

The "New" Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
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Special Edition

**Creation of Life in
Contemporary Times**

(Copyright) by Ernest L. Martin
(Portland, Oregon)
Edited by David Sielaff

PAGE 1 **Articles**

**In regard to:
You Are King**

Article by Nathaniel Burson
Comments by Laura Lee
(Bismarck, North Dakota)

PAGE 16 **Iron Sharpening Iron**

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Articles

Creation of Life in Contemporary Times

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The first word in the Holy Scriptures that shows God in action reveals Him as the "creator." That verbal construction in Genesis 1:1 emphasizes that essential role of God. It could be rightly said that God is God because He is the One who "creates." The divine account states: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." It was through a word of command (John 1:1) that the heavens and the earth came into existence. ¹ The literary usage of the word being a command within the Scriptures reveals that a primary activity of God centers around His power as a creator of the earthly and cosmic environment in which we humans live. This is God's display of His uniqueness in having a universal creative power and showing the awesomeness of His massive and majestic endeavors throughout all space.

But that is not all. In the Bible there is much more about God's creative activities than at first meets the eye. Holy Writ consistently reveals God's creative role as the identifying sign of His primal employment within our contemporary

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 12, 2022 --- Issue No. 58
Special Edition

environments. He is described as being constantly on duty with His watchful eye over all our affairs. So interested is God in the most minute of details of our human existence that we are told the very hairs of our heads are numbered (Matthew 10:30). His power in matters of detail is matched by another principle of uniqueness. The Scriptures disclose that God is not simply “a creator” but that He is the **“Only Creator”** (Isaiah 45:7). There is no other Family of beings within the divine hierarchy that can be in the same spiritual league of authority as the singular **Creator** Himself.

The Family of the Lord Elohim (the God of Israel) is the only source for the origin of the cosmos. This Family is represented by the “Father God” of the Old and the New Testaments who has as His agent His Firstborn Son, Christ Jesus. The Son does the executive job of **creating** (Colossians 1:15–21). But the Father is supreme. Within the personal attributes of the Father reside an extensive (and exclusive) innate wisdom to bring into existence the original dynamical laws and rules that comprise the pristine elements of His **creative** understanding and intuitiveness. This means that only the Father has the basic foundational building blocks of inherent and original **creativity**.

Those dynamic factors can be transferred. The Father dispensed to Christ Jesus those authoritative attributes that make it possible for Christ (under the watchful eyes of the Father) to bring into a **creative** reality all things in the universe. In a word, God is the only **Creator** and the only sustainer of the **creation**, but He provides that same consummate power to the person of Christ Jesus (Colossians 1:15–21). Those extensive powers are one day to be shared with each of us. We humans are **created** to be like Christ, and we are now **“in Christ.”** We are *now* God’s divine scions.

There is another factor in God’s power to **create**. God possesses something even greater than the intuitive power to produce physical matter. There are also spiritual attributes. God equally exercises the power to **create** non-physical forces that can sustain or even counter (and control) the material forces that God has **created** in the universe. It is a great mystery, but the **creation** of these spiritual “non-physical-forces” such as **“love, hope, faith”** (and the other virtuous attributes as manifested through the fruit of the Holy Spirit) are also within the realm of God’s **creative** abilities. These non-material elements are psychological in nature, and they are prompted by the actions of the Holy Spirit. They are as significant in the **creative** processes of God as is the making of the physical “forces” (powers) that God innately utilized at the initial **creation**. All these are resident with God.

The Scriptures show that God possesses in His character the fullness of those essential spiritual factors that are “non-physical forces.” These embrace the emotional and intellectual elements that are shown to be aspects of God’s own Holy Spirit. This means that the principle of “love” (and the other emotional and psychological factors associated with the Holy Spirit) is also inherent within the personality of God. He **creates** them alongside His triumphant and invincible acts that are manifested in His physical **creation**.

