

Harden Not Your Heart

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’Eiaha e fa’āeta’eta i tō ’outou ’āau

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Nō te Hitu ’Ahuru

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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

Mai te mea e tātarahapa mau tātou, e fa’aha’eha’a, e ti’aturi i te Fatu, ’e e tūru’i i ni’a iāna, e marū tō tātou ’āau.

’Ua ha’amata te Fa’aho’i-fa’ahou-ra’a mai o te ’evanelia ’a Iesu Mesia i te taima ’a fā mai ai te Atua te Metua ’e Tāna Tamaiti Here ia Iosepha Semita, ’ei pāhonora’a i tāna pure ha’eha’a. ’Ei tuha’a nō te Fa’aho’i-fa’ahou-ra’a mai, ’ua ’iriti Iosepha Semita i te mau pāpā’a parau tahito nā roto i te hōro’a ’e te mana o te Atua. Tei roto i teie mau pāpā’a parau « te mau ravera’a a te Atua i ni’a i te mau tāata nō Amerika i tahito ra ’e te ’ira’a o te ’evanelia mure ’ore. »

I tō’u ’āpīra’a, ’ia tai’o ana’e au i te Buka a Moromona, e mea pinepine au i te uiui nō te aha ’aita ’o Lamana ’e ’o Lemuela i ti’aturi i te mau parau mau i hōro’ahia ia rāua, noa atu ’ua fā mai te hō’e melahi a te Fatu ia rāua ’e ’ua paraparau ’āfaro mai ia rāua. Nō te aha ’aita i nehehehe ia Lamana ’e Lemuela ’ia riro ’ei nā tāata ha’eha’a a’e ’e te ha’apāo i te mau ha’api’ira’a a tō rāua metua tāne, ’o Lehi, ’e tō rāua teina ’o Nephi?

’Ua ’itehia iā’u te hō’e o te mau pāhonora’a i teie uira’a i roto i te 1 Nephi, o tē parau nei e « ’ua tupu te ’oto [’o Nephi] nō te ’eta’eta o tō rāua ’āau. » ’Ua ani Nephi i tōna nā tua’ana, « Nō te aha ho’i i ’eta’eta ai tō ’ōrua ’āau, ’e i pōiri ai tō ’ōrua mana’o ? »

E aha te aura a te eta eta o te ’āau ?

Te ’iritira’a Korea nō te « ’eta’eta » i roto i te Buka a Moromona ’o (Wan-Aak:). Tē fa’āohipa nei teie parau i te tāo tinitō « Wan » (), ’oia ho’i « ’eta’eta, » ’e « Aak » (), ’oia ho’i « ’ino. » ’Ia fa’āeta’eta ana’e tātou i tō tātou ’āau, e ha’apōurihia tātou, ’e e’ita te mau mea maita’i e ō

our minds. We become stubborn and begin to place more focus on worldly desires, closing our 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.

i roto i tō tātou ’āau ’aore rā i tō tātou ferurira’a. E riro tātou ’ei feiā ’eta’eta ’e te fa’atumu rahi a’e i ni’a i te mau hina’aro o te ao nei, ma te tāpiri i tō tātou ’āau i te mau mea a te Atua. E mā’iti tātou ’ia fa’atumu noa i ni’a i tō tātou iho mau mana’o ma te ’ore e fa’ari’i i te mana’o ’e te aorā’a a vetahi ’ē. E mā’iti tātou ’eiaha e ’iriti i tō tātou ’āau i te mau mea a te Atua, i te fa’aururā’a rā a te mau mea o te ao nei ’e a te ’enemi. ’Ia ’eta’eta ana’e tō tātou ’āau, e pātō’i ia tātou i te fa’aururā’a a te Vārua Mo’a. E « mea tāere tātou i te ha’amana’o i te Fatu, » ’e i te roara’a o te tau, e ’ere tātou i te « fa’ari’ira’a » i Tāna mau parau.

