

# Harden Not Your Heart

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## Forhærd ikke jeres hjerte

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*De Halvfjerds*

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*If we sincerely repent, humble ourselves, and trust and rely on the Lord, our hearts will be softened.*

The Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ began when God the Father and His Beloved Son appeared to the young Joseph Smith, answering his humble prayer. As part of the Restoration, Joseph Smith translated an ancient record by the gift and the power of God. This record contains “God’s dealings with ancient inhabitants of the Americas and contains the fulness of the everlasting gospel.”

When I was a young boy, as I read the Book of Mormon, I often wondered why Laman and Lemuel did not believe the truths that were given to them, even when an angel of the Lord appeared and spoke to them directly. Why couldn’t Laman and Lemuel be more humble and obedient to the teachings of their father, Lehi, and their younger brother Nephi?

I found one of the answers to this question in 1 Nephi, which states that Nephi was “grieved because of the hardness of their hearts.” Nephi asked his older brothers, “How is it that ye are so hard in your hearts, and so blind in your minds?”

What does it mean to have a hardness of heart?

The Korean translation of “hardness” in the Book of Mormon is (Wan-Aak: ). This phrase uses the Chinese character “Wan” ( ), meaning “stubborn,” and “Aak” ( ), meaning “wicked.” When we harden our hearts, we are blinded, and good things cannot come into our hearts or our minds. We become stubborn and begin to place more focus on worldly desires, closing our

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*Hvis vi oprigtigt omvender os, ydmyger os, stoler på og sætter vores lid til Herren, vil vores hjerte blive blødgjort.*

Gengivelsen af Jesu Kristi evangelium begyndte, da Gud Faderen og hans elskede Søn viste sig for den unge Joseph Smith og besvarede hans ydmyge bøn. Som en del af genoprettelsen oversatte Joseph Smith ældgamle optegnelser ved Guds gave og kraft. Disse optegnelser indeholder beretninger om, »hvordan Gud har handlet med fordums indbyggere på det amerikanske kontinent, og indeholder det evigtvarende evangeliums fylde«.

Da jeg var dreng, og jeg læste i Mormons Bog, undrede jeg mig ofte over, hvorfor Laman og Lemuel ikke troede på de sandheder, de havde fået, selv da en Herrens engel viste sig og talte direkte til dem. Hvorfor kunne Laman og Lemuel ikke være mere ydmyge og lydige over for det, deres far, Lehi, og deres yngre bror Nepi underviste om?

Jeg fandt et svar på dette spørgsmål i 1 Nepi, hvor der står, at Nepi var »bedrøvet over deres hjertes hårdhed«. Nepi spurgte sine ældre brødre: »Hvordan kan det være, at I er så hårde i hjertet og så forblindede i sindet?«

Hvad vil det sige at have et hårdt hjerte?

Den koreanske oversættelse af »hårdhed« i Mormons Bog er (Wan-Aak: ). Denne sætning bruger det kinesiske tegn »Wan« ( ), der betyder »stædig«, og »Aak« ( ), der betyder »ugudelig«. Når vi forhærder vores hjerte, bliver vi forblindede, og gode ting kan ikke komme ind i vores hjerte eller sind. Vi bliver stædige og begynder at fokusere mere på verdslige ønsker

hearts to the things of God. We choose to focus solely on our own thoughts while not accepting the opinions and guidance of others. We choose to not open our hearts to the things of God but instead to the influence of the things of the world and the adversary. When our hearts are hardened, we resist the influence of the Holy Ghost. We are “slow to remember the Lord,” and over time we become “past feeling” His words.

Alma taught the people in Ammonihah that some “would reject the Spirit of God on account of the hardness of their hearts.” He also taught that “they that will harden their hearts, to them is given the lesser portion of the word until they know nothing concerning his mysteries.” Eventually, the Spirit withdraws, and the Lord “will take away [His] word” from those who have hardened their hearts just like Laman and Lemuel. Because Laman and Lemuel continually hardened their hearts, resisted the feelings of the Holy Ghost, and chose not to accept the words and teachings of their father and Nephi, they ultimately rejected eternal truths from God.

