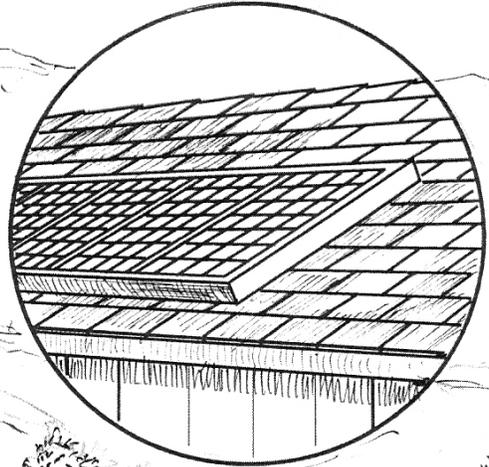


ABUNDACULTURE

Formerly: The Noah Project

SOLAR ELECTRICITY



SAFE AND SANITARY HOUSING

GOOD FOOD

CLEAN WATER



PATHWAYS TO GOD'S ABUNDANCE

By Jack Dody

ABUNDACULTURE

Forward

Jack Dody and Dwight Gradin
Marilou Dody, editor

“Oh, Lord, my God, when I, in awesome wonder, consider
all the worlds thy hands have made”

How Graqt Thou Art – Boberg

These words from the great Christian hymn attempt to describe the glory and power of the King of the Universe, the Creator of all things. He created a world overflowing with all of the things needed for a life of plenty. There is potentially more food than we need. Exactly the same amount of life-giving water flows on the planet as existed in the days immediately following creation. Resources for building homes are found everywhere, and the energy available on the earth far surpasses our needs. The Bible contains instructions regarding the stewardship of God's creation which, if followed, would place our feet on the path to abundance.

But something is terribly wrong. More than a billion people on this planet are starving. Billions live in hovels surrounded by filth. Approximately two million people will die this year because they do not have access to clean water (United Nations, *Beyond Security*, executive summary, 2006). As individuals, we often do not follow God's instructions, and corrupt governments often neglect and abuse the people they rule. How can this be?

As we read the story of the Israelites, we see that God clearly states the conditions for experiencing abundance. Notice God's promises:

Leviticus 26:3-5 If you follow My decrees and are careful to obey my commands, I will send you rain in its season, and the ground will yield its crops and the trees of the field their fruit. Your threshing will continue until grape harvest, and the grape harvest will continue until planting, and you will eat all the food you want and live in safety in your land.

However, we see that even the Chosen People couldn't live up to God's requirements for the abundant life. They sinned, and, as a result, did not experience the abundance that was promised. But God reached out to them to deliver them from their sins.

Isaiah 1:18 “Come now, let us reason together,” says the Lord. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be a white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.”

God offered to restore the abundance of the Israelites, but it was conditional, as the next sentence indicates.

Isaiah 1:19-20 If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land, but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword.”
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

The people of Israel were rebellious. They were not willing to follow God's words. They were not obedient. And, as a general rule, they did not enjoy abundance. It should also be noted that acts of disobedience have a direct effect on all of creation.

Isaiah 24:4,5 The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers, the exalted of the earth languish. The earth is defiled by its people; they have disobeyed the laws, violated the statutes and broken the everlasting covenant.

Romans 8:19-22 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the One who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into glorious freedom of the children of God . We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

As a follower of Jesus, I believe that men are not capable of following the Law of Moses. Sinful men cannot enjoy abundance because we cannot obey the commands of God. But God, in His mercy, sent Jesus to save us from sin. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we can have faith in Jesus and learn to follow God's instructions which lead to abundance. Without Jesus, we can have no true, lasting abundance! Of course, we can only follow God imperfectly until we are with Him in heaven, but through Jesus our imperfections are covered by grace. Thus, abundance is a gift from God, and He is the source of all good things. See how abundance is expressed in Psalm 65: 9-13:

You (God) care for the land and water it; you enrich it abundantly.
The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with grain,
for so you have ordained it.
You drench its furrows and level its ridges;
You soften it with showers and bless its crops.
You crown the year with your bounty, and your carts overflow with abundance.
The grasslands of the desert overflow;
the hills are clothed with gladness.
The meadows are covered with flocks and the valleys are mantled with grain; they shout for joy and sing. [my underlining]

Many would argue that, in fact, evil men often do enjoy abundance, while many righteous men live in poverty. Therefore they dismiss the idea that abundance comes from our Father in heaven. It is true that God does not provide abundance to all believers at all times. Sometimes He uses hardship to build our characters and test our faith. A good example is the story of Job. But if one looks at all of history, it is apparent that those people who consistently base their lives on biblical principles prosper far more than those who do not. Remember, after Job was tested, he was restored to abundance.

To bring clarity to the subject of abundance, we need to understand fully what the Bible says about the subject.

Biblical Principles Concerning Abundance

PRINCIPLE ONE: Abundance is a manifestation of God's character and a part of God's creation.

I define abundance as “more than enough.” Abundance shows God's majesty, creativity, and generosity toward His people, and His affection for them. Any gardener or farmer can tell you that plants produce an abundant number of seeds. More than enough plants can spring from the seeds that God provides on each plant. Left untouched by man, most landscapes will soon be overgrown by plants and over-run by insects and animals if God provides enough rain.

PRINCIPLE TWO: God commissioned men to take care of the garden. We are stewards of God's creation and He holds us responsible.

A patch of land that is overgrown by weeds and over-run by vermin is not very useful. Abundance comes about when men take seriously and act upon the biblical directive to “take care of the garden.”

Genesis 1:28 God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

Genesis 2:15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

Because of the Fall, God cursed the ground, and taking care of the garden became fraught with “painful toil.” Abundance only occurs now by sweat and toil; but still occurs by God's gracious provision.

Genesis 3:17b Cursed is the ground because of you. . . .

Proverbs 28:19 He who works his land will have abundant food, but the one who chases fantasies will have his fill of poverty.

PRINCIPLE THREE: God provides everything needed for abundance.

Genesis 1:29 Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it”

Genesis 9:3 Everything that lives and moves will be food for you. Just as I [God] gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.