’Ua ha’api’i Alama i te nūna’a nō Ammoniha ē e « pātō’i te tahi pae i te Vārua o te Atua nō te ’eta’eta o tō rātou ’āau. » ’Ua ha’api’i ato’a ’oia « ’E ’o rātou ho’i ’o tē fa’a’eta’eta i tō rātou ’āau, e hōrō’ahia ia rātou te tufa’a iti nō te parau ē tae noa atu ’aita rātou e ’ite fa’ahou i tāna ra mau parau ’aro. » I te pae hope’a e fa’aātea ’ē atu te Vārua, ē « e rave ’ē atu [te Fatu] i [tāna] mau parau » i te feiā i fa’a’eta’eta i tō rātou ’āau, mai ia Lamana ’e Lemuela. Nō te mea ho’i ’ua tāmāu noa ’o Lamana ’e ’o Lemuela i te fa’a’eta’eta i tō rāua ’āau, ’ua pātō’i i te mau mana’o o te Vārua Maita’i, ’e ’ua mā’iti ’eiaha e fa’ari’i i te mau parau ’e te mau ha’api’ira’a a tō rāua metua tāne ’e ’a Nephi, ’ua pātō’i rāua i te pae hope’a i te mau parau mau mure ’ore a te Atua.

Tā’a ’ē atu ia Lamana ’e ia Lemuela, ’ua tāmāu noa ’o Nephi i te fa’aha’eha’a iāna, i te ’imira’a i te arata’ira’a a te Vārua o te Fatu. ’Ei fa’aho’ira’a, ’ua tamarū te Fatu i te ’āau ’o Nephi. ’Ua parau ’o Nephi ē « ’ua ti’aoro atu [’oia] i te Fatu ; ’E inaha, ’ua fā mai ra ’oia iā’u, ’e ’ua ha’amarū ho’i i tō’u ’āau ’e ’ua ti’aturi ihora vau i te mau parau ato’a i parauhia e tō’u ra metua tāne. » ’Ua tauturu te Fatu ia Nephi ’ia fa’ari’i, ’ia māmaramama, ’e ’ia ti’aturi i te mau parau ’aro ato’a a te Atua ’e a Tāna mau parau. ’Ua ti’a ia Nephi ’ia fa’ari’i i te auhoara’a tāmāu o te Vārua Maita’i.

E aha tā tātou e nehenehe e rave ’eiaha ’ia fa’a’eta’eta i tō tātou ’āau ?

’A tahi, e nehenehe tā tātou e tātarahapa i te mau mahana ato’a.

’Ua ha’api’i tō tātou Fa’aora ē, « ’O ’oia ’o tē tātarahapa ’e ’o tē haere mai iā’u nei mai te tamari’i ’aru’aru ra, ’o ’oia ia tā’u e fa’ari’i. » ’Ua ha’api’i mai tō tātou peropheta here, Russell M. Nelson ē :

Te tātarahapara’a, ’o tetāviriiā nō te haerera’a i mua. Nā te fa’aro’o mā e fa’ahaere ia tātou i mua i ni’a i te ’ē’a nō te fafaura’a.

“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 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.

‘Eiaha na e mata’u ‘aore rā e fa’atāere i te tātarahapara’a. E ‘oa’oa Sātane i tō ‘outou ‘ati. ‘A ha’amata i teie ihoā mahana nō te tāmata i te ‘oa’oa nō te fa’aruē i te ta’ata tino. Tē here tāmāu noa ra te Fa’aora ia tātou ‘ia tātarahapa anaēiho arā tātou. »

‘Ia tāmata tātou i te ‘oa’oa ‘ia tāmārū i tō tātou ‘āau ‘e ‘ia haere mai i te Fatu ra, e riro ia tātou « mai te hōē tamari’i ra i te auraro, te marū, te haēha’a, te fa’aōroma’i, te ‘i i te aroha, te hina’aro ‘ia auraro i te mau mea ato’a tā te Fatu e hina’aro ‘ia tu’u mai i ni’a iāna, mai te hōē tamari’i e auraro i tōna ra metua tāne. »

‘A piti, e nehenehe tātou e fa’aōhipa i te haēha’a.