In contrast to Laman and Lemuel, Nephi continually humbled himself, seeking guidance from the Spirit of the Lord. In return, the Lord softened Nephi’s heart. Nephi shares that he “did cry unto the Lord; and behold he did visit me, and did soften my heart that I did believe all the words which had been spoken by my father.” The Lord helped Nephi to accept, understand, and believe all the mysteries of God and His words. Nephi was able to have the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost.

What can we do to not harden our hearts?

First, we can practice daily repentance.

Our Savior taught, “Whoso repenteth and cometh unto me as a little child, him will I receive.” Our beloved prophet, President Russell M. Nelson, taught:

“Repenting is the key to progress. Pure faith keeps us moving forward on the covenant path.

“Please do not fear or delay repenting. Satan delights in your misery. ... Start today to experience the joy of putting off the natural man. The Savior loves us always but especially when we repent.”

As we experience the joy of softening our hearts and coming to the Lord, we become “as

og lukker vores hjerte for det, der hører Gud til. Vi vælger udelukkende at fokusere på vores egne tanker, mens vi ikke accepterer andres meninger og vejledning. Vi vælger ikke at åbne vores hjerte for det, der hører Gud til, men for indflydelse fra verdens ting og modstanderen i stedet for. Når vores hjerte er hårdt, modstår vi Helligåndens påvirkning. Vi bliver »langsomme til at huske Herren« og mister med tiden »evnen til at føle« hans ord.

Alma lærte folket i Ammoniha, at nogle ville »forkaste Guds Ånd som følge af deres hjertes hårdhed«. Han sagde også, at »de, der forhærder hjertet, til dem gives en mindre del af ordet, indtil de intet kender til hans hemmeligheder«. Til sidst trækker Ånden sig tilbage, og Herren tager »[sit] ord bort fra dem«, der har forhærdet deres hjerte, ligesom det skete for Laman og Lemuel. Fordi Laman og Lemuel kontinuerligt forhærdede deres hjerte, modstod de følelser, som Helligånden formidlede, og valgte ikke at acceptere deres fars og Nefis ord og lærdomme, afviste de i sidste ende Guds evige sandheder.

I modsætning til Laman og Lemuel ydmygede Nefi sig vedblivende og søgte vejledning fra Herrens Ånd. Herren blødgjorde Nefis hjerte som gengæld. Nefi fortæller, at han »anråbte ... Herren; og se, han kom til mig og blødgjorde mit hjerte, så jeg troede alle de ord, som min far havde talt«. Herren hjalp Nefi til at acceptere, forstå og tro på alle Guds hemmeligheder og ord. Nefi var i stand til at have Helligåndens konstante ledsagelse.

Hvad kan vi gøre for at ikke at forhærde vores hjerte?

For det første kan vi praktisere daglig omvendelse.

Vor Frelser lærte os: »Den, der derfor omvender sig og kommer til mig som et lille barn, ham vil jeg tage imod.« Vores elskede profet, præsident Russell M. Nelson, har sagt:

»Omvendelse ernøglentil fremgang. Ren tro holder os i bevægelse fremad på pagtsstien.

Frygt eller forhal venligst ikke omvendelse. Satan fryder sig over jeres elendighed ... Begynd i dag med at opleve glæden ved at aflægge det naturlige menneske. Frelseren elsker os altid, men især når vi omvender os.«

Når vi oplever glæden ved at blødgøre vores hjerte og komme til Herren, bliver vi »som et

a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.”

Second, we can practice humility.

Daily repentance will bring humility to our hearts. We want to become humble before the Lord, like a little child who obeys their father. We will then always have the Holy Spirit with us, and our hearts will soften.