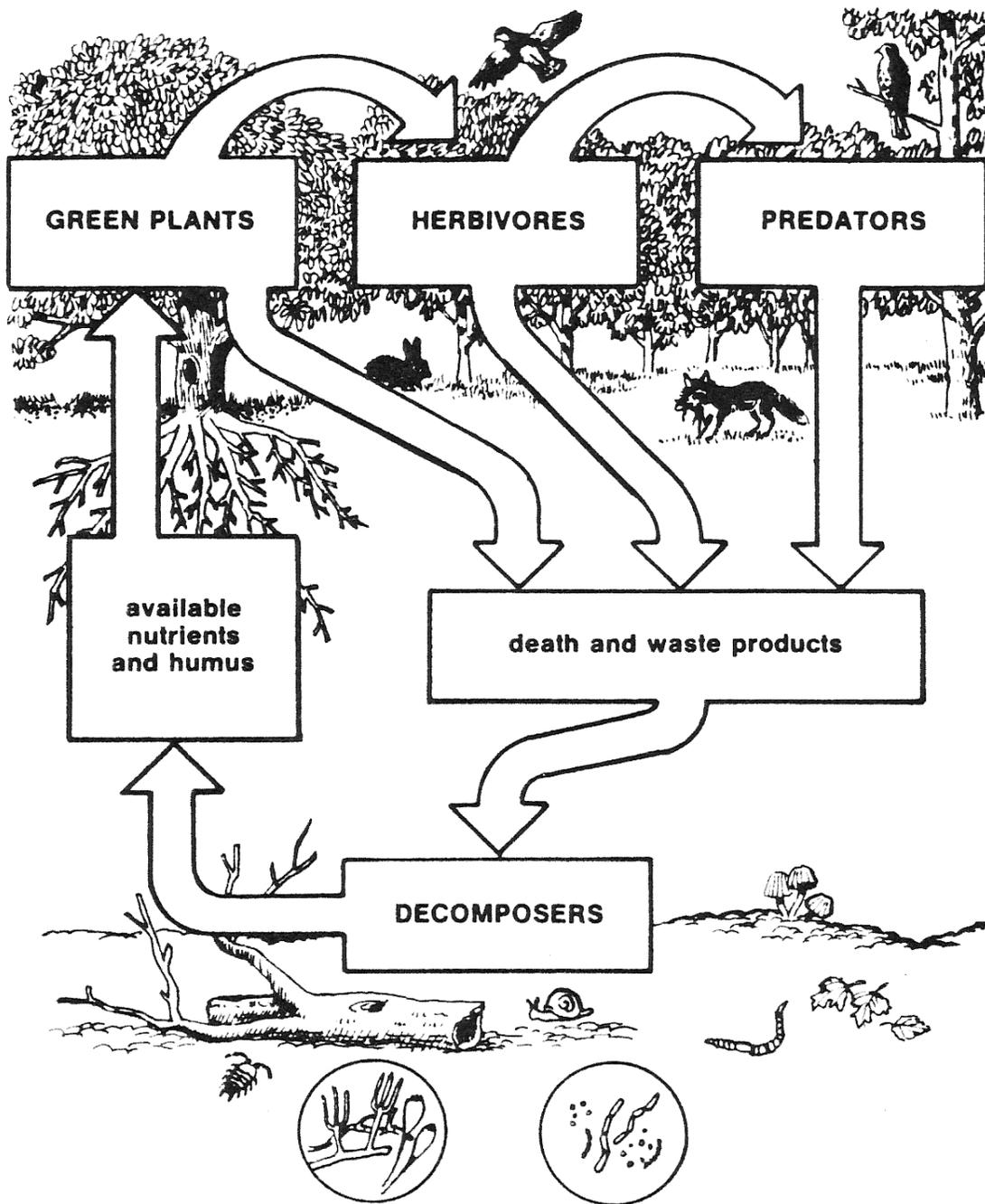
Note: There are many things inherent in the design of the universe that make abundance possible: nutrients, processes, cycles, even gravity. A thoughtful study of photosynthesis points to a Creator worthy of worship.

PRINCIPLE FOUR: God designed cycles and processes so that abundance would always be available to man.

Even though men are basically sinful beings—greedy, selfish, lazy and foolish—God's created order remains. Abundance is still possible because God's plans will not be thwarted by men. Creation points to a marvelous Creator. The more we know, the more we can appreciate the greatness of our God. He is not a figment of our imagination. He is real. And He's not far off. He is near. We can communicate with Him and know Him.

True science is the study of God's creation. An important component of taking care of the God's creation is the study of the creativity and intelligence of His designs. The following illustrations are just a few of hundreds of cycles and processes that directly affect God's abundant provision.

