

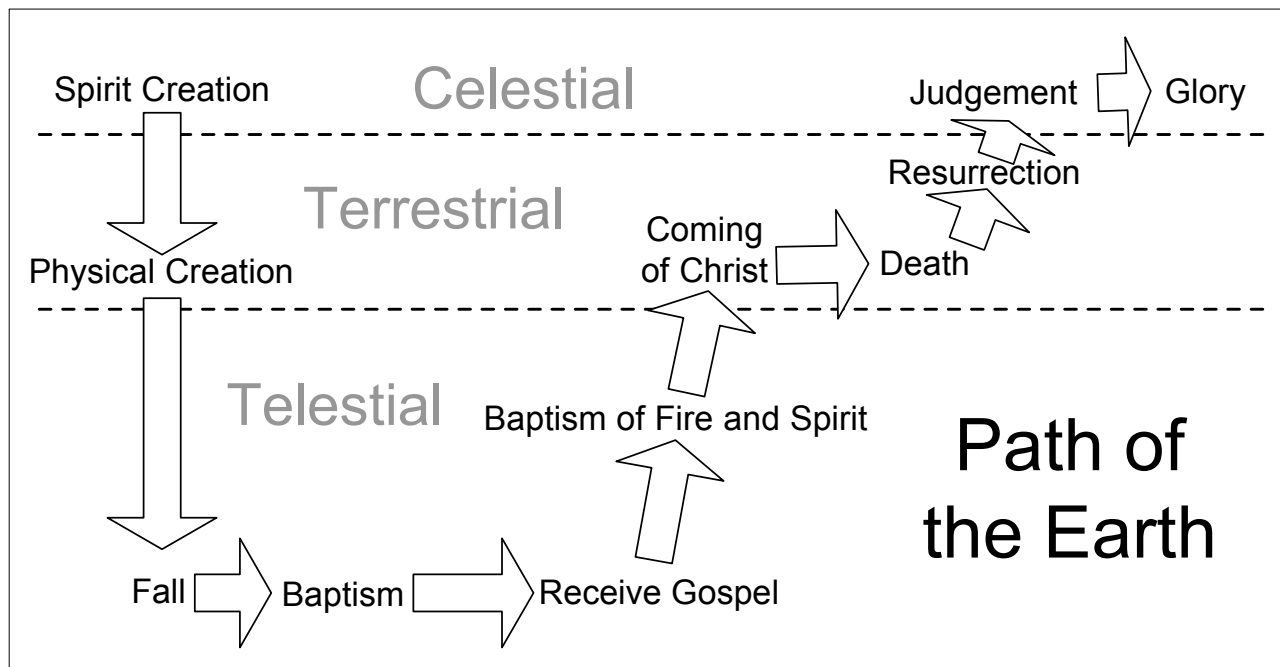
The Path of the Earth

By Roald E. Peterson, Jr.

... all things denote there is a God; yea, even the earth, and all things that are upon the face of it, yea, and its motion, yea, and also all the planets which move in their regular form do witness that there is a Supreme Creator. [Alma 30:44]

PARALLEL PATHS TO GLORY

We haven't been left in a world without guidance and without proof of its divine authorship. The real problem is that we take so much for granted that we seldom look at what is really going on around us. Our progress and path back to God is not an arbitrary set of events. It is a carefully planned method, designed to bring out the best in us and allow us to choose our true desires. Even the Earth follows this path of eternal progress. The events associated with its creation, fall, mortal existence, death, and eventual resurrection to Celestial glory are a parallel to our own eternal progress.



The Earth teaches us that there is more to the Plan than just getting baptized, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and "enduring to the end." Notice in the diagram above that death follows the coming of Christ. In other words, seeing Christ and living in a sanctified state is not something that must wait until after our death. It should happen before.

Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually. [1 Chronicles 16:11]

There is much that is not shown in the diagram. Consider the struggle between good and evil which is constantly occurring on the face of the Earth. This is also in parallel to our own lives, as good and bad exist side by side, both vying for control and eventual supremacy. Neither we nor the Earth can eliminate evil without the aid of the Spirit and of Christ, the true conqueror of evil.

Christ's millennial reign on the earth should also happen in our lives. The latter years of our lives should be final preparation to return to the Father who sent us here. What better teachers could we have than the Father and the Son.

Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. [John 14:23]

And wouldn't it be even better if we could have this from our youth, as Lehi's son Jacob.

And thou hast beheld in thy youth his glory; wherefore, thou art blessed even as they unto whom he shall minister in the flesh; for the Spirit is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. And the way is prepared from the fall of man, and salvation is free. [2 Nephi 2:4]

PROGRESS OF THE EARTH

1. The earth was created spiritually before it was created physically. [Moses 3:5-7]
2. The Earth was created physically, in an unfallen, paradisiacal state. [Tenth Article of Faith]
3. Adam brought the fall of the earth and all things. [2 Nephi 2:22]
4. The earth was baptized with the great flood of Noah's time.
5. Christ came and brought the gospel. [Matthew]
6. There is and will be great struggling between good and evil, growing worse as the end of the world (destruction of the wicked) approaches. This is symbolic of the repentance process.
7. Evil will be swept off the face of the Earth until it is cleansed for the return of its Creator and rightful King. [Jacob 5:66]
8. There will be a great burning at the time of the Second Coming of Christ as the Earth is cleansed with fire. [JST Hebrews 6:7; Malachi 4:1-3; 2 Peter 3:10]
9. Christ will personally come to the Earth and will reign for a thousand years. [Revelation 20:6]
10. The earth will have rest for the final 1000 year-day of its temporal existence. During this time, the remaining work needed for its mission and exaltation will be accomplished.
11. There will be a final struggle and then the death of the Earth. [Revelation chap 7 on; Isaiah 51:6; Matthew 24:35; Alma 9:3; Ether 13:8; D&C 1:38]
12. The Earth will be resurrected and receive its Celestial glory. [D&C 77:1]
13. The Earth will be the dwelling place for those who receive Celestial glory. [D&C 130:9; Matt 5:5]