So, in summation, it is both within the physical and the spiritual realms that God illustrates His **creative** genius. The spiritual attributes are even greater in scope. And though we humans are now limited in expressing our physical **creative** powers (which are merely a reflection of God’s own powers), we can participate with God more abundantly on the spiritual side of creation. This is through our exercise of the fruit of the Holy Spirit that God gives us (Galatians 5:22–26). Remember, all the virtues of the Holy Spirit are gifts (given by grace) to us who are the Children of God (Ephesians 2:8–10).

The Actual Creator of the Universe

Let us review some basic facts. The real Creator of all things in the cosmos is Christ Jesus who did his **creating** at the behest of the Father (Colossians 1:15–21). Along with this fact, the Holy Scriptures identify the Family of God [Elohim] as that single **creative source** within the **creation** itself whether it relates to physical and/or to spiritual matters. But the divine Family [God] is even more than being the Family to which Christ belongs. That Family is shown to be the only **creative sustainer** of what has been **created** in the past, or what is being **created** now or what **will be created** in the future.

Indeed, it even goes beyond that. The Scriptures tell us that God is still in the act of **creating** — both in physical matters and also in the development of the non-physical elements. After all, God even **created YOU**, and you have both physical and spiritual attributes. The fact is, God is in the constant act — in a present-time scenario — of **creating** things on earth and in the heavens. There is no such thing as an endangered species to God. If a species is thoroughly eliminated from any environment, God can simply (and quickly) restore it to abundance if He sees fit. Indeed, many thousands (even

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 12, 2022 --- Issue No. 58
Special Edition

billions) of living species of the past have died out and are no longer a part of our environments (and God has ordained it).

We witness death all around us, but we also see births and other kinds of plant and animal regeneration. God even allows all of us humans to die (Hebrews 9:27) and the physical elements do get old as a garment (Hebrews 8:13), but God **can** and **will re-create YOU anew** in the resurrection at the Second Advent. He will restore the heavens and the earth when the *new* heavens and earth are brought to pass. The fact is, God is a Creator who is continually (and persistently) **creating**. None of us should ever make the mistake of thinking that God was once the **Creator** who brought everything into existence (in the remote past) and has now retreated into a quiet and non-productive period. In no way does God sit back on His throne and watch His **creation** simply “run down” without any further personal involvement of His **creative** powers to sustain the earth or our human existence. This is not the case. Indeed, God is **creating** things *right now*. God has no “endangered species” around Him. Let us see.

There Were Two Main Periods of Creation Within the Earth’s Environment in the Past

The first period of God’s creation was mentioned in Genesis chapter 1 (and elaborated on in Genesis chapter 2 with the more detailed creation of Adam and the animals associated with our first parent). But there was another period of creation, which the Bible plainly reveals, but it has been hidden from the eyes of most people. That further activity followed the Flood of Noah. Most people have not recognized that there was another phase of creation at the time when Noah was letting out of the Ark the few animals he saved in the Ark. Let us look at this “second creation” because it is important in our present context of research.

Most people have a misconception of the account of Noah and the animals he took into the Ark. Hollywood gives the usual version. It shows Noah gathering together many of our types of animals that we have in our modern world and ushering them into the Ark. This is not the way it was done. The Bible says Noah took into the Ark a pair of animals (or seven pairs of clean animals). These were animals that had been created in the period associated with Adam and Eve coming on the scene. These creatures were located in the area where the Ark was built. We will see, however, that this is **NOT** how all our *modern* animals originated.

There is a “second account” of creation in the Bible that was written by King David. This other narrative tells us of another vast creation (that is, it shows a secondary creation of animals after the Flood of Noah that finally brought into existence the many types of animals, insects, and other living creatures that we know today). It was *this LATER* creation, and NOT the earlier one at the time of Adam, that brought the majority of our modern animals into existence. This “second creation” is recorded in the context of Psalm 103 and all the way to the end of Psalm 106. In Psalm 104 we specifically read of this “second creation.”

