

## The Pattern Of Creation

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**Given 15-Oct-19; Sermon #FT19-02B**

I was given two quilts made by my paternal grandmother when I first married at age 20: a pink one and a blue one. We carried those quilts with us over ten moves to multiple states, kids growing up, all the ups and downs of life. Over time they got pretty ragged. Recently, as a surprise, a neighbor of ours repaired the blue one. She was able to salvage most of it, put it back together. It looks really good. We have it hanging on a quilt rack in our bedroom. Phyllis and Virginia, our neighbor, have made a lot of quilts together over the last few years but this antique blue one was already there. Just needed to repair it. My granny Ford used a pattern for these quilts just as Phyllis and Virginia do. They come up with their own colors and their own fabrics—their own designs—but they are still following a pattern. They had a plan from the many others who have done this and they have established a foundation of how a quilt is put together.

Well, God works with patterns as well, like in Exodus chapter 25.

**Exodus 25:9** “According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.”

God gave Moses directions on all that He wanted made of the tabernacle and its furnishings (“just so”—the New King James says; “exactly”—the Contemporary English Version says).

Let us turn to I Chronicles 28.

**I Chronicles 28:19** “All this,” said David, “the Lord made me understand in writing, by His hand upon me, all the works of these plans.”

David was given plans by God to pass on to Solomon for the building of the Temple. And it says, in writing. Did God actually give David a set of blueprints? Probably David saw a vision that was so vivid, he was able to transfer his vision to paper.

God uses pattern again and again throughout the pages of the Bible. These verses we just read deal with physical buildings but with spiritual overtones. Let us go to Romans 8, verses 28 and 29. We will see a little more clearly a spiritual purpose.

**Romans 8:28-29** And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

You might say that Christ is a living blueprint of what we are to become. He is our model. He is our pattern. But we are not coming off an assembly line. We have our individual features, our own mannerisms, our own thoughts. There is a pattern, however, to follow, just as Phyllis does when she makes a quilt. It can be lots of different colors or themes, but she starts with a pattern. She cuts it out. She sketches it. She assembles it. But she is following well thought-out plans that have been used for hundreds of years, but it is still her own individual work of art.

Clyde read earlier in his sermonette John 14:3, where Christ was speaking to His disciples. And He said, “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.” So our goal is to be in the Kingdom of God and our Father sees this as a done deal. I think He has more faith in us than we do in ourselves sometimes. God knows where He wants us to serve. Christ is right now preparing those positions.

This is the foundation of what I want to speak on today, and that is God’s awesome creation and the pattern He gives us for our jobs in the Kingdom, and I am speaking of beyond the Millennium.

**II Peter 3:5-7** (KJV) For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

Peter, speaking here to the church, says some have forgotten that God is sovereign. He is in charge. He is bringing His purpose to be in spite of what men might think or do. Everything is moving towards the conclusion He has planned from the beginning. Peter mentions the creation: the earth being formed, the Flood that destroyed the known world at that time. Of course, there was an earlier world that was inhabited by angels. We know that from the book of Jude. He could be speaking in verse 6 of that world, or of the recreated earth, or of both, destroyed in the Flood. The point is, God spoke and it was created. Peter says we forget this that by the word of God the heavens were of old.

Let us turn to Psalm 33, verses 6 through 9. David says here:

**Psalm 33:6-9** By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deep in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.

Peter spoke of the earth standing in water and then being overflowed with water. David mentions God gathering the waters of the sea together in a heap. We know this is God working through Jesus Christ, and I am going to talk a little bit more about water in a moment. God made the universe and all that is in it. And for all we know, there are universes beyond ours. But let me bring the focus in—narrow it down a little bit.

Let us go to Psalm 115. I will read it from the Contemporary English Version.

**Psalm 115:15-16** (CEV) May the Lord who created the heavens and the earth give you his blessing. The Lord has kept the heavens for himself, but he has given the earth to us humans.

The vast universe God kept for Himself. It is out there, we know a few things about it. But His attention is right now focused on this earth and its inhabitants. So let us go back to the beginning. We have been there a time or two.