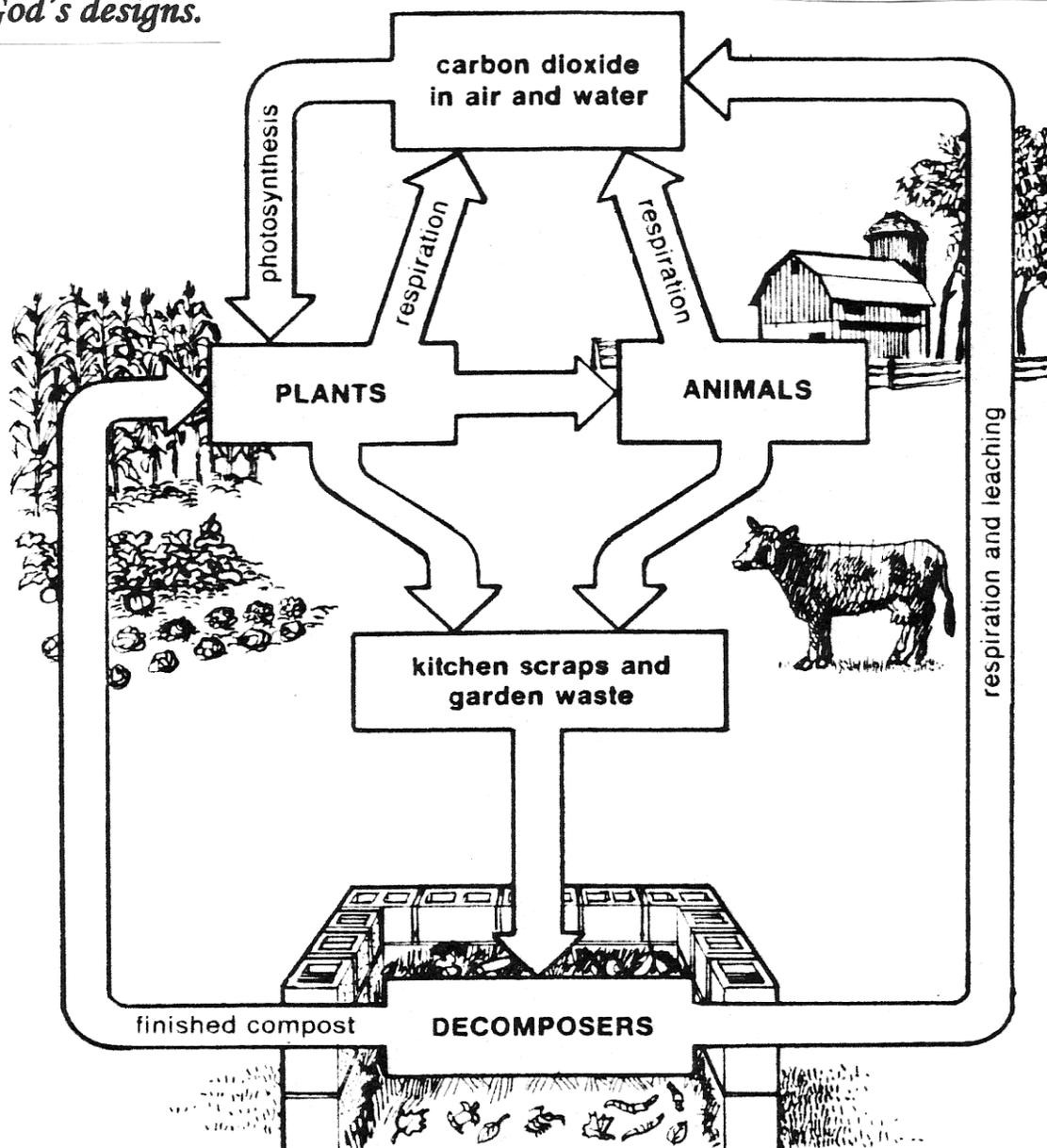
Look at God's design and created order. He put the world in place.



In the forest, nutrients are recycled through the natural decomposition of plant and animal waste.

