“The Seven Thousand Years of the Earth’s Continuance or it’s Temporal Existence”  
(D&C 77:6-7, 12)

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God Knows the End from the Beginning

Abraham 2:8
8 My name is Jehovah, and I know the end from the beginning; therefore my hand shall be over thee.

D&C 38:1-6
1 THUS saith the Lord your God, even Jesus Christ, the Great I AM, Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the same which looked upon the wide expanse of eternity, and all the seraphic hosts of heaven, before the world was made;
2 The same which knoweth all things, for all things are present before mine eyes;
3 I am the same which spake, and the world was made, and all things came by me.
4 I am the same which have taken the Zion of Enoch into mine own bosom; and verily, I say, even as many as have believed in my name, for I am Christ, and in mine own name, by the virtue of the blood which I have spilt, have I pleaded before the Father for them.
5 But behold, the residue of the wicked have I kept in chains of darkness until the judgment of the great day, which shall come at the end of the earth;
6 And even so will I cause the wicked to be kept, that will not hear my voice but harden their hearts, and wo, wo, wo, is their doom.

Joseph Smith (1805-44) President of the Church

The great Jehovah contemplated the whole of the events connected with the earth, pertaining to the plan of salvation, before it rolled into existence, or ever the “morning stars sung together for joy,” [Job 38:7] the past, the present and the future, were, and are with him one eternal now [see D&C 38:1-2;Moses 1:6; Abr. 2:8; 1 Ne. 9:6; 2 Ne. 9:20; Moro. 7:22] he knew of the fall of Adam, the iniquities of the antediluvians, of the depth of iniquity that would be connected with the human family; their weakness and strength, their power and glory, apostasies, their crimes, their righteousness, and iniquity; he comprehended the fall of man, and their redemption; he knew the plan of salvation, and pointed it out; he was acquainted with the situation of all nations; and with their destiny; he ordered all things according to the council of his own will, he knows the situation of both the living, and the dead, and has made ample provision for their redemption, according to their several circumstances, and the laws of the kingdom of God, whether in this world, or in the world to come. (“Baptism For the Dead,” Times and Seasons, Apr. 15, 1842 Vol. No. , pp. 759-61; Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith [2007], 406-7)

Days of Man Prolonged

2 Nephi 2:21
21 And the days of the children of men were prolonged, according to the will of God, that they might repent while in the flesh; wherefore, their state became a state of probation, and their time was lengthened, according to the commandments which the Lord God gave unto the children of men. For he gave commandment that all men must repent; for he showed unto all men that they were lost, because of the transgression of their parents.
Alma 12:24

24 And we see that death comes upon mankind, yea, the death which has been spoken of by Amulek, which is the temporal death; nevertheless there was a **space** granted unto man in which he might repent; therefore this life became a probationary state; a **time** to prepare to meet God; a **time to prepare for that endless state** . . . which is after the resurrection of the dead.

The Seven Thousand Years of the Earth's Continuance
or it's Temporal Existence

D&C 77:6-7, 12

6 Q. What are we to understand by the book which John saw, which was sealed on the back with seven seals?
   A. We are to understand that it contains the revealed will, mysteries, and the works of God; the hidden things of his economy concerning this earth during the seven thousand years of its continuance, or its temporal existence.

7 Q. What are we to understand by the seven seals with which it was sealed?
   A. We are to understand that the first seal contains the things of the first thousand years, and the second also of the second thousand years, and so on until the seventh.

D&C 77:12

Q. What are we to understand by the sounding of the trumpets, mentioned in the 8th chapter of Revelation?
   A. We are to understand that as God made the world in six days, and on the seventh day he finished his work, and sanctified it, and also formed man out of the dust of the earth, even so, in the beginning of the seventh thousand years will the Lord God sanctify the earth, and complete the salvation of man, and judge all things, and shall redeem all things, except that which he hath not put into his power, when he shall have sealed all things, unto the end of all things; and the sounding of the trumpets of the seven angels are the preparing and finishing of his work, in the beginning of the seventh thousand years--the preparing of the way before the time of his coming.

Joseph Fielding Smith (1876-1972) President of the Church

By the seven thousand years of temporal existence is meant the time of the earth’s duration from the fall of Adam to the end of time, which will come after the Millennium and “a little season” which will follow. The earth and all on it were in a spiritual condition before the fall, for mortality had not come bringing temporal conditions. We are now living in the second period of the earth’s history, which is referred to as being a telestial condition. In other words, a condition where wickedness and all the vicissitudes of mortality endure. It is the earth and its inhabitants in the fallen state which Adam brought through his transgression. This condition will continue until Christ comes.

