

Plato: The Creation Story

A cosmological argument for a Creator. Here it is:

We must ask: What is that which always is and has no becoming; and what is that which is always becoming and never is? That which is apprehended by intelligence and reason is always in the same state; but that which is conceived by opinion with the help of unreasoning perception is always in a process of becoming and perishing, and never really is. Now everything that becomes or is created must be created by some cause, for without a cause nothing can be created. . . . So what about the universe? Was it always in existence and without beginning? Or did it come into existence, starting from some beginning? It has come into existence, since it is visible and tangible and has materiality, and therefore it is perceivable; and all perceivable things are apprehended by opinion and sense and are in a process of creation and created. Now that which is created must be created by a cause. (Plato, *Timaeus*: 27D-28D; trans. B. Jowett)

Plato's argument can be summarized like this:

- (1) Anything which can be perceived is in a process of becoming.
- (2) If anything is in a process of becoming, then it has some cause.
- (3) Our universe is perceivable.
- (4) Therefore, our universe is in a process of becoming.
- (5) Therefore, our universe has some cause.

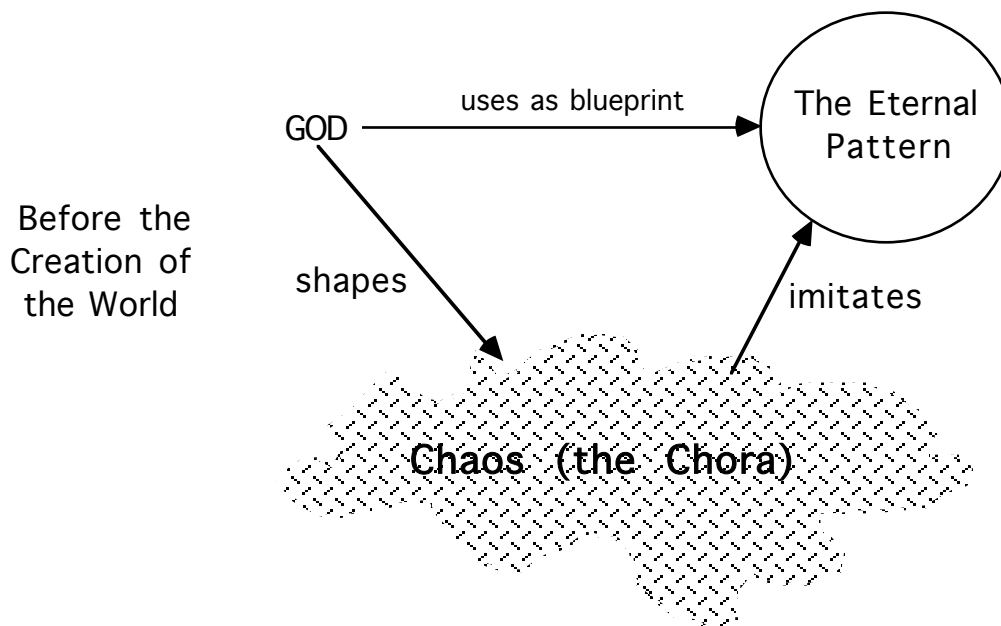


Figure 1. Before the creation of the universe.

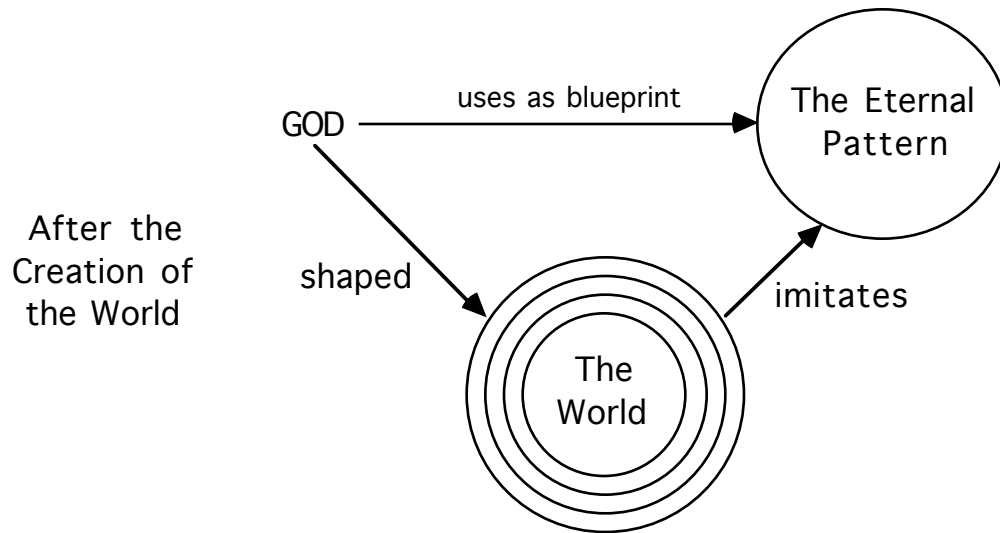


Figure 2. After the creation of the universe.