**Genesis 1:1-2** In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over [moved upon] the face of the waters.

Now, if you will think about this, after verse 1 the heavens are subsequently ignored. In verse 2 our attention is exclusively on Planet Earth where creation will take place. The heavens are not modified or improved upon any further. Yes, the sun, the moon, the stars are mentioned. Genesis 1:14 and 16 talk about them but only as they relate to earth. Throughout the remainder of the Bible, all the way to the signs in Revelation, it is only as it relates to the earth. So the billions and perhaps trillions of galaxies are out there doing not much really, waiting for their turn to be developed. They are slowly moving away from the earth but they are not a player in the rest of the Bible other than how they relate to the earth. God has a plan, a pattern of how life should be created and lived. And within the pages of the Bible, we learn about this.

So why can life exist here, and not in, let us say, Venus or Mars? What did God do here that He did not do elsewhere, as far as we know? Because as far as man has been able to determine, this is the only place where life exists in our universe—and not just life but *intelligent* life. Now scientists still hope to find life out there, I am not sure why, but they are searching. They think that they will find microbes beneath the surface of Mars. Some think that Saturn's moon, Titan, once held some form of life. But as far as we know, we are it. How is that so? Lots of reasons.

For one, it is our atmosphere. Mars and Venus have atmospheres but they cannot support life—they do not have enough oxygen. Venus is mainly carbon dioxide, huge clouds of sulfuric acid. It is so hot that no human could

breathe there. Surface temperatures are hot enough to melt lead. But earth has just the right mix: about 80 percent nitrogen, 20 percent oxygen; you throw in a bit of argon, carbon dioxide, water vapor, a few other gases; and our atmosphere protects us from the harsh rays of the sun as if a quilt is wrapped around the earth. It is a perfect formula.

What about our big brother planet Jupiter that acts to block debris from hitting earth? It is like a big broom and it sweeps away objects as small as cars and as big as moons. And if earth were to get hit with any of these projectiles, life would be extinguished in one blow.

What about the moon? It stabilizes earth's rotation preventing drastic movements of the poles that would cause massive changes in the climate. And then there is our size: Earth is just right. If we were any smaller, we would not be able to hold on to our atmosphere. If we were any larger, we might be a gas giant too hot for life.

Geoffrey Marcy is an astronomer at the University of California, Berkeley. This guy has discovered dozens of extra-solar planets. He says:

The most impressive attribute of the earth is the existence and amount of liquid water on its surface. The earth is remarkable for its precisely tuned amount of water: Not too much to cover the mountains, not so little that it is a dry desert as are Mars and Venus.

And so, I am in total agreement with this gentleman. He sounds like a very smart guy. But he has to throw in one more thing.

No one knows why earth has the exact amount of water it does, which is relatively small considering that water molecules outnumber silica molecules in the galaxy.

It certainly could not be that there is a God with a plan. Why is that so hard to admit?

Diana Valencia, a graduate student in Earth and Planetary Sciences at Harvard, says:

Many details as to why earth is the only planet with liquid water in our solar system need to be worked out. [She goes on to say] Certainly the distance to the sun has made it possible. A planet much farther in would receive too much energy from the sun. A planet too far out would quickly freeze.

She says many details need to be worked out. Why can they not see that this is by design? This Goldilocks planet is just right because God planned and created it.

Mike Brown from Caltech discovered a plutoid object, out past Pluto, and he named it Aries. He says:

Without water, the planet would be geologically dead. Water is what lubricates plate tectonics, which is what leads to the extreme difference between continents and sea floors, and the large amount of earthquakes and volcanoes, and fresh mountain building.

Still in Genesis 1, look at verse 2 again. The earth was covered in water. In verses 6 and 7, God separated the waters giving us our atmosphere. In verses 9 and 10, He further separated the waters into dry land and the seas. And He did this working from His plan.

Scientists describe clouds as water suspended from the air. John Lynch wrote a book called *The Weather*, and he puts it in a very beautiful way. He says: “We live in a water planet. The seas dominate the world, but there is also an ocean around us and an ocean above us.” Very nicely put.