[After quoting D&C 77:12, President Smith said:] In this instruction the Lord sets days against thousand years, as days, in speaking of the creation and the continuance of the earth during its mortal existence. At the close of the sixth thousand years and at the opening of the seventh, since the fall, the earth and all that remain upon its face will be changed from the telestial condition of wickedness to the terrestrial condition of peace and order. This is the day when the earth “will be renewed and receive its paradisical glory,” as declared in the tenth Article of Faith. We are now in the great day of restoration of all things, and the renewal of the earth is the bringing of it back to a comparable condition to that which existed before the fall. *(Church History and Modern Revelation, 4 vols.,*
Prison

Moses 7:38-39

38 But behold, these which thine eyes are upon shall perish in the floods; and behold, I will shut them up; a prison have I prepared for them.

39 And That which I have chosen hath pled before my face. Wherefore, he suffereth for their sins; inasmuch as they will repent in the day that my Chosen shall return unto me, and until that day they shall be in torment;

What is the Purpose of Torment?

Suffering eternal torment played an important role in the repentance–changing–of Alma the Younger–consider the following:

Mosiah 27:29

26 And thus they become new creatures; and unless they do this, they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God.

27 I say unto you, unless this be the case, they must be cast off; and this I know, because I was like to be cast off.

28 Nevertheless, after wading through much tribulation, repenting nigh unto death, the Lord in mercy hath seen fit to snatch me out of an everlasting burning, and I am born of God.

29 My soul hath been redeemed from the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity. I was in the darkest abyss; but now I behold the marvelous light of God. My soul was racked with eternal torment; but I am snatched, and my soul is pained no more.

Alma 36:12-22

12 But I was racked with eternal torment, for my soul was harrowed up to the greatest degree and racked with all my sins.

13 Yea, I did remember all my sins and iniquities, for which I was tormented with the pains of hell; yea, I saw that I had rebelled against my God, and that I had not kept his holy commandments.

14 Yea, and I had murdered many of his children, or rather led them away unto destruction; yea, and in fine so great had been my iniquities, that the very thought of coming into the presence of my God did rack my soul with inexpressible horror.

15 Oh, thought I, that I could be banished and become extinct both soul and body, that I might not be brought to stand in the presence of my God, to be judged of my deeds.

16 And now, for three days and for three nights was I racked, even with the pains of a damned soul.

17 And it came to pass that as I was thus racked with torment, while I was harrowed up by the memory of my many sins, behold, I remembered also to have heard my father prophesy unto the people concerning the coming of one Jesus Christ, a Son of God, to atone for the sins of the world.

18 Now, as my mind caught hold upon this thought, I cried within my heart: O Jesus, thou Son of God, have mercy on me, who am in the gall of bitterness, and am encircled about by the everlasting chains of death.

19 And now, behold, when I thought this, I could remember my pains no more; yea, I was harrowed up by the memory of my sins no more.

20 And oh, what joy, and what marvelous light I did behold; yea, my soul was filled with joy as exceeding as was my pain!

21 Yea, I say unto you, my son, that there could be nothing so exquisite and so bitter as were my pains. Yea, and again I say unto you, my son, that on the other hand, there can be nothing so
exquisite and sweet as was my joy.

22 Yea, methought I saw, even as our father Lehi saw, God sitting upon his throne, surrounded with numberless concourses of angels, in the attitude of singing and praising their God; yea, and my soul did long to be there.

Heaven

Moses 7:21

21 And it came to pass that the Lord showed unto Enoch all the inhabitants of the earth; and he beheld, and lo, Zion, in process of time, was taken up into heaven. And the Lord said unto Enoch: Behold mine abode forever.

Joseph Smith (1805-44) President of the Church

Now the doctrine of translation is a power which belongs to this priesthood. There are many things which belong to the powers of the priesthood and the keys thereof, that have been kept hid from before the foundation of the world; they are hid from the wise and prudent to be revealed in the last times.

Many have supposed that the doctrine of translation was a doctrine whereby men were taken immediately into the presence of God and into an eternal fullness, but this is a mistaken idea. Their place of habitation is that of the terrestrial order, and a place prepared for such characters He held in reserve to be min-istering angels unto many planets, and who as yet have not entered unto so great a fullness as those who are resurrected from the dead. "Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection." (Heb. 11:35) (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 250-52)

Joseph Fielding Smith (1876-1972) President of the Church

Translated bodies cannot enter into rest until they have undergone a change equivalent to death. Translated bodies are designed for future missions. (Answers to Gospel Questions, 5 vols., 2; p.47)

The Design Of God

Joseph Smith (1805-44) President of the Church

It has been the design of Jehovah, from the commencement of the world, and is His purpose now, to regulate the affairs of the world in His own time, to stand as a head of the universe, and take the reins of government in His own hand. When that is done, judgment will be administered in righteousness; anarchy and confusion will be destroyed, and “nations will learn war no more.” . . .

