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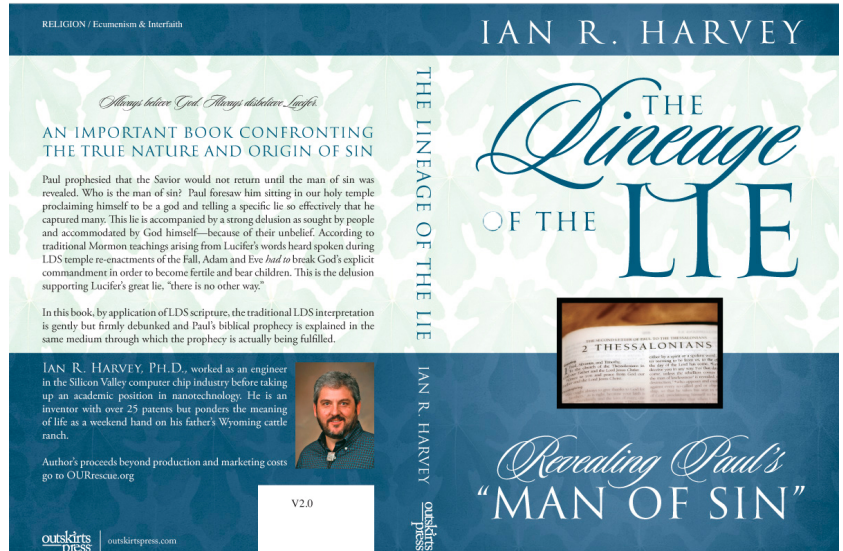
Blurring the Lines

Inclusiveness by moving Mormons back to Christianity and inviting Christians to revise how they perceive Mormons

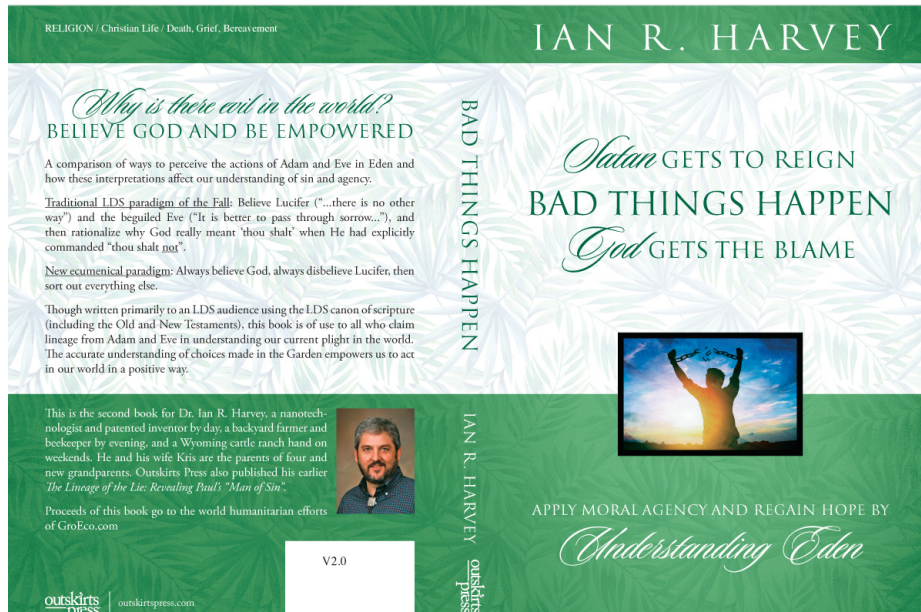


I.R. Harvey
 Sunstone Summer Symposium session 166
 University of Utah
 July 27, 2017

Book price: \$12 + \$3 S&H
 (profits to OURrescue.org)



This book unravels the garden infertility paradox from the LDS interpretation of the Fall.