Let us go to Psalm 104. We sometimes think the ancients did not know a whole lot, but they did. I want to read this from the Good News Bible.

**Psalm 104:5-13 (GNB)** You have set the earth firmly on its foundations, and it will never be moved. You placed the ocean over it like a robe, and the water covered the mountains. When you rebuked the waters, they fled; they rushed away when they heard your shout of command. They flowed over the mountains and into the valleys, to the place you had made for them.

You set a boundary they can never pass, to keep them from covering the earth again. You make springs flow in the valleys, and rivers run between the hills. They provide water for the wild animals; there the wild donkeys quench their thirst. In the trees nearby, the birds make their nests and sing. From the sky you send rain on the hills, and the earth is filled with your blessings.

The graduate student I quoted said “Many details need to be worked out,” speaking about how and why there is water on earth. I think King David laid it out for us right here pretty well. So God separated the waters, put the oceans and the rivers within their boundaries, set up evaporation and transportation of water via clouds and rain. Water is constantly recycled as evaporation, condensation, precipitation, and runoff. It flows between the different reservoirs.

First we had to have a water source, and God provided that—the whole earth was covered in water. That was our raw material, what became the oceans that we see here (one of them) behind me. But we need freshwater for human life, and precipitation is the sole source for that, be it mist or snow, but mainly rain. Statistics can be hard when you are speaking, but listen. 90 percent of the earth’s moisture comes from the oceans. 90 percent of that (and it is rain) will fall back into the oceans. Only 10 percent of freshwater falls on land.

According to the book *Earth* by James Luhrs, “Every year 9500 cubic miles of water evaporates from the ocean and falls on land. This yearly flow is 10 times that of the Amazon River and, in theory, it is enough to support five times the current number of people on earth.”

So freshwater, which is water with low concentrations of dissolved salts, comes via evaporation from the ocean and in the form of rain. Now out of all the water in the earth, only 2.75 percent of it is freshwater. And of that, 2 percent is locked up in glaciers. 0.7 percent is groundwater. 0.01 percent is surface freshwater gathered in lakes and rivers. And, as far as we know, the sole natural source of freshwater in the entire universe: Precipitation from our atmosphere. It is amazing. What a plan!

From this book, *The Weather*, John Lynch says there are three basic elements necessary for the operation of earth's climate: Water, wind, and heat. Now he uses the analogy that water is the fuel of the weather system; heat is the ignition; wind is the engine.

We talked a bit about water. I do not have the time really to touch on heat. A couple of years ago I gave a split about "The Light of Day and the Dark of Night" in which I talked a lot about details of the sun and its relationship to earth.

On the aspect of wind, which is the engine of the weather system, I read an interesting book last year called *Awesome Creation*, by a Rabbi named Yosef Bitton. The entire book is on the first three verses of Genesis. He has several chapters on wind and I really do not want to get in to the weeds on this, but I did want to try to condense a little bit of what he says on wind because it does have a bearing. And we can be turning back, if you would, to Genesis 1: 2.

The Hebrew word *ruach* has always been used by the church to mean spirit (as in God's Holy Spirit). In biblical Hebrew, *ruach* by itself simply means 'wind.' But *ruach* is also a common homonym; it can also mean 'breathing' or 'the soul' or 'inspiration' or 'you are moved.'

**Genesis 1:2** (KJV) The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

The word translated 'spirit' is the Hebrew *ruach*. That is combined here with *elohim* which means 'rulers,' 'divine ones,' 'angels,' 'gods,' or 'God.' So the translators rendered *ruach elohim* as 'Spirit of God' and that is correct. I did not find a single translation that did not. It is technically correct according to the Hebrew.

Rabbi Bitton feels that this two-word phrase means a special type of wisdom and inspiration that is possessed by humans inspired by God. For example, when Pharaoh marveled at Joseph's wisdom, in Genesis 41 verse 38, he said "Joseph had *ruach elohim*—the Spirit of God. When God asks Moses to



appoint Bezaleel to head up the work of the tabernacle in Exodus 31:3, God assures Moses that Bezaleel has been filled with *ruach elohim*—the Spirit of wisdom.