The Lord has at various times commenced this kind of government, and tendered His services to the human family. He selected Enoch, whom He directed, and gave His law unto, and to the people who were with him; and when the world in general would not obey the commands of God, after walking with God, he translated Enoch and his church, and the Priesthood or government of heaven was taken away.

Abraham was guided in all his family affairs by the Lord; was conversed with by angels, and by the Lord; was told where to go, and when to stop; and prospered exceedingly in all that he put his hand unto; it was because he and his family obeyed the counsel of the Lord.

When Egypt was under the superintendence of Joseph it prospered, because he was taught of God; when they oppressed the Israelites, destruction came upon them. When the children of Israel were chosen with Moses at their head, they were to be a peculiar people, among whom God should place His name; their motto was: “The Lord is our lawgiver; the Lord is our Judge [i.e., Heb. Word means ruler]; the Lord is our King; and He shall reign over us.” While in this state they might truly say, “Happy
is that people, whose God is the Lord.” Their government was a theocracy; they had God to make their
laws, and men chosen by Him to administer them; He was their God, and they were His people. Moses
received the word of the Lord from God Himself; he was the mouth of God to Aaron, and Aaron taught
the people, in both civil and ecclesiastical affairs; they were both one, there was no distinction; so will
it be when the purposes of God shall be accomplished; when “the Lord shall be King over the whole
earth” and “Jerusalem His throne.” “ The law shall go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from
Jerusalem.” . . .

This is the only thing that can bring about the “restitution of all things spoken of by all the holy
Prophets since the world was”—“the dispensation of the fullness of times, when God shall gather
together all things in one.” Other attempts to promote universal peace and happiness in the human
family have proved abortive; every effort has failed; every plan and design has fallen to the ground; it
needs the wisdom of God, the intelligence of God, and the power of God to accomplish this. The world
has had a fair trial for six thousand years; the Lord will try the seventh thousand Himself; “He whose
right it is, will possess the kingdom, and reign until He has put all things under His feet;” [D&C 58:22;
76:106-107] (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 250-52; Teachings
of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith [2007, 257-58])

Second Coming and the Transfiguration of the Earth

D&C 63:20-21

20 Nevertheless, he that endureth in faith and doeth my will, the same shall overcome, and shall
receive an inheritance upon the earth when the day of transfiguration shall come;

21 When the earth shall be transfigured, even according to the pattern which was shown unto mine
apostles upon the mount; of which account the fulness ye have not yet received.

Joseph Fielding Smith (1876-1972) President of the Church

Read what is written in our scriptures. Read what he himself has said. When he comes, he will cleanse
this earth from all its wickedness, and, speaking of the Church, he has said that he would send his
angels and they would gather out of his kingdom, which is the Church, all things that offend. Then we
are going to have a new earth, a new heaven. The earth will be renewed for a thousand years, and
there shall be peace, and Christ, whose right it is, shall reign. Afterwards will come the death of the
earth, its resurrection, its glorification, as the abode of the righteous or they who belong to the
celestial kingdom, and they only shall dwell upon the face of it. (Conference Report, April 1952, p.28)

Earth in it's Sanctified, Immortal, and Eternal State

D&C 77:1

Q. What is the sea of glass spoken of by John, 4th chapter, and 6th verse of the Revelation?
A. It is the earth, in its sanctified, immortal, and eternal state.

D&C 88:18-24

18 Therefore, it [i.e., the earth] must needs be sanctified from all unrighteousness, that it may be
prepared for the celestial glory;

19 For after it hath filled the measure of its creation, it shall be crowned with glory, even with the
presence of God the Father;

20 That bodies who are of the celestial kingdom may possess it forever and ever; for, for this intent
was it made and created, and for this intent are they sanctified.
21 And they who are not sanctified through the law which I have given unto you, even the law of Christ, must inherit another kingdom, even that of a terrestrial kingdom, or that of a telestial kingdom.
22 For he who is not able to abide the law of a celestial kingdom cannot abide a celestial glory.
23 And he who cannot abide the law of a terrestrial kingdom cannot abide a terrestrial glory.
24 And he who cannot abide the law of a telestial kingdom cannot abide a telestial glory; therefore he is not meet for a kingdom of glory. Therefore he must abide a kingdom which is not a kingdom of glory.