The Moral Agency Blueprint
 vs.
 The Doctrine of Privation



I.R. Harvey
 Sunstone Summer Symposium session 214
 University of Utah
 July 28, 2017

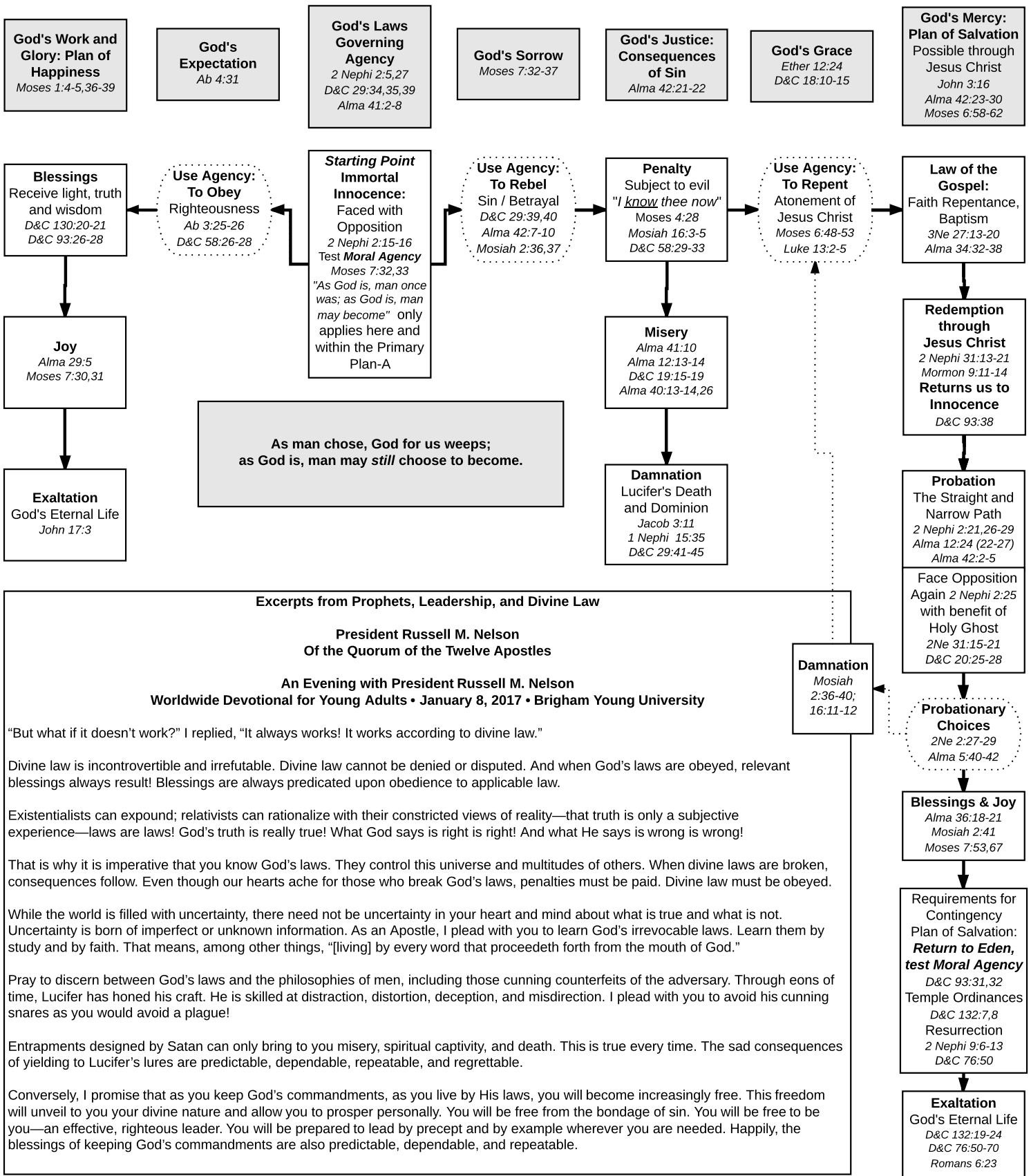
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I call it the Doctrine of Privation when we quote Lucifer to rationalize the presence of evil in the world, “there is no other way!” By understanding what went on in Eden, Christians and Saints understand the nature of the “god of this world”, the surprising ways he has deceived, and a means to shed his chains.