E hōpoi mai te tātarahapa i te mau mahana ato’a i te haēha’a i roto i tō tātou ‘āau. E hina’aro tātou e fa’ahaēha’a ia tātou i mua i te Fatu, mai te hōē tamari’i ‘aru’aru e fa’aro’o i tōna metua tāne. E vai noa ia te Vārua Maita’i i roto ia tātou, ‘e e marū mai tō tātou ‘āau.

‘Ua mātau māua tā’u vahine ‘o Sue i te hōē tāne ‘e tāna vahine fa’ahiahia mau ‘a maha matahiti i teienei. I tō māua fārereira’a ia rāua, e melo ‘āpī te tāne nō te ‘Ēkalesia, ‘e e fārereira’a tā tāna vahine ‘e te mau misiōnare nō te tuatāpapa i te ‘evanelia. E rave rahi misiōnare tei fārerei iāna nō te tauturu iāna ‘ia haere mai i te Mesia ra. ‘Ua mana’o māua e ‘itera’a pāpū ora tōna nō ni’a i te ‘evanelia ‘e ‘ua ‘ite ‘oia e parau mau te ‘Ēkalesia. E mea pinepine ‘oia i te fa’ari’i i te Vārua i roto i tā mātou mau fārereira’a ‘e ‘ua ‘āmui mai ‘oia i roto i te mau purera’a ato’a. E mea au nāna ‘ia fa’ahoa i te mau melo fa’ahiahia o te pāroisa. Teie rā, e mea fifi nōna ‘ia fafau nō te tomo i roto i te pape o te bāpetizora’a. I te hōē mahana, tē tai’o ra ‘oia i te Moroni 7:43–44’o tē nā ‘ō ra ē :

« E inaha, e parau atu vau ia outou ē, e ore e roa a te fa’aro’o e te tīa i ia outou maori rā o te haēha’a e te marū te ā au.

« ‘Āhiri ē ‘aita, ‘ua riro ia tō [outou] fa’aro’o ‘e tō [outou] ti’aturira’a ‘ei mea faufa’a ‘ore, ‘e ‘aore roa ho’i ia te ta’ata e ‘itehia i mua i te Atua, maori rā te feiā marū ‘e te ‘āau haēha’a. »

I muri aē i tōna tai’ora’a i teie mau ‘irava, ‘ua ‘ite a’era ‘oia i tē tīa iāna ‘ia rave. ‘Ua mana’o ‘oia ē ‘ua māmaramama ‘ōna i te aura’a o te marū ‘e te haēha’a. Terā rā, ‘aita tōna ‘ite i nava’i nō te fa’ari’i i te fa’aro’o ‘e te ti’aturira’a nō te ha’apa’o i te mau f’āauera’a a te Atua. ‘Ua tīa iāna ‘ia fa’aruē i tōna mana’o ‘etaeta ‘e tōna iho pa’ari. ‘Ua ha’amata ‘oia i te fa’ahaēha’a iāna nā roto i te tātarahapara’a

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 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

mau. 'Ua ha'amata 'oia i te ta'a i te ha'eha'a 'ia au i te mana'o 'o te Atua. 'Ua ti'aturi 'oia i te Metua i te Ao ra 'e 'ua pure no te tamaru i tona 'au. Na roto i teie mau pure, 'ua 'ite 'oia i te Varua i te fa'ite-papu-ra'a iana e 'ua hina'aro te Metua i te Ao ra 'ia bapetizohia 'oia.

'Ua fa'ata'a mai te tane 'e te vahine e, rahi noa atu to raua haeha'a, rahi noa ato'a atu to raua maramarama'a i te mau parau a te Atua, 'e 'ua maru to raua 'au no te pe'e i te mau ha'api'ira'a a to tatou Fatu, o Iesu Mesia.

'A toru, e nehenehe ta tatou e ti'aturi 'e e turu'i i ni'a i to tatou Fa'aora.