Let us be reasonable. The Ark was large but not large enough to hold specimens of all the vast numbers of animal types that we see on earth today. Why, biologists tell us that two to three thousand *new* species of insects and other small creatures are being discovered every year and given new scientific names in the region of the Amazon basin alone. But that is only a drop in the bucket of the unknown species that are in the tropical rain forests. **“There are still probably millions of insect species, as well as many plant species, that have not been described scientifically”** (Article “Rain Forest,” *Encarta Encyclopedia*, CD edition). ² Yes, *millions* of insect types have not yet been discovered by our modern biologists. Those unknown *millions* inhabit the equatorial bio-systems. It is a fact beyond dispute by any intelligent person that Noah could not have selected all pairs of animals or insects from all areas of the earth (and obtained other small animals that are local to specialized regions of earth).

The Ark was not large enough to contain such magnitudes of living creatures. Take for example polar bears. Noah did not live in the Arctic region where polar bears and other arctic animals live. Noah also was not from Antarctica where there are special penguins or other creatures that live exclusively in that cold and inhospitable region. Noah also did not journey to the Galapagos Islands to bring into the Ark the exotic types of animals that have had a singular existence in that location. Indeed, Noah was in the Ararat region of eastern Asia Minor (in modern Turkey), and there is not the slightest reason for believing that polar bears, etc. left their Arctic abode (or the other animals unique to special areas of the world) to trek to where the Ark was located.

The reasonable notion, on the other hand, is the belief that Noah only took into the Ark some of the animals that were

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 12, 2022 --- Issue No. 58
Special Edition

found in his own location (which did not include polar bears, etc.). All the other animals on earth (*wherever* and *whatever* they were) died off in the great inundation that came with the Flood. The earth was left empty of animal life. If there were polar bears in the “first creation” (and there may have been), they were simply re-created at the time of the “second creation” after the Flood. That goes for many other animals and plants.

But that was not the end of the story. God saw the need for a “second creation” of a multitude of animals, birds, insects, etc. That is what the “second creation” account recorded in the Book of Psalms is all about. Let us now look at that “second creation” in detail. We will see that God is both a **Creator** on a massive scale at certain ordained periods, but He also can (and does) **create** spontaneously things on a limited scale and even on an individual basis if the need arises.

The First and Second General Creations on Earth

These four psalms (Psalms 103 through 106) cover the single narrative that mentions a “first creation” followed by a “second creation.” These Psalms are to be read as a single unit. Note what they state:

Psalm 103:1–18	A general introduction
Psalm 103:19–22	David begins to describe God’s use of the angelic host to help Him at the “first creation” mentioned in the Book of Genesis.
Psalm 104:1–4	Starts with the creation of the heavens with the aid of angels.
Psalm 104:5–9	Then the earth was created with its oceans and finally its landmasses.
Psalm 104:10–19	Then fresh water, grasses and other vegetation were created along with birds and cattle and also mankind.
Psalm 104:19–28	The sun and the moon were shown to provide a calendar for man. The world was then made harmonious for all life forms.
Psalm 104:29	But then a sudden destruction takes place when God turns his face away from the living <i>and they all die</i> , and <i>all living things</i> return to dust. This was the time of the Great Flood of Noah.
Psalm 104:30–32	“You send forth your spirit, they are created: and you renew the face of the earth. The glory of the Lord shall endure forever [<i>olam</i>, for the age]: the Lord shall rejoice in his works. He looks on the earth, and it trembles: he touches the hills, and they smoke.” But afterward, God again sent forth His spirit of life. The result was the renewal of “the face of the earth” verse 30. This was a time when things were again created over the whole earth (verse 30). This was accompanied by great seismic disturbances (verse 32).
Psalm 104:30	Note this verse. It specifically records the account of the “second creation.”