Illustration from THE RODALE BOOK OF COMPOSTING, 1992

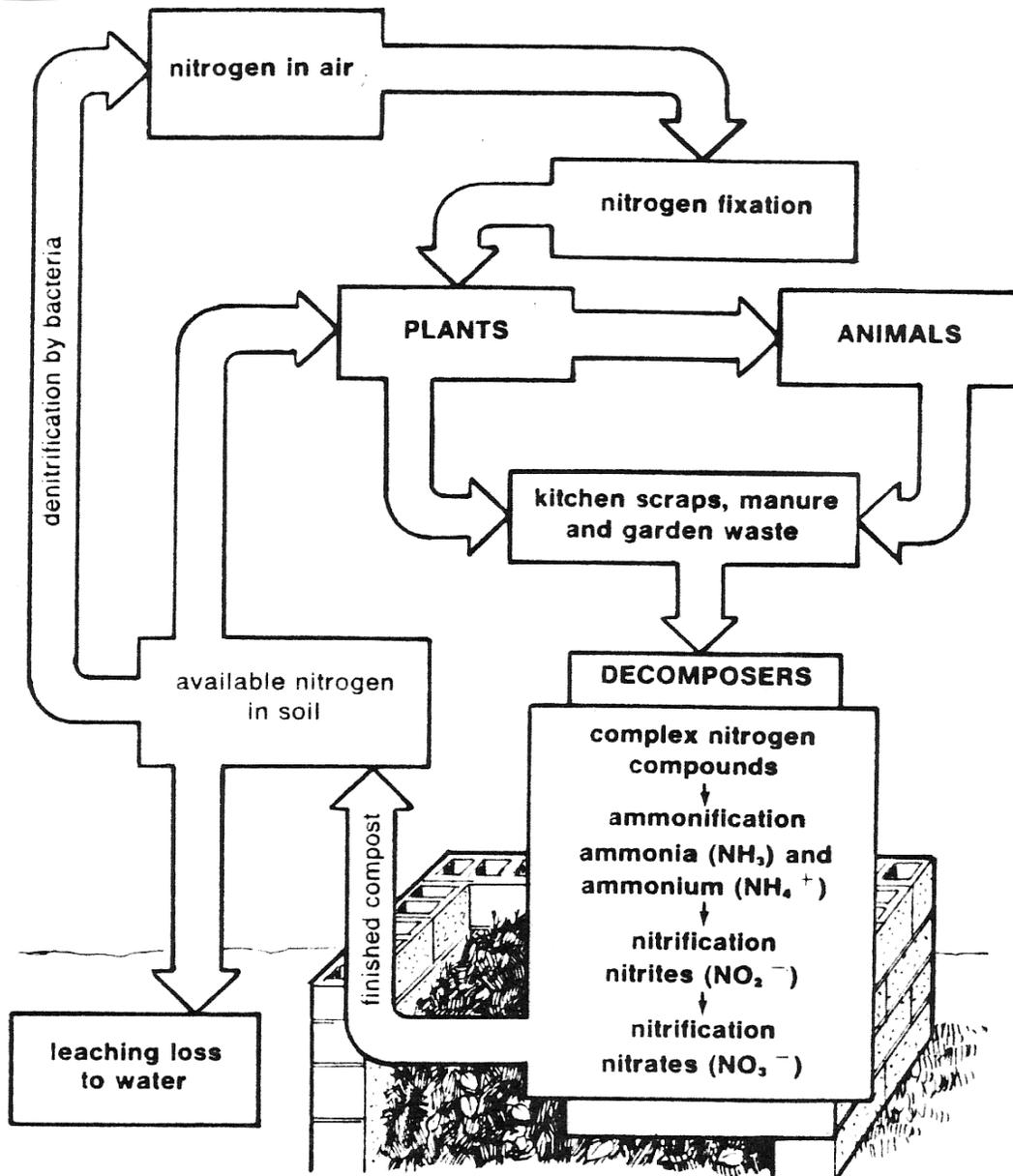
See how God has designed all natural processes! The path to abundance is in understanding these processes and cooperating with God's designs.



The carbon cycle. Green plants use carbon dioxide gas, water, and sunlight to make sugars and other carbon-containing compounds that animals use as food. Carbon compounds in plant and animal wastes provide food for decomposers in the compost pile. Materials that have passed through the decomposers' bodies and the microbial bodies themselves contain nutrients used by plants to continue the carbon cycle.