My wife, Sue, and I have known a wonderful couple for the last four years. When we initially met them, the husband was a new member of the Church, and his wife was meeting with the missionaries to study the gospel. Many missionaries met with her to help her come unto Christ. We felt that she had a vibrant testimony of the gospel and knew that the Church was true. She felt the Spirit often during our visits and actively participated in all the meetings. She loved to interact with the wonderful members of the ward. However, she found it difficult to commit herself to enter the waters of baptism. One day she was reading Moroni 7:43–44, which reads:

“And again, behold I say unto you that he cannot have faith and hope, save he shall be meek, and lowly of heart.

“If so, [your] faith and hope is vain, for none is acceptable before God, save the meek and lowly in heart.”

After reading these verses, she realized what she needed to do. She thought that she had understood the meaning of being meek and humble. However, her understanding was not sufficient enough to have faith and hope to obey the commandments of God. She had to let go of her stubbornness and her own wisdom. She started to humble herself through sincere repentance. She began to understand humility in the perspective of God’s eyes. She relied on Heavenly Father and prayed to soften her own heart. Through these prayers, she felt the Spirit witness to her that Heavenly Father wanted her to be baptized.

Both husband and wife shared that the more they became humble, the more they could understand the words of God, and their hearts were softened to follow the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Third, we can trust and rely on our Savior.

Nephi was a great example of allowing his heart to be softened by trusting in the Lord. He

barn, underdanig, sagtmodig, ydmyg, tålmodig, fuld af kærlighed, villig til at underordne sig alt det, som Herren finder det tjenligt at pålægge os, ligesom et barn underordner sig sin far«.

For det andet kan vi udvise ydmyghed.

Daglig omvendelse vil bringe ydmyghed i vores hjerte. Vi ønsker at blive ydmyge for Herren, ligesom et lille barn, der adlyder sin far. Så vil vi altid have Helligånden hos os, og vores hjerte vil blødgøres.

Min hustru, Sue, og jeg har kendt et vidunderligt par i de sidste fire år. Da vi mødte dem for første gang, var manden nyt medlem af Kirken, og hustruen mødtes med missionærerne for at lære mere om evangeliet. Mange missionærer mødtes med hende for at hjælpe hende med at komme til Kristus. Vi følte, at hun havde et levende vidnesbyrd om evangeliet og vidste, at Kirken var sand. Hun følte ofte Ånden under vores besøg og deltog aktivt i alle møderne. Hun elskede at omgås de vidunderlige medlemmer af menigheden. Men hun fandt det svært at forpligte sig til at gå i dåbens vande. En dag læste hun Moroni 7:43–44, hvor der står:

»Og videre, se, jeg siger jer, at han ikke kan have tro og håb, medmindre han er sagtmodig og ydmyg af hjertet.

Hvis ikke, er [jeres] tro og håb forgæves; for ingen bortset fra den sagtmodige og ydmyge af hjertet er antagelig for Gud.«

Da hun havde læst disse vers, indså hun, hvad hun måtte gøre. Hun troede, at hun havde forstået betydningen af at være sagtmodig og ydmyg. Men hendes forståelse var ikke tilstrækkelig til at have tro og håb til at adlyde Guds bud. Hun måtte give slip på sin stædighed og sin egen visdom. Hun begyndte at ydmyge sig gennem oprigtig omvendelse. Hun begyndte at forstå, hvad ydmyghed er set fra Guds perspektiv. Hun stolede på vor himmelske Fader og bad ham om at blødgøre hendes hjerte. Gennem disse bønner følte hun Ånden vidne for hende om, at vor himmelske Fader ønskede, at hun blev døbt.

Både mand og hustru fortalte, at jo mere ydmyge de blev, jo mere forstod de Guds ord, og deres hjerter blev blødgjort, så de kunne følge vor Herre Jesu Kristi lærdomme.

For det tredje kan vi stole på og sætte lid til vor Frelser.