The narrative context of Psalm 104:30 was about a new time of massive creation. In this creating of animals after the Flood of Noah, God no doubt designed and brought into existence many of our *modern* forms of animals and insects. They were made for the renewed type of earth, which came into existence after the time of Noah (the time of the “second

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 12, 2022 --- Issue No. 58
Special Edition

creation”). God took away many of the older animal and plant types that existed before the time of Noah. He created new specimens that would be an aid to mankind in their lives and development.

Psalm 105	David continues with his account of world history in Psalm 105 by mentioning Abraham, Jacob.
Psalm 106:1–22	Continuing through Psalm 106 to the end, David discusses the history of Israel up to the period when David came on the scene.

In these four Psalms (that are linked together as a single piece of historical literature), David brought into review all the main historical events associated with Israel up to the time that Israel became a united nation just before the time of David. These four Psalms give us a different viewpoint on the matter of pre-Davidic history.

The information in these Psalms represents the “second account” of God’s creation of things on earth. What the narrative reveals is the fact that God can create animals or insects any time he pleases, *and He did so again on a grand scale* just after the Flood. We discover that after the Flood of Noah, God devised many of the life forms of animals, plants and even microbes that we are familiar with today. What is sad is the fact that hardly anyone today even realizes what God did on a grand scale in the wake of the Flood of Noah. ³

Hollywood, because of their lack of attention to these matters of the Scriptures, knows next to nothing of this “second account” of creation mentioned in these four Psalms. Indeed, why single out Hollywood? Most preachers, priests and theologians know nothing of any such “creation,” neither do they seem to be concerned about it. This is a fact. I have often been criticized for chastising many of my fellow ministers in matters like this. But I am simply telling the truth. This teaching is in the Bible, but the vast majority of professional theologians and religious leaders are completely silent about it. However, you do hear it from me.

God Continues to Create Every Day of the Year (and Throughout Time)

What most people do not realize is the fact that God not only originally created the heavens and the earth in the “first creation,” He also did it *again* in the whole earth at the time of the “second creation” after the Flood of Noah. But that does not end the matter. God is not limited to time periods. He is actually *creating things at this very moment* in massive proportions (and will continue to do so as long as it suits His purpose of sustaining the earth and the universe to have them function in a harmonious fashion).

There is a cardinal section of the Holy Scriptures that God presented to early Israel to prove His power as a “**continual Creator**.” Look at Isaiah 48:3, 5–7 in the King James’ Version.

“I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I showed them; I did them suddenly, and they came to pass. ...

⁵ I have even from the beginning declared it to you; before it came to pass I showed it you: ...

⁶ You have heard, see all this; and will not you declare it? I have showed you new things from this time, even hidden things, and you did not know them. ⁷ They are created now, and not from the beginning; even before the day when you heard them not; lest you should say, Behold, I knew them.”

- ***Isaiah 48:3, 5–7***

Let me unpack this passage. The words to the right are my explanatory words illuminating the biblical context. You can either read the biblical text in the left column straight down, or read the biblical text, then go across to the commentary before going down to the next line. I recommend reading the text both ways.

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
 March 12, 2022 --- Issue No. 58
Special Edition

<u>Isaiah 48:3, 5–7</u>	<u>Commentary</u>
<p>³“I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I showed them; I did them suddenly, and they came to pass. ...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - that God created - that He created in the Book of Genesis - God’s commands to create - the created things became evident - the creation was instantaneous - immediately [skip to v. 5]
<p>⁵ I have even from the beginning declared it to you; before it came to pass I showed it you: ...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the “first creation” - God showed it to Israel in Genesis 1, a blueprint of creation - written <u>before</u> the creation came to pass
<p>⁶ You have heard, see all this; and will not you declare it? I have shown you <u>NEW THINGS from this time, even hidden things, and you did not know them.</u> ⁷<u>They are CREATED NOW, and NOT from the beginning;</u> even before the day when you heard them not; lest you should say, Behold, I knew them.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Israel heard what God then said - see the former creation - that God created it, But ... - that is, in this present time new things were being created - Israel had never heard of these new creations before - God revealed things were being “CREATED NOW,” and NOT simply back at the original creation - in previous days they had not heard of these <i>newly</i> created things - that Israel was specially privy to these new creations of God

