even though He speaks with a different voice, it's always based on love and with the same purpose to gather all who will hearken unto Him. Sooner or later, every knee must bow, and every tongue must confess that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God and the Savior of the world, —even those who have rebelled and rejected Him! They must acknowledge Him for who He is before the great day of judgment. He alone is worthy to be praised by all creation!

The same choice is before us. It's a call to hearken unto His voice. Are we willing to prepare and participate in the great things coming on the earth? If so, let us quickly go and do as the Lord has commanded.

It is yet day when all can work. The night will come for many of my people opportunity to assist will have passed.  
(D&C 142:5b)

And it came to pass that I, Nephi, said unto my father, I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them.  
(1 Nephi 1:65)



And again I say,  
Hearken unto my voice,  
lest death shall overtake you;  
in an hour when ye think not, the  
summer shall be past, and the harvest  
ended, and your souls not saved. Listen  
to him who is the Advocate with the  
Father, who is pleading your cause  
before him, saying, Father, behold the  
sufferings and death of him who did no  
sin, in whom thou wast well pleased;  
behold the blood of thy Son which was  
shed, the blood of him whom thou  
gavest that thyself might be glorified;  
wherefore, Father, spare these my  
brethren that believe on my name,  
that they may come unto me  
and have everlasting life.  
(D&C 45:1b-1e)



<sup>1</sup><https://www.facebook.com/Inside-TheChosen/videos/the-chosen-opening-credit-sequence/407147443412253/>





# Repent and Believe in Me

by John Owings

Yea, say unto them, except they repent, the Lord God will destroy them.  
(Alma 6:21)

“But behold, if the inhabitants of the earth shall repent of their wickedness and abominations, they shall not be destroyed,” saith the Lord of hosts.  
(2 Nephi 12:21)

What comes to your mind when you hear the word **repent**? It might be something like what these two preceding verses convey—that we must forsake all our sins through the repentance process, or else stand at enmity to God and ultimately face His wrath. There is truth in the understanding that our sins put us outside of our Heavenly Father’s presence and the communion with Him that He desires, for it is true that we cannot abide in the holiness of His presence as we cling to sin. So, while these verses describe a true perspective on repentance, we will not reach a complete understanding of this fundamental gospel principle until we can see it in the light of God’s all-encompassing love.

The scriptures also reveal that to turn from sin is to turn to God. When Alma commanded his son, Corianton, to repent from evil deeds, he said: ... **refrain from your iniquities; that ye turn to the Lord with all your mind, might and strength,** (Alma 19:19) Note the word **turn**. The Hebrew word for

**repent** is formed from the root word meaning to **turn**. The New Testament writers used the Greek word for repentance which means a change in the heart and mind. When Jesus speaks of the most important commandment in Mark 12:35-36 He states:

And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment. And the second is like this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

Jesus is describing a depth of love for God that is a reflection of the universe of love He expresses to us. This love is not bounded, but instead its great sweep commands us to share it with those around us (Mark 12:36). I believe He is here describing for us the heart condition that is most fundamental to repentance. To turn to God with the whole heart is to turn away from and leave behind the things of self and the world that separate us from His love, if we allow place in our hearts and lives for these lesser things.

Brother Arthur Oakman gives a penetrating description of man’s dilemma around repentance—the dilemma that is our fundamental need for God’s love to govern our lives, while our natural tendency is to place ourselves as supreme ruler of our lives. He says: “We are selves...a gift of God given in creation. Being selves we have become self-centered. It is not wrong to be a self; it is wrong to be self-

centered. There is a freedom of self-determination that is utter bondage. This is the freedom of man to do as he pleases, but this freedom is simply man's power to destroy himself. There is a bondage that is perfect freedom, and this is the bondage of love."<sup>1</sup>

When we use our agency to turn away from our self-centered nature and turn toward God's love for us, we can, by the guidance of His Holy Spirit, be drawn into God's presence and **learn of Him** as He desires. As we learn His ways, to begin to know the heart and the will of Our Father, even our limited capacity to grasp the depth and power of His love will fundamentally impact our choices. In true repentance, we take God's part against ourselves. We stop asking, "What will my sin bring to me?" and start asking, "What does my sin mean to God?" F. Henry Edwards explains this perspective on repentance as follows: "The root meaning of the word repentance is rethinking, or thinking again; Christian repentance is ceasing to think as men have thought and thinking again in the way that God thinks...Repentance is rethinking of the kind that results in reliving, in changing ideals and purposes, and in growing righteousness."<sup>2</sup>

As I acknowledge that true repentance is not my natural tendency, how can this transformation become a reality in my life? Oakman concludes his quote above with our answer: "This lifting of self from itself as center must be done by power that is outside of self. The love of God disclosed in Jesus is the only power by which this can be done."<sup>3</sup> Only God's love and power can transform us. As we truly seek Him and His will for our lives, He imparts His Holy Spirit to guide and direct us. God tells us that He has planned to perform this work in us from the beginning, as He speaks to us through His servant, Nephi: **For he is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. And the way is prepared from the foundation of the world, if it so be that they repent and come unto him;** (1 Nephi 3:27-28) Our Heavenly Father tells us how He desires to achieve this transformation in us, that He is actively reaching out to us. Here, He speaks that truth through Alma: **Behold, he sendeth an invitation unto all men; for the arms of mercy are extended towards them, and he saith, Repent, and I will receive you;** (Alma 3:57)