Illustration from THE RODALE BOOK OF COMPOSTING, 1992

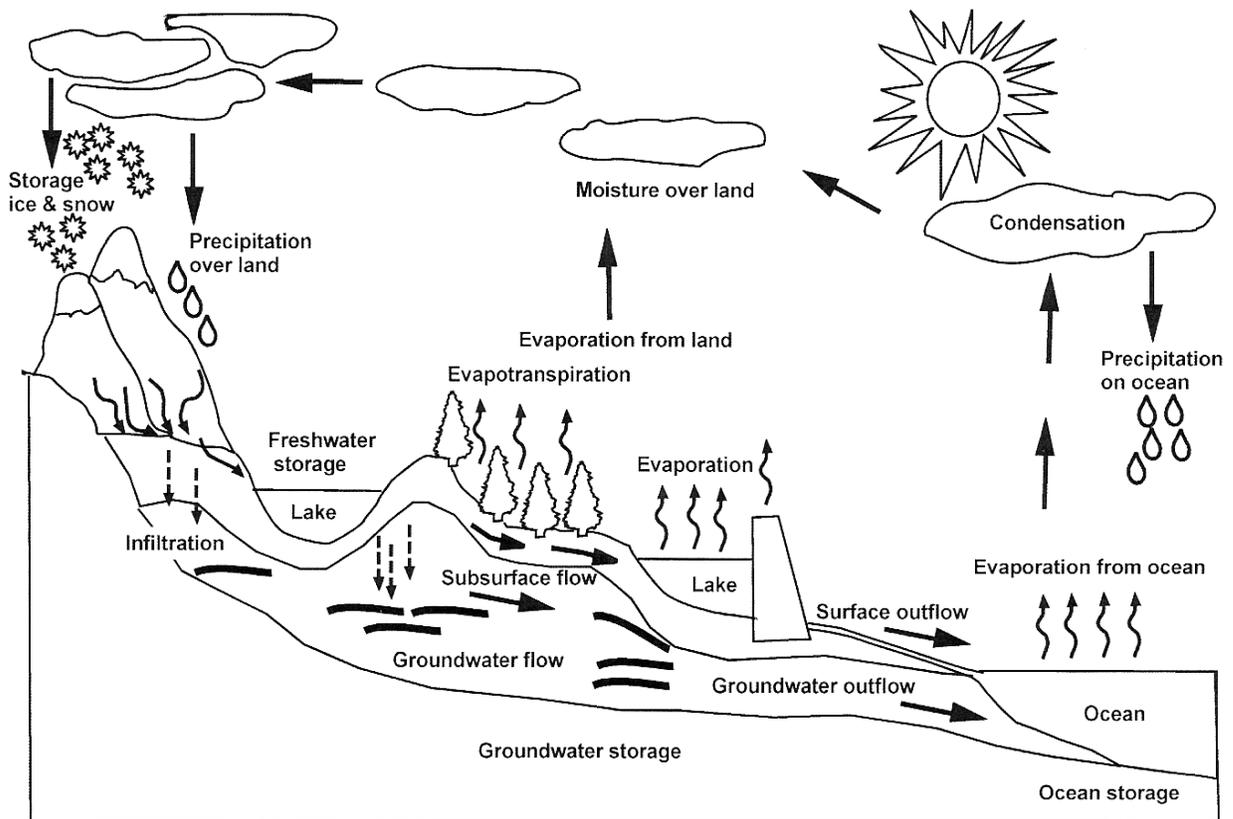
These cycles and processes are God's doing – they didn't just happen. God's wisdom and creativity should cause us to worship and praise Him.



The nitrogen cycle. Shortage of available nitrogen is often a limiting factor in plant growth, since plants can't make use of abundant atmospheric nitrogen gas. (So-called nitrogen-fixing plants rely on symbiotic bacteria.) Composting plant and animal wastes exposes the nitrogen they contain to nitrogen-fixing microorganisms and decomposers that break it down into forms available to plants.