But here, in Genesis 1 verse 2, there is no man to be the recipient of this wisdom. So it cannot be understood as God granted inspiration and it is also not in this context ‘breathing’ or ‘soul.’ *Ruach* in verse 2 has been understood by Jewish scholars for centuries to mean simply a physical wind, not a spirit. But what about when you add *elohim*?

Now I said I did not want to get in the weeds, but let me go a little further. *Elohim* refers usually, but not exclusively, to God Almighty. In the first chapter of Genesis, it is the only name used for God. In this chapter alone *elohim* is used 30 times. But according to Rabbi Bitton, the default meaning is not God but ‘powerful’ and ‘mighty.’ It should be understood as an adjective, not a noun. It would be similar in English when we refer to God as ‘the Almighty.’ It would be an adjective, a description. So, there are two schools of thought between Jewish scholars as to how to understand *ruach elohim*: One opinion is that it is God Almighty; another is that it is a very powerful wind. Both versions stress that *ruach* is wind, not spirit. Now I understand this approach, I understand this thinking. It is not a doctrine to stand on. Just a thought.

There was a great Jewish writer named Maimonides, and he put it as ‘a wind sent by God’ in the sense of a physical wind coming from, or directed by, God. And after a lot of debate within himself and the pages of this book, Mr. Bitton comes to agree with Maimonides. So you can look at it as God’s Holy Spirit doing His bidding, or you can call it ‘a divine wind.’ It depends on your school of thought. Either way works.

The point is wind is essential, and has been from the very beginning essential for physical existence on this earth for the equilibrium of the earth’s climate, for the preservation of water in the world. In Genesis 1:2, it was God’s instrument, God’s agent, in the process of creation to forming the clouds and the upper waters that was on the second day, or the drawing of the land on the third day. And wind continues to be a very large part of life on this earth.

Think about the hurricanes in this feast site over the last few years. We had real problem last year and thought we would have another one this year. Quoting John Lynch again from his book, *The Weather*:

Without wind, our beautiful earth will be transformed into a cauldron of extremes. The heat of the tropics would increase inexorably while toward the north and the south the planet would freeze beyond the point at which life could survive. Instead we have wind, the circulation of air around the planet ultimately mixing hot and cold, wet and dry, to create the rich confection of cloud and clear sky, rain and storm, that make up the weather we all accept as a part of our lives.

We covered briefly some of the main ingredients for life on this earth. But to what purpose? Interesting. But what is the reason? We read John 14:3 early on. Christ said He was going to prepare a place, a position for us, and He said “Where I am, there you will be also.” We are going to be with Christ wherever He is. The apostle Paul tells us in I Corinthians 15 we will be resurrected in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, that we will inherit the Kingdom of God. Zechariah 14:4 says that in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives. Christ will return to earth; we will be at His side.

**Revelation 2:26** “He who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations.”

Let us turn to Romans 8, verse 17 if you would.

**Romans 8:17** if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

We are going to reign with Christ on this earth for a thousand years. And then after that, the Great White Throne judgment. And then after that, what? Let us turn to Hebrews 1, verse 2. Breaking into the middle of a thought here, it says:

**Hebrews 1:2** has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds.

Let me read that verse from the Contemporary English Bible.

**Hebrews 1:2** (CEV) But now at last, God sent his Son to bring his message to us. God created the universe by his Son, and everything will someday belong to the Son.

Over a chapter, to Hebrews 2.

**Hebrews 2:5** For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels.

Now, right here at this section of Hebrews, let me interject a passage from chapter 7 of *Mystery of the Ages* by Herbert W. Armstrong. Let me quote here.