'Ua riro Nephi 'ei hi'ora'a rahi no te ho'e ta'ata tei fa'ati'a i tona 'au 'ia maru na roto i te ti'aturira'a i te Fatu. 'Ua ha'api'i 'oia : « E te Fatu, 'ua ti'aturi au ia 'oe, 'e e ti'aturi au ia 'oe e a muri noa atu. E 'ore au e tu'u i to'u ti'aturira'a i roto i te rima tahuti nei .» 'Oia ato'a, i roto i te ho'e heheura'a i horo'ahia i te Peropheta Iosepha Semita, 'ua parau te Fatu e, « 'A ti'aturi i tera Varua o te fa'auru mai 'ia rave i te 'ohipa maita'i—'oia ia, 'ia rave i te parauti'a, 'ia haere noa ma te ha'eha'a. »- Mai te mea e tu'u tatou i to tatou ti'aturira'a i ni'a i te Fatu 'e e turu'i tatou i ni'a iana, e tamaru 'Oia i to tatou 'au 'e e paturuhia tatou i roto i to tatou mau tamata'a, te mau fifi, 'e te mau 'ati.

Mai te mea e tatarahapa mau tatou, e fa'ahaeha'a, e ti'aturi i te Fatu, 'e e turu'i i ni'a iana, e maru to tatou 'au. I reira 'Oia e nini'i mai ai i tona Varua 'e e fa'ite mai ai ia tatou i te mau parau aro no te ra'i mai. E ti'aturi tatou i te mau parau ato'a tana i ha'api'i mai, 'e e hohonu atu a to tatou maramarama.

'Ua riro to tatou Fa'aora o Iesu Mesia 'ei hi'ora'a rahi no te maru. I roto i te 2 Nephi 31:7 te tai'o nei tatou, « 'E noa atu a e mea mo'a 'oia, te fa'ite mai ra 'oia i te mau tamari'i a te ta'ata nei e, te fa'ahaeha'a ra 'oia iana iho i te pae tino nei i mua i te Metua, 'e te fa'ite ato'a ra ho'i i te Metua e, e auraro 'oia iana ra i te ha'apa'ora'a i tana ra mau fa'auera'a. » Noa atu tona mo'a 'e tona ti'a roa, 'ua fa'ahaeha'a 'oia iana iho i mua i te Metua 'e 'ua auraro iana na roto i te bapetizora'a iana.

I te hope'a o tona orara'a i te tahuti nei, 'ua tu'u o Iesu Mesia i tona hina'aro i te hina'aro o tona Metua na roto i te inura'a i te 'au'a maramara. Na te reira mamae rahi i fa'atupu i roto iana « i te rurutaina no te mau iui, 'e 'ua tahe mai ra te toto na te mau poa ato'a, 'e 'ua mau iui i te tino 'e te varua ato'a ho'i. » 'Ua ani te Fa'aora « 'ia 'ore 'ia inu i te 'au'a maramara 'e 'oriorio atu. » «

[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.

’Āre’a rā. », ’ua parau ’ōia, « ’ei te Metua te hanahana, ’e ’ua inu [’ōia] ’e ’ua fa’aoti ho’i i [tāna] mau fa’aineinera’a nō te mau tamari’i a te tāata nei. »

E a’u mau taeae e a’u mau tuahine, ’ua hōro’ahia ia tātou te ti’amāra’a mōrare. E nehenehe tātou e mā’iti ’ia fa’aeta’eta i tō tātou ’āau ’aore rā ’ia tāmarū i te reira. I roto i tō tātou orara’a i te mau mahana ato’a, e nehenehe tātou e mā’iti ’ia rave i te mau mea e ti’a ai i te Vārua o te Fatu ’ia tomo i roto i tō tātou ’āau ’e ’ia parahi i reira. ’Ua ’ite au ē i roto i teie mau mā’itira’a, tē vai ra te hau ’e te ’oāoa.

E pe’e ana’e tātou i te hi’ora’a o tō tātou Fa’ao-ra, ’o Iesu Mesia, tei pe’e i te hina’aro o te Metua. Mai te mea e nā reira tātou, ’ua fafau mai te Fatu ia tātou ē, « Inaha ho’i, e ha’aputu mai au ia rātou mai te moa e ha’aputuputu i tōna mau fanau’a i raro a’e i tōna pererau, mai te mea ē ’aita rātou e fa’aeta’eta i tō rātou ra mau ’āau. » I te i’oa ’o Iesu Mesia, ’āmene.