Illustration from THE RODALE BOOK OF COMPOSTING, 1992

The Hydrologic Cycle



Job 36: 27+28 He [God] draws up the drops of water, which distill as rain to the streams; the clouds pour down their moisture and abundant showers fall on mankind.

PRINCIPLE FIVE: God expects His people to share their abundance. The abundance we experience will be in direct proportion to our generosity.

Proverbs 11:24,25 One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.

Luke 6:38 [Jesus speaking] Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

II Corinthians 9:6 Remember this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly . . .

II Corinthians 8:13-15 Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard-pressed, but that there might be equality. At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. Then there will be equality, as it is written, "He who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little did not have too little."

When God's people have experienced more than enough, we are to share with others. We are to share our knowledge of, and our love for, the Creator God. And we are to share the products of His blessings. In gratitude we express how great our creator is and how the intricacies of creation manifest a God who we can get to know through Jesus, who is Emmanuel, God with us.

PRINCIPLE SIX: God, through His Word, provides wisdom and guidance that leads to abundance.

Using the wisdom provided by God in His Word, and knowledge gained by careful study of creation, a servant of God can successfully "take care of the garden" and produce abundant, useful crops that are not over-run by destructive pests.

Psalms 111:10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding.

Deuteronomy 8:18 But remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms His covenant, which He swore to your forefathers, as it is today.

Proverbs 10:22 The blessing of the Lord brings wealth, and He adds no trouble to it.

II Timothy 3:16,17 All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God

may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. [my underlining]

PRINCIPLE SEVEN: Only God will, in His time, restore the earth to its full glory. We are to be faithful stewards, working toward restoration until He returns.

Colossians 1:15-20 He [Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all the creation. For by Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. And He is the head of the body, the church; He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything He might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through His blood shed on the cross.

[underlining mine]

Psalms 104:24-30 How many are Your works, O Lord! In wisdom You made them all; the earth is full of Your creatures. There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number—living things both large and small. There the ships go to and fro, and the leviathan, which You formed to frolic there. These all look to You to give them their food at the proper time. When You give it to them, they gather it up; when You open Your hand, they are satisfied with good things. When You hide Your face, they are terrified; when You take away their breath, they die and return to dust. When You send Your Spirit, they are created, and You renew the face of the earth. [underlining mine]

Revelation 22:1-5 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and His servants will serve Him. They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever. [underlining mine]

Note: I don't know if God makes a "new heaven and earth" from the old one, or if He creates, from nothing, a new heaven and earth. Only He is capable of creating a new heaven and earth, regardless of how He does it.

Conclusion

“Then sings my soul, my savior God to thee: How great Thou art!
How great Thou art!”

How Great Thou Art – Boberg

True abundance occurs when God's people, in obedience and dependence on Him, take care of His creation with wisdom and diligence and are blessed with more than enough, enabling them to share with others and to bring glory to the creator God. Without faith in Jesus, the Creator of the universe, and help from the Holy Spirit, it is impossible to understand and implement God's directives that lead to abundance.

ABUNDACULTURE™

Abundaculture™ is a word coined to describe God's pathway to abundance. Abundaculture™ is an integrated system that allows a child of God, in dependence upon the Holy Spirit, to access God's abundance in providing energy, housing, clean water, good food, and sanitary living conditions for himself and to share with others.

Abundaculture™ does not advocate self-sufficiency or sustainability. God directs His people to depend upon Him and upon each other. We embrace God's all-sufficiency. “He is our source of everything and in Him we find increase.” (from *Farming God's Way*)

Abundaculture™ is an amalgamation of ideas collected over four decades. Due credit is given to the following pioneers:

Brad Oldreive – *Farming God's Way*
Don Richards – *Environment and Resource Stewardship*
Michael Reynolds – *Earthships*
Brad Lancaster – *Rainwater Harvesting*
Bill Mollison – *Permaculture*

...and to those homesteaders who search for a better way and who are willing to share their ideas.