But bear in mind the general theme [here in Hebrews] or context is the world to come whereof we speak. Not this present age, now coming rapidly to its end. He says, continuing on in verse 6, 'But one testified in a certain place, saying', then follows a quotation from the first six verses only of Psalm 8. In this psalm, David continues showing specifically that God has now placed in subjection under man the solid earth, the earth's atmosphere or air, and the sea. But now, the writer of the book of Hebrews is inspired to expand David's prophecy to add something radically different, something to happen in the world to come.

Christ is the heir of all things. We read that in Hebrews 1:2. Multiple translations render that the universe. We read Romans 8:17 earlier. Let me read it to you from the Good News Bible.

**Romans 8:17** (GNB) Since we are his children, we will possess the blessings he keeps for his people, and we will also possess with Christ what God has kept for him; for if we share Christ's suffering, we will also share his glory.

So, what do we have here? Christ has been given the entire universe. We will share in that blessing. We read that God gave all things (meaning the universe) to Christ, that the world to come is under the authority of Christ—that God left nothing out—and we have the opportunity to share that glory.

**Revelation 21:3** And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.”

Over a page, to Revelation 22.

**Revelation 22:3** (GNB) Nothing that is under God's curse will be found in the city. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will worship him.

Once God’s headquarters are established on this earth, with His throne in Jerusalem, Christ will be over the entire universe, and we will be with Him. But what are we going to do with Christ for all this time—I mean, as they say, eternity is a long time.

You may remember Gary Larson’s cartoon strip “The Far Side.” It is just a one-panel cartoon. The guy sitting on a cloud, wings, white robe, harp, and the caption read: “Sure, wish I had brought a magazine!”

Christ works and so will we. After the great and terrible Day of the Lord, the earth will need to be repaired. Those coming out of the Tribulation will need to be comforted and taught God’s way. And after a thousand years, those given their chance in the Great White Throne Judgement will have to be taught. And then it stretches out to eternity. Do you really think that those

billions and perhaps trillions of galaxies out there will stay undeveloped? Well, I think to myself “I just cut grass. How can I develop a planet?”

First of all, we are going to be with Christ in the Millennium for a thousand years. We are going to be with Him all the time. I think we will be doing some learning there. Maybe He will have us start out teaching a small class in maybe a small town. Maybe we will have five cities, maybe we will have ten cities, I do not know. But you are going to learn by doing and we are going to be following Christ’s example leading others. And as a member of the God Family, you are going to be doing this teaching and this leading in love rather than making decisions in jealousy or anger. And I have no doubt that our responsibilities will grow as we go along.

Secondly, we have a pattern to follow. We do not have to re-invent the wheel. We need what a planet needs to support life. It needs the three ingredients: Heat, water, and wind. There are other things of course (the atmosphere, gravity). But the point is there is a pattern to follow. Blueprints have been drawn and they have been used and they have been proven to work. What if Christ calls you in one day, somewhere far down the road, and He says: “I’d like you to take a few folks and go out to Planet X and make something nice out there for Me. Right now it’s just a rocky, hot, dry, worthless chunk out there in space but, you know, do something nice.” Where do you start? With light, water, and wind. We have Christ as our pattern for our individual lives and there is the hope that we are going to become day by day more like Him. And all around us (and what a beautiful setting we are in!) we have this magnificent creation called earth and the patterns of life to follow as we go along.

I would like to finish, reading from I Thessalonians 4 verses 11 through 17. I am going to read it from the J. B. Phillips translation. So this kind of encapsulates everything we are talking about here.

**I Thessalonians 4:11-17** (J. B. Phillips) Be busy with your own affairs and do your work yourselves as we instructed you. Then the world outside will respect your life and you will never be in want. Now we don’t want you, my brothers, to be in any doubt about those who “fall asleep” in death, or to grieve over them like the rest of men who have no hope.

If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, then we can believe that God will just as surely bring with Jesus all who are “asleep” in him. Here we have a definite message from the Lord. It is that those who are still living when he comes will not in any way precede those who have previously fallen asleep.

One word of command, one shout from the archangel, one blast from the trumpet of God and the Lord himself will come down from Heaven! Those who have died in Christ will be the first to rise, and then we who are still living on the earth will be swept up with them into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And after that we shall be with him for ever.