The above section of Scripture shows that God is a “continual **Creator**” of *new* things that had not been in existence before. This shows that God can devise *new* animals and plants that have never existed in previous generations. And He can evoke those powers of **creation** any time He pleases. God did so in the 8th century B.C.E. What were some of the **newly created things** that God brought into created state in the presence of the Israelites in the time of the prophet Isaiah? One such thing was the mysterious “**fiery flying serpent.**” The Bible informs us that such a species was created by God in the last year of King Ahaz (Isaiah 14:28,29). This flying snake propagated in the deserts in the south of Palestine (Isaiah 30:6). Herodotus three centuries later mentioned “fiery serpents” in Arabia of which he saw evidence (Book II, 75). ⁴ They soon became extinct and never described again. God must have allowed mankind to exterminate them because of their lethal powers to attack even from the air. God in His mercy has seen fit that we no longer have to endure such “flying serpents” — nor the sabre-tooth tiger or the two animals that the patriarch Job observed in the Jordan River area, behemoth (Job 40:15–24) and leviathan (Job 41:1–34).

But God gave Israel other “**newly created things**” in the time of Isaiah. There were prophetic examples that could be witnessed. These were things not seen before. One such example was the **creative** act that God gave to King Ahaz of Judah. Note:

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
 March 12, 2022 --- Issue No. 58
Special Edition

<u>Isaiah 7:10–12, 14–16</u>	<u>Commentary</u>
¹⁰ “The Lord spoke unto Ahaz, saying, ¹¹ ‘Ask you a sign of the Lord your God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above.’ ¹² But Ahaz said, ‘I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord.’ ...	– a sign to be created in the depths of the ocean – or as a sign to be created among the stars of heaven
¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. ¹⁵ Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good the land that you abhor shall be forsaken of both her kings.”	– of significance – a particular virgin woman known to Ahaz and Isaiah – that is, before <i>this</i> child would reach the age of responsibility, about age two

This was a child **created** by a virgin birth. It was never done before.

There had never been such a **creative act** in previous history. But Ahaz and the prophet Isaiah were able to witness this **creative act**. This was a *dual* act of prophecy — one was of *type* and the other was the *antitype*. It was a prophecy of how Christ would come on the scene some eight centuries later, but the latter arrival of Christ was based on a *former event* that happened in the time of Isaiah. This was when another virgin who lived at that earlier time also conceived and brought forth a son. This *first* child was an archetypal child who was born of a virgin that fulfilled the *first* part of the prophecy back in the time of Ahaz. King Ahaz and his advisors (and the prophet Isaiah) knew *that* particular virgin.

This is one of the *dual* prophecies of the Holy Scriptures that show God as a **Creator** in a duplicate or repetitive sense. It also shows that God can **create** in any generation of time as He chooses. This *duality* principle in showing *archetypal* personalities in prophecy is used many times in Scripture. Note that there was the First Adam and then the Second Adam (Christ). There was the First David and the Second David (Christ). There was the First Elijah and Second Elijah (John the Baptist), etc.

There is even a greater time of **creation** coming on earth in the future. That is the time when all of us are resurrected from the dead. This is also a great and marvelous **creation**. As God divinely **re-created** Christ at His own resurrection, so He will in a *dual* sense **create us anew** in our own resurrections (and **our resurrections** will be a **creation** of which Christ’s resurrection was *typical*).

God as the **Creator** can perform lots of various **creations**, and He is doing so even now in this modern period. The **creations** that He originates are eventually for the benefit of mankind. For example, it is prophesied that God will change the nature of the wild beasts so that they will be tame around humans (Isaiah 11:6–9). God will also transform the climate patterns of this earth that the deserts we know now will become lush gardens with vegetation similar to that we have in the Pacific Northwest (Isaiah 41:18–19). God says these changes in the weather and the vegetation systems on earth will emerge specifically because **“the Lord has done this, and the Holy One of Israel created it”** (Isaiah

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 12, 2022 --- Issue No. 58
Special Edition

41:20). Yes, God has **created** beneficial things for mankind in the past, and He will in the future.

