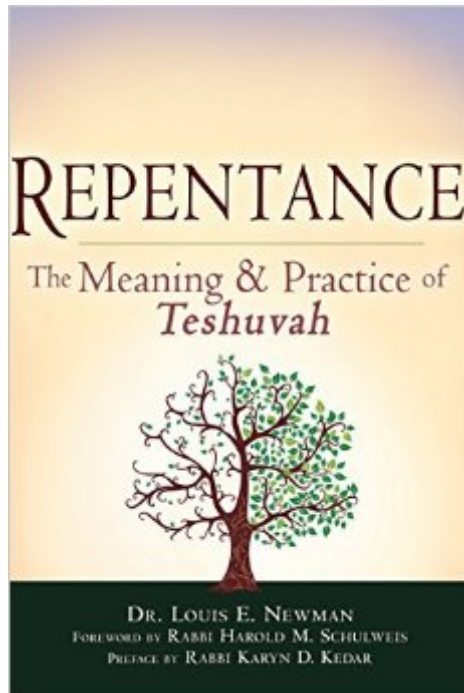


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Repentance: The Meaning And Practice Of Teshuvah



Synopsis

An inspiring way to reclaim your integrity and renew your sense of moral purpose. "Like water, teshuvah is both destructive and creative. It dissolves the person you were but simultaneously provides the moisture you need to grow anew. It erodes the hard edges of your willfulness but also refreshes your spirit. It can turn the tallest barriers of moral blindness into rubble while it also gently nourishes the hidden seeds of hope buried deep in your soul. Teshuvah, like water, has the power both to wash away past sin and to shower you with the blessing of a new future, if only you trust it and allow yourself to be carried along in its current." —from Part VII

In this candid and comprehensive probe into the nature of moral transgression and spiritual healing, Dr. Louis E. Newman examines both the practical and philosophical dimensions of teshuvah, Judaism's core religious-moral teaching on repentance, and its value for us — Jews and non-Jews alike — today. He exposes the inner logic of teshuvah as well as the beliefs about God and humankind that make it possible. He also charts the path of teshuvah, revealing to us how we can free ourselves from the burden of our own transgressions by:

- Acknowledging our transgressions
- Confessing
- Feeling remorse
- Apologizing
- Making restitution
- Soul reckoning
- Avoiding sin when the next opportunity arises

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Repentance is an act where people rid themselves of the wrongs that they committed. Various cultures and religions handle repentance differently. Roman Catholics, for example, absolve parishioners from wrongs when they confess their improper act. They see repentance as a religious

act. How does Judaism understand the repentance process? Is there a single view? Do Jews consider repentance as a practical or a religious act? What is "sin"? Is sin a non-Jewish concept? What happens on the holiday of Yom Kippur when synagogue worshipers pray for the removal of their sins? Dr. Louis E. Newman is a Professor of Religious Studies in Minnesota. In this very readable book, Dr. Newman sees repentance as a spiritual, perhaps even mystical and magical process. He writes that repentance is "a central - some would say, the central - religious-moral teaching of Judaism." He quotes Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik: "Repentance cannot be comprehended rationally; it does not really make sense. Even the angels do not understand what repentance is." He refers to the Babylonian Talmud's statement (in Berakhot 54a) that repentance was created at twilight just before the first Sabbath, and understands this rabbinic statement to teach that repentance is a miracle that God placed in the world. The book examines repentance from seven angles and quotes sources from the Bible, and from rabbinical, mystical, moral, secular, and philosophical writings, and even the New Testament. He starts by talking about sin, which is the basis for his understanding of repentance: "Repentance is a response to sin, an effort to overcome its causes and undo its effects." Newman sees sin "as an element of human nature, rather than a trait of human behavior." Sin, is "an existential reality."

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