The Moral Agency Blueprint

Primary Plan-A

Probationary Plan-B



Whose is death?

Does anyone control the selection, timing, and nature
of death
or how much of suffering there will be?

Or is it undecided?

Does God's gift of agency to me
constrain even Him
from intervening and manipulating?

Does life always happen 'this way'
because it is 'supposed to be' this way?

Or do *daily* challenges, opportunities and misfortunes
largely result
from consequences to ours and others' choices,
and from blessings besought
at the divine hand
—in faith—
plus much of randomness?

Whose is death?

Is it God's *will*?

Is it a *designed* step in His great plan of progression—
required to enable us to be with Him?
Or the first fruit of the newly chosen 'god of this world'?

Whose is death?

Stealing opportunity for sensation, experience?
Tearing apart families, relationships, and loves;
trading suffering, loneliness, even despair?

In dying—spirit wrenched from flesh—
Is it like *God* that I become?
Should I esteem the purveyor of death?

Whose is suffering?

Is it a divine punishment? A cruel test?
Who is pleased when misery arises?
Or, if I were permitted just a glimpse,
to see the face of God—
wouldn't it be stained with tears?

Whence came death?

Designed for our *welfare* from the beginning?
Were we cast from His face to enable a return?
Or was it rather the dire cost of first disobedience—
the dark purchase of wisdom sought
from the father of lies?

Whose is *Life*?

Nurturing opportunity for lasting happiness;
fostering light, peace, and understanding?
Whose tree bears *this* most desirable fruit?

In living, can I seek to know God,
let Him make my burdens light
and hope to *live with Him again*?

Whose is happiness?

Who created the loving kiss? The tender caress?
Who ordained marriage?
Who prototyped the family?
Who gave joy and promised rejoicing in posterity?
Who is rejoicing with me?

Whence came life?

Planned and ordained from the beginning,
this is Life: to know Him, to be with Him.
This is the promised blessing of obedience:
"Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom;
and to depart from evil is understanding."*

Whose is agency?

Is it God's gift—

required for the opportunity
eternally to succeed?

Is *sin* required for righteousness to exist,
or is the mere *enticement* sufficient thereto?

Can there be any true success
without a *legitimate opportunity to fail*?

Whose *justice* is this?

*see Job 27:11; 28:10-28; James 1:5; 2Ne 28:30-31

What a supreme manifestation of love for us,
and ultimate respect for agency,
that He *really* means it:
He truly loves His children enough
to *allow* us to choose
to fail—
to the point of experiencing
great suffering
or even death!

What is death? Where does it take me?
In what state will my spirit reside?
Do I go to a better, happier place?
Is it 'home'? Is it 'heaven'?

Or is it merely a respite
of disembodied peace
enforced by the loss of liberty
to feel, sense, experience, *act*?
Is this not a *prison*
of sorts?

Though perhaps welcome
as an end of suffering,
whose victory is it
if I pine for release
from this divinely-given temple
of flesh and bone
patterned after that of God Himself—
to forfeit the agency this body imparts?

Death: Lucifer's small victory,
making us each in turn
like *him*
in a small way
—if only temporarily—
bodiless, perhaps miserable, cast from the presence
of God.

Can I be made like the Christ
and overcome death?
Can sensory experience and full agency
be restored?

Whose is mercy—curative for my deepest sorrow?
It is from Him who conquers both temporal and spiritual deaths:
redeeming me from my sins;
ransoming me from the great deceiver;
resurrecting me from the chains of death;
restoring true and lasting happiness.
It is from Him to whom true happiness belongs—
even the giver of Life.