Conversely, God also has created *bad things* (called *evil things*) that have afflicted and chastised mankind throughout all periods of history. God is in full control of all natural forces within our environments. Note the universal powers of God and how He puts them into a continual action when He sees fit.

<u>Isaiah 45:7</u>	<u>Commentary</u>
<p>That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and <u>create</u> darkness: I make peace, and <u>create</u> evil:</p> <p>I the Lord do all these things”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - all mankind - that is, in all eastern parts of the globe - all in the western parts of the globe - not only the sun, but all the “light” in the universe - tranquility in the environment - that is, God also creates <i>bad things</i>, as the Hebrew word denotes in other biblical passages: that is, chaos, misery, woes, calamity, hurt, the wicked

Equally, and in another context: “I [God] **have created the waster to destroy” (Isaiah 54:16).**

God is presently active in the creation of *evil things* in the earth. All earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, droughts, and various natural calamities to which mankind has been subjected from the dawn of history were looked on by early Bible believers (even as we do in legal parlance today) as “acts of God.” In the Bible, these are called *evil things* that God creates, and under no circumstances can God be called into account for His creation of *such evils*. He is at liberty to create them as often as He pleases.

God uses these *evil things* like an obstacle course to provide mankind with experiences in dealing with the *good* and the *evil* of nature. God creates them to give mankind practice in coping with such things. The “*evils*” can even work for good in the end. We are all aware how God has caused lightning to ignite grasses that can cause vast forest fires (which He uses to “dress and keep” the forests that He has designed in order to present them later in a healthy and pristine condition after the cleansing process has ended). Even forest rangers are now realizing the worth of controlled forest fires (which some so-called environmentalists today erroneously think are disastrous beyond compare). But such things can benefit forests.

The Duties of God and Those of Mankind

When God created mankind and placed him within the environment of the other creations that God designed, He commanded mankind to do seven things. Of those seven, it is the middle command (number four) which should concern us who live within our present environment. Look at those seven commands given by God that He expects each of us individually (and all of us collectively) to accomplish. The commands are in Genesis 1:28.

“And God blessed them [Adam and Eve, who represented mankind], and God said unto them,

- [Command One:] **Be fruitful,**
- [Command Two:] **and multiply,**
- [Command Three:] **and replenish the earth [fill the earth to the brim],**

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 12, 2022 --- Issue No. 58
Special Edition

- [Command Four:] **and subdue it** [mankind should **subjugate all the earth** and its resources to themselves, and they should make **the earth** to be a **servant** of mankind],
- [Command Five:] **and have dominion** [rule] **over the fish of the sea** [the *lower*, oceanic part of earth],
- [Command Six:] **and** [rule] **over the fowl of the air** [the *higher*, atmospheric part of earth],
- [Command Seven:] **and** [rule] **over every living thing that moveth upon the earth** [that is, have dominion over things on the *lithosphere* — all things on *the surface* part of the earth].”

These commands just mentioned are for man’s education and welfare. The earth is for our training. God told mankind to subjugate the earth and to bring it under the complete domination of mankind. To accomplish this subjugation, man can act like God. God used the above commands in the Scriptures in a context of force. The words mean “to strive and to fight hard” until mankind has conquered every aspect of power that the earth and its atmosphere has within their jurisdiction. In other words, it is NOT mankind that should let the earth rule over mankind, but that mankind should rule over every aspect of the earth! Such commands as these were given by God in a reasonable and responsible manner.

Just as mankind was expected to put a rope around a bull (or a cow) and subjugate the animal to the full use of humanity, so should mankind “subdue the earth itself” and cause the earth to become the full servant of mankind. And while man was told to look after animals in a benign and kindly manner, so God expected mankind to treat his greater home that we call the earth in the same fashion.