Despite God's great love and His desire to draw us into His presence, He cannot start the process of repentance for us. God can save us, transform us, fulfill us and give us peace, but He will not violate our agency. Repentance is a choice; it requires action on my part. Repentance is the application of the agency God gave me to turn toward Him. He knows the intent of our hearts and requires we seek Him in spirit and truth: **Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I beseech of you in words of soberness, that ye would repent, and come with full purpose of heart, and cleave unto God as he cleaveth unto you.** (Jacob 4:8) So, how do I make this process of repentance a truthful choice in my life? As I have searched the scriptures desiring to fully comprehend repentance, I have been impressed how Jesus emphasized faith during His ministry.

*He said:*

*Thy faith hath made thee whole.*  
(Mark 10:53)

*I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.*  
(Luke 7:9)

*Thy faith hath saved thee;*  
(Luke 7:50)

*I see that your faith is sufficient, that I should heal you.*  
(3 Nephi 8:8)

*Father, I thank thee that thou hast purified these whom I have chosen, because of their faith.*  
(3 Nephi 9:28)

I believe it is the leading of His Spirit that has impressed upon me the common factor of humbleness in all these instances of the healing power, saving power and purifying power of faith. As we read the stories behind these instances of Jesus' emphasis on faith's power, we find desperation and the outpouring of the Spirit's power causing these who were so touched to see **the greatness of God, and your own nothingness, and his goodness and long suffering towards you unworthy creatures.** (Mosiah 2:20) In Jesus' own words:

And behold I have given you the law and the commandments of my Father, that ye shall believe in me, and that ye shall repent of your sins, and come unto me **with a broken heart and a contrite spirit.** (3 Nephi 5:66)

When I realize how desperately I need what only God can give and become humbled in that knowledge to reach out with whatever faith I can muster, He will strengthen my faith and lead me by His Spirit in the way of repentance. The way of repentance made possible through the gift of Jesus is the only way I can come unto God and be made whole.

God desires to make us whole and fulfill all His promises in our lives. These words that Jesus spoke to the Nephites are just as true for you and me today:

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. (3 Nephi 4:41-42)

Oh to be healed, to know the life God created us to live—not sometime in the future, but now! I want to underscore this vital truth through a testimony. Among all those God has blessed me to know, there is a subset of people I will call special. They are mostly elderly, and some are gone now. One day, I had reason to spend a few moments with four of them. At my first stop, I spent moments with one who had been blessed with special talents he put to very good use through the years. Lives were touched with kindness, and he was surrounded by loving family. Illness had taken his ability to enjoy and share his talents, as well as his ability to walk, but had not diminished the spirit in him that had defined his life. I think I might be resentful to become unable to do the things I have loved, but he showed none of that. I went to my next stop and sat with one who has had some hardships in life, and the bitterness that remains seems to now dominate that person's life. This unhappiness was the focus of our time that day, as it had been before and has been since. I went then to the home of one whose story I can only guess, but the clues I saw in the few times we met were the Vietnam War, isolation and alcohol. That day, he pointed to a TV and said,

“That’s all I have left...it’s on 24 hours a day. I can’t even sleep.” My last stop that day was to a home I have only visited once. I met a husband and wife; one had been rendered helpless by a massive stroke, and the other was a full-time caregiver. I was touched by the peaceful spirit evident in the caregiver, who commented on taking early retirement in order to fulfill the obvious needs. As I looked briefly at the walls in their home, I could see their priorities—faith and family. As I made my way home, I couldn’t help but wonder how I would manage if faced with the need to set all else aside in order to fulfill my marriage covenant. I thought about the contrast in the lives that had touched mine that day and, at that moment, the Spirit poured over me. I understood plainly, “the differences you’ve seen in the outcomes of life today has **EVERYTHING TO DO WITH REPENTANCE.**” Repentance was the central theme of a sermon I was preparing earlier that week. I knew with certainty I was being instructed on the words of John the baptizer. I had read, **Repent, therefore, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance;** (Matthew 3:35). There are outcomes tied to our life choices; do the outcomes of our life demonstrate what the power of repentance has done within us? Our Heavenly Father desires to transform our lives today through the power of repentance. He waits only for us to turn to Him with full purpose in our hearts.