Who has agency?
"I set before you this day life and death: Choose Life."**
Choosing life, can I not know Father;
and by knowing Him,
become like Him?

**see Deut 30: 15-20; 2Ne 2:27-29; 10: 23-25; Hel 14: 30-31

Genealogy of The Lie: Man must sin, suffer and die to become like God

L to E

There is no other way: that is the way god obtained his knowledge

L to E

— you must <sin> to comprehend that everything has its opposite^r

- good and evil
- virtue and vice
- light and darkness
- health and sickness
- pleasure and pain

E to A by L's commandment

— you must partake of this fruit if you intend to have children; elsebe left a lone man in the Garden

Eve's self justification in Moses 5: 11

— were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil

Lehi's supposition (2Ne 2:17) reading Eve (1Ne 5: 11)

— If Adam had not transgressed...all things must have remained in the same state forever and had no end

And they would have had no children; wherefore they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin. (2 Nephi 2:23)

If Adam had not sinned, and if this posterity had continued upon the earth, they could not have known sin, or the bitter from the sweet, neither would they have known righteousness for the plain and simple reason that every effect can only be fully manifested by its opposite. If the Saints could realize things as they are when they are called to pass through trials, and to suffer what they call sacrifices, they would acknowledge them to be the greatest blessings that could be bestowed upon them. But put them in possession of true principles and true enjoyments without the opposite, and they could not know enjoyment, they could not realize happiness. They could not tell light from darkness, because they have no knowledge of darkness and consequently are destitute of realizing a sense of light. If they could not know the bitter, how could they realize the sweet? They could not.” BRIGHAM YOUNG Teachings of the Presidents, ch 35, p.262

Adam-God Theory

As man is God once was; as God is man may become -- Lorenzo Snow

So much depends, therefore, upon our maintaining gospel perspective in the midst of ordinariness and the pressures of temptation, tribulation, and deprivation. As we come to love the Lord more and more, we can understand, rather than resent, his purposes. **He who should know has said that there is no other way.** (NEAL A. MAXWELL, Grounded, Rooted, Established, and Settled, address given at Brigham Young University on 15 September 1981)

Some people believe Adam and Eve committed a serious sin when they ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. However, latter-day scriptures help us understand that their Fall was a necessary step in the plan of life and a great blessing to all of us. Because of the Fall, we are blessed with physical bodies, the right to choose between good and evil, and the opportunity to gain eternal life. None of these privileges would have been ours had Adam and Eve remained in the garden. (Gospel Principles, chapter 6)

There is no other way!

Maslow’s hierarchy as loosely applied to choice making © IRHarvey 2017

Father wanted to give us the opportunity to mature in our making of choices. It might be useful to consider different levels or degrees of maturity in choice-making, running mostly parallel to the degree to which Maslow’s hierarchy of human needsⁱ is met.

Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs	Decision-Making Maturity	Example
Self-Actualization: morality and creativity	Moral agency: recognizing the opportunity to compare between good and evil and to implicitly or explicitly choose to assume the attributes of one or the other	The Tree of Life vs. a tree known to bring death; “Choose me, their Father” or not.
Respect from and for others	Ethical humanism: I can choose to find fulfillment in the world around me and choose not to harm others.	Right vs. wrong decisions based on conscience or the light of Christ given to all
Love/belonging/desire	Relational decisions: What will help me “fit in?” Also referential decisions expressing free will: What is it that I want?	A teen making fashion choices; an infant choosing between crushed bananas or squash; joining a church for sociality
Safety/security/response to fear	Adrenal decisions Anxiety-based decisions	Fight or flight or the despairing realization that “I can’t do this alone” and to be motivated to seek help or salvation
Most basic needs: physiological (food, water, warmth, rest)	Instinctual decisions	Reference the statistics in the text demonstrating the chains of Satan over the earth

ⁱ Maslow’s hierarchy: See this Wikipedia entry, for example:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow%27s_hierarchy_of_needs