We are aware that Adam and Eve were given the Garden of Eden to be their abode. The Garden was a resplendent Garden of sumptuousness that was created by God for the benefit of our first parents. They were still commanded by God “**to dress and to keep it**” (Genesis 2:15). Yes, even the beautiful Garden of Eden could be taken over by weeds and vermin unless mankind would use his ingenuity to “**dress and keep it.**” And so, it is with the earth and our earthly environment. We should master it, but we should also learn to treat it as ourselves — like we would our loved ones in our own household. We should clean it on schedule, prune it, repair it, and then we can (as a result of our care) rejoice in it.

The way to do this is for mankind to act like God. Remember that God is a Creator and a Ruler, and we are His children who should act in the same manner that He does. We are commanded by God to rule the earth. God does NOT expect the earth to rule mankind (as many misguided so-called “environmentalists” would have us believe is proper). Again, God commands us to master and have sovereignty over the earth.

Of course, we should manage the earth by “taking care of it” and by “nurturing it” and by giving it tender care and protection. We should learn the laws of nature (that is, those that God has placed in action) and co-operate with them in the best possible way in order to bring balance and harmony within our terrestrial environment. But we can take things from the earth. We should not hesitate to use any and all of the resources that the earth contains and that it produces. In fact, God would expect us even to exterminate certain animals or plants in certain areas where they are ill suited for human habitation. For example, the Los Angeles area is naturally a desert environment. Two hundred years ago the whole region was infested with rattlesnakes. But now, it is an urban area with children in its parks and streets. As a result, the venomous creatures are not allowed in the populated areas any longer.

In time, habitats change. So, we humans can do without modern dinosaurs. Indeed, dinosaurs have lost their reason for existence in a human environment. Also, the “fiery flying serpent” was created and in a few generations, it was exterminated, and God approved. Yet, it would be to our hurt (and it would show folly) if we exterminated all such creatures from the earth even in their own natural habitats. Such animals do proper balancing in its habitats by keeping down rodents, etc.

Yes, man should properly care for our environments. We should be habitually conservative and have utmost care in regard to the environment that God has given us. We should respect the earth and preserve and protect our habitats (not only for the enjoyment and benefit of ourselves, but also for all those generations that will come after us). Even *evil types* of animals are not bad if they give balance to nature. But the earth or the powers resident in its animal and plant

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 12, 2022 --- Issue No. 58
Special Edition

creations should not intimidate us. The earth is our inheritance. We should control and keep it in balance. It is even our **servant**, but our use of it must be wise so that even the earth will say “thank you” to us, its caretakers. That is how God looks on the matter of the environment and our roles within it.

There remains, however, a caveat that should temper and moderate us in our quest to dominate. It is a warning that all of us should recognize. Regrettably, mankind is still limited in our knowledge of how to care for the earth in all proper ways. We do not yet know it all. We need God to help us in our ignorance. In the overall sense, we need God to supervise all the natural conditions on earth. We have the assurance that God will not abandon us in His care for the earth, and for us. Certainly, God never surrenders His watchful responsibility for our welfare.

God Is in Complete Control of the Environment

God controls the entire environment, and He does so admirably well. It is time that we humans begin to recognize the fact that God is very much in control of all matters concerning conditions on this earth. True, He commands us to dress and keep it, but God has not designed the earth for it to dominate us. We are its master. But all of us who love the teachings of the Holy Scriptures need to recognize God’s overall control of our earthly environment. When we do, we will all be a lot better off. The truth is the environment of this earth that we witness around us is presently in the hands of God. He is sustaining it and He will replenish it in precisely the manner that He has determined as shown in His Holy Scriptures. **“Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world”** (Acts 15:18). Speaking about Christ Jesus:

“Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, ... all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist [“all things hold together,” RSV].”

- ***Colossians 1:15–17, KJV***

Yet God expects us to do our part and to preserve the territory that God dispatches to us on which we live.