And I bear record of the Father, and the Father beareth record of me, and the Holy Ghost beareth record of the Father and me, and I bear record that the Father commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent and believe in me; (3 Nephi 5:33)

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>A. Oakman; “He Who Is” from chapter descriptions “III-The Idea of Restoration”; Herald Publishing House

<sup>2</sup>F.H. Edwards; “For Such a Time”, p117; Herald Publishing House

<sup>3</sup>A. Oakman; “He Who Is” from chapter descriptions “III-The Idea of Restoration”; Herald Publishing House

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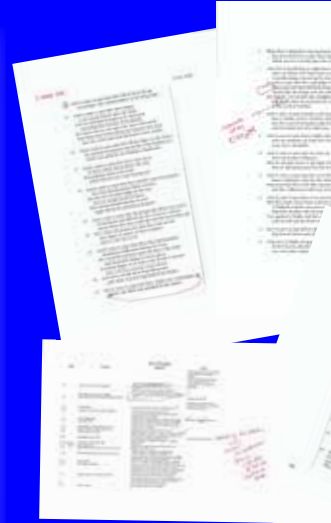
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Alan Smith devoted a year restoring the original corrupted files.



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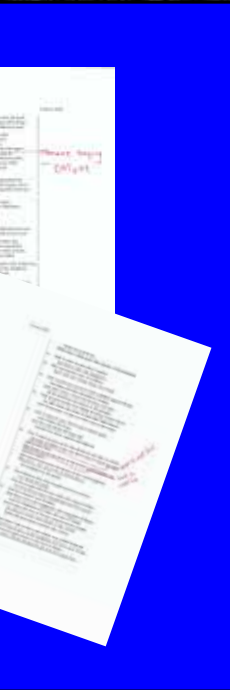


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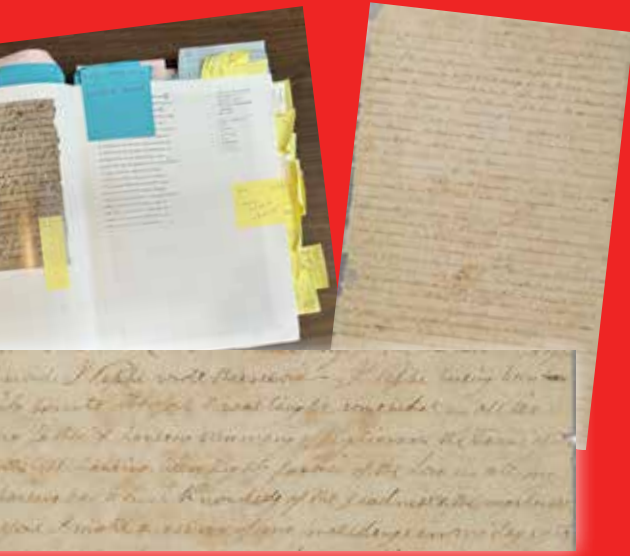
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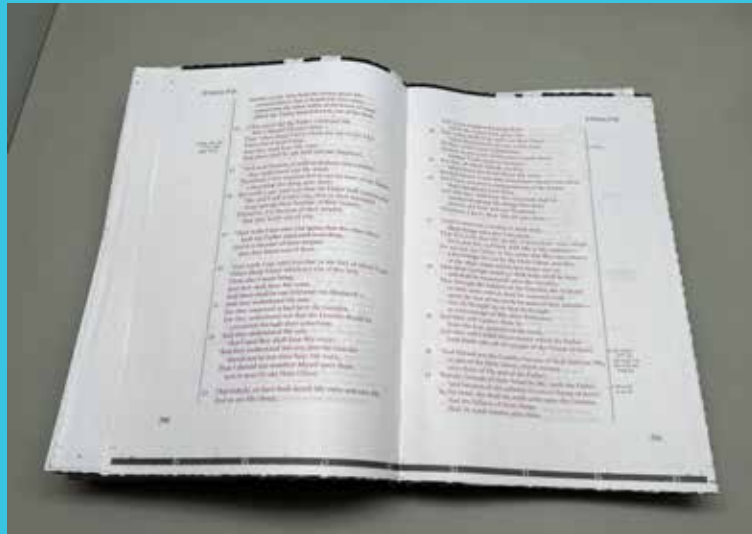
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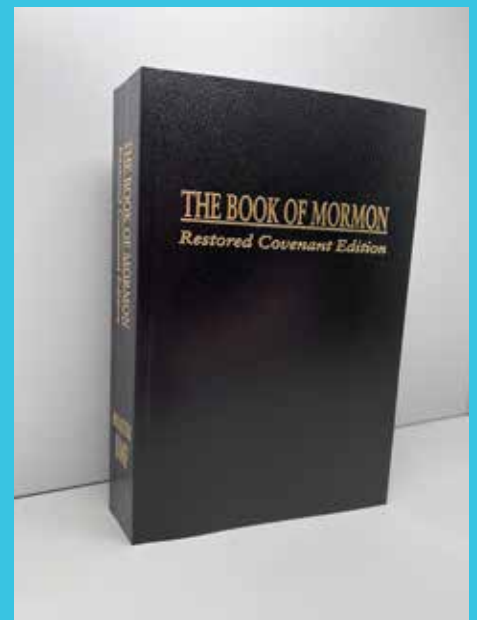
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