Nefi var et godt eksempel på at lade sit hjerte blive blødgjort ved at stole på Herren. Han sagde:

taught, "I have trusted in thee, and I will trust in thee forever. I will not put my trust in the arm of flesh." Similarly, in a revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord said, "Put your trust in that Spirit which leadeth to do good—yea, to do justly, to walk humbly." When we put our trust in the Lord and rely on Him, He will soften our hearts, and we will be supported in our trials, troubles, and afflictions.

If we sincerely repent, humble ourselves, and trust and rely on the Lord, our hearts will be softened. He will then pour out His Spirit and show us the mysteries of heaven. We will believe all the words that He has taught, and our understanding will deepen.

Our Savior, Jesus Christ, was the ultimate example of meekness. In 2 Nephi 31:7, we read, "But notwithstanding he being holy, he showeth unto the children of men that, according to the flesh he humbleth himself before the Father, and witnesseth unto the Father that he would be obedient unto him in keeping his commandments." Even though He was holy and perfect, He humbled Himself before the Father and was obedient to Him by being baptized.

At the end of His mortal life, Jesus Christ submitted His own will to His Father by partaking of the bitter cup. This suffering caused Him "to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit." The Savior asked that He "might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink." "Nevertheless," He said, "glory be to the Father, and [He] partook and finished [His] preparations unto the children of men."

Brothers and sisters, we've been given moral agency. We can choose to harden our hearts, or we can choose to soften our hearts. In our daily lives, we can choose to do the things that invite the Lord's Spirit to come into and dwell in our hearts. I know that in these choices, there is peace and joy.

Let us follow the example of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who followed the will of the Father. As we do so, the Lord has promised us, "For, behold, I will gather them as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, if they will not harden their hearts." In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

»O Herre, jeg har sat min lid til dig, og jeg vil sætte min lid til dig for evigt. Jeg vil ikke sætte min lid til armen af kød.« På samme måde sagde Herren i en åbenbaring til profeten Joseph Smith: »Stol på den Ånd, der leder til at gøre det gode – ja, til at handle ret, til at vandre ydmygt.« Når vi sætter vores lid til Herren og stoler på ham, vil han blødgøre vores hjerte, og vi vil blive støttet i vores prøvelser, problemer og trængsler.

Hvis vi oprigtigt omvender os, ydmyger os, stoler på og sætter vores lid til Herren, så vil vores hjerte blive blødgjort. Han vil derefter udøse sin Ånd og vise os himlens hemmeligheder. Vi vil tro alle de ord, han har forkyndt, og vores forståelse vil forstørres.

Vor Frelser, Jesus Kristus, var det ultimative eksempel på sagtmodighed. I 2 Nephi 31:7 står der: »Men uagtet at han er hellig, viser han menneskenes børn, at han hvad kødet angår ydmyger sig for Faderen og bevidner for Faderen, at han ville være lydige mod ham ved at holde hans befalinger.« Selvom han var hellig og fuldkommen, ydmygede han sig for Faderen og var lydige mod ham ved at blive døbt.

Mod slutningen af sit jordiske liv underkastede Jesus Kristus sig Faderens vilje ved at drikke af det bitre bæger. Disse lidelser fik ham til at »skælve af smerte og til at bløde fra hver pore og til at lide på både legeme og ånd«. Frelseren ønskede »ikke [at] skulle drikke det bitre bæger, men [at] undlade det«. »Dog,« sagde han, »æret være Faderen, så drak [han] og fuldendte [sine] forberedelser for menneskenes børn.«

Brødre og søstre, vi har fået handlefrihed. Vi kan vælge at forhærde vores hjerte, eller vi kan vælge at blødgøre vores hjerte. I vores daglige liv kan vi vælge at gøre det, der indbyder Herrens Ånd til at komme ind og bo i vores hjerte. Jeg ved, at der i disse valg er fred og glæde.

Lad os følge vor Frelser, Jesu Kristi, eksempel, som fulgte Faderens vilje. Når vi gør det, har vi dette løfte fra Herren: »For se, jeg vil samle dem, som en høne samler sine kyllinger under sine vinger, hvis de ikke forhærder hjertet.« I Jesu Kristi navn. Amen.