It is up to you and me to learn just what His will is in regard to our present environment and try to abide by it. But when we discover God’s role in our environmental matters, mankind should be able to breathe a lot easier and realize that we humans on earth (and the earth itself) are in the hands of a benign **Creator** who has our best interests at heart. He has not withdrawn His care for us. His watchful eye is keeping our environment in the best possible condition, even with the present global warming that the earth is experiencing.

In fact, this warming trend for the earth has been in evidence in a slowly creeping manner for the past 500 years. During that time (since the discovery of the New World by Columbus), the world has been going through a “quiet phase” in its existence, while it has been getting warmer. This warming has been a great benefit to mankind. It has produced a period of relative “quietness” that has been secured by God in order to develop the modern world that we now witness. It is God’s doing, not man’s. Our burning of fossil fuels is not the real cause.

It is really God who is at work in this regard. For this past 500 years the earth has been relatively peaceful in nature without any of its previous traumas of earlier periods being repeated. True, we have had natural catastrophes, but they have been mild in comparison to those of former times. Indeed, it is prophesied that the time is soon coming when the earth again will commence (abruptly and out of the blue) its belching forth of earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes, extreme weather conditions, the like of which modern mankind has never seen. This is prophesied in the Book of Revelation. It is also shown (as an introductory judgment in the “Damascus Phase” prophecy of Zechariah 9 to 14) as a massive tsunami to hit the eastern Mediterranean. ⁵ Though the start of the fulfillment of that prophecy is **not far** in the future, it is still a few years away. However, let us keep our eyes open to God’s prophesied signs because none of us — including Ernest L. Martin — knows the exact times for these End-Time events. Jesus said chronology would be the least understood thing (Matthew 24:36).

The Millennium before the Discovery of the New World Was Traumatic for Everyone

The earth has not always been relatively warm, as it now is. A cool phase in climate began to set in near the end of the Roman Empire. Then, in the 6th, 7th, and 8th centuries of our era, we have records of tremendous natural disasters

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 12, 2022 --- Issue No. 58
Special Edition

happening around the eastern Mediterranean that make our modern hurricanes and floods (along with our earthquakes) look like child's play in comparison. Indeed, at the time when Justinian was emperor (527 to 565 C.E.), and in the midst of great prosperity, all of a sudden great disasters struck.

Historical scientists have determined that in the early reign of Justinian (536 C.E.) volcanic activity was so intense and destructive in the area of Krakatoa that great changes in the weather began to take place throughout the earth. This and other catastrophic events resulted in crop failures, then plagues and famines with consequent wars of such proportions that percentage wise would make World Wars I and II as being in the minor leagues.

The Byzantine historian Procopius who lived at the time showed the loss of human life to have been so vast that he used an outrageous figure to describe it (which means that probably 75% to perhaps 90% of humans perished). These disasters helped to bring on what historians call the “Dark Ages” that lasted almost 500 years. It was no accident that a bunch of rag-tag Arab Bedouins from the Arabian desert could spread their mostly untrained armies into a conquest that led them to central France and to the borders of India in a short hundred years. There was simply no population of people remaining in the former Byzantine or Persian Empires (after the destructions) to stop the spread of the Muslims. In many cases, the desert Arabs conquered defenseless cities that had very small populations to defend them.

Look briefly at some of those disasters. As an example of whole cities being destroyed, look at Rome. In 546 C.E. at the beginning of the year the records show that Rome had over 500,000 people in it, but because of wars and plagues by the end of that year the city was a ghost town with only 500 people left. There were many disasters during that time.

In 726 C.E. a string of ruinous destructions began. In that year, the island of Santorini in the Aegean Sea exploded with an intensity that people thought the end of the world was happening. Tsunamis developed in the Mediterranean Sea and caused widespread ruin. So destructive was this natural phenomenon that the Byzantine emperors (who were being chided by the Muslim rulers for their idolatry) began what is known as the Iconoclastic Controversy. ⁶ For about