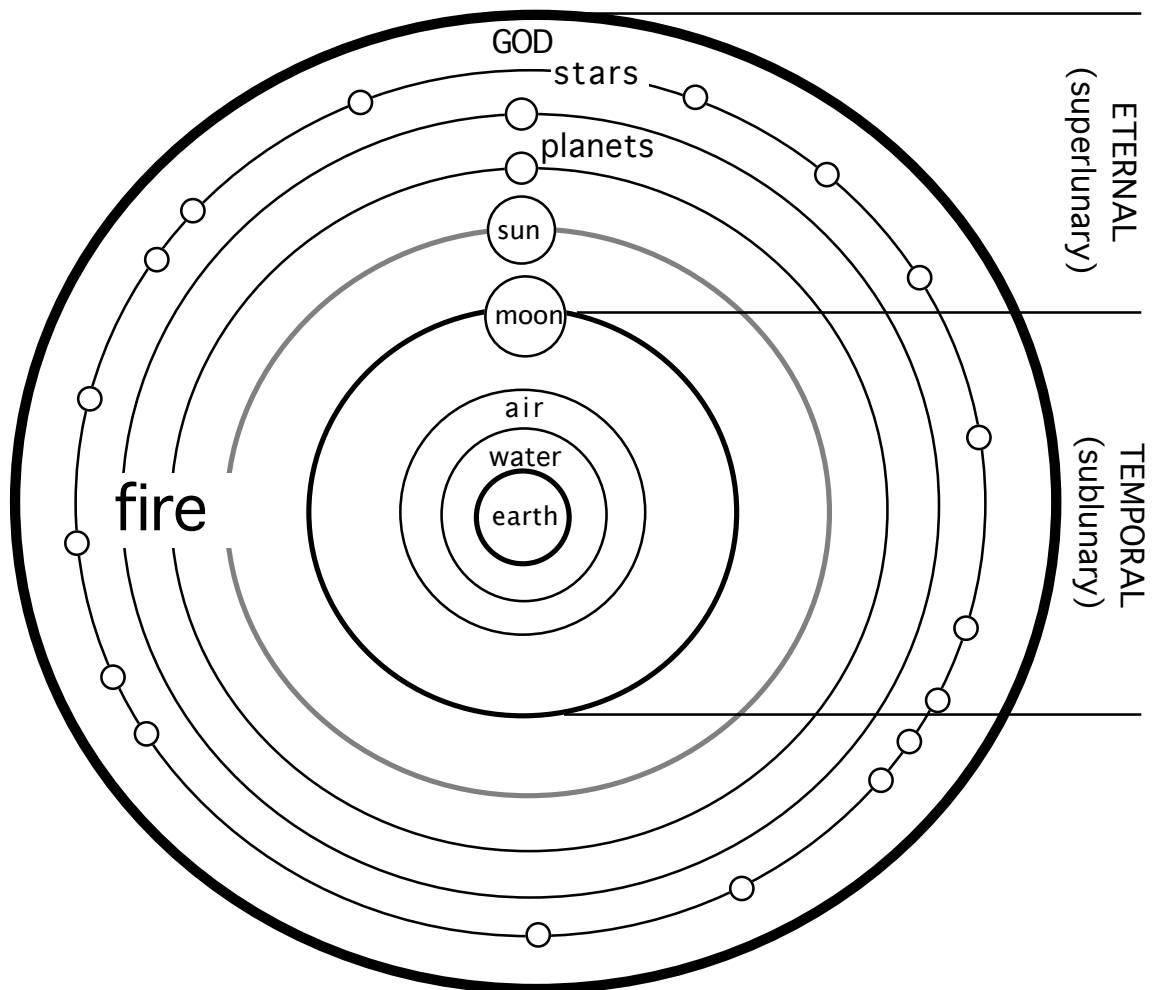


Figure 3. The universe is enclosed in a sphere.