Repentance – The Meaning and Practice of Teshuvah by Dr Louis E. Newman; foreword by Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis, preface by Rabbi Karyn D. Kedar. Jewish Lights Publishing 2010.

Teshuvah, Repentance, is one of the most frequently spoken words in Jewish spiritual life, and yet as a concept its true depths are rarely plumbed by those who mouth it. Few realise that sincere Teshuvah, and the forgiveness that follows it, is only achieved through a great deal of thought and no little effort.

In Repentance, the eminent scholar, Professor Louis E. Newman presents his readers with a clear and powerful explanation of Teshuvah in all its dimensions, and shines a bright light down its path for them to follow.

Newman divides his book into seven parts: The Nature of Sin, Release From Sin, The Way of Teshuvah, Teshuvah in Three Dimensions, Experiencing Teshuvah, Teshuvah: Its Problems and Limits, Teshuvah: Its Moral and Spiritual Meaning.

In his conclusion, Newman reflects on Teshuvah in Our Time set against the prevalence of moral breakdown in Western society about which he is realistic yet hopeful that Teshuvah, once it is properly understood, offers a healing path back to a much better balance in the way human beings live.

Repentance shows Louis Newman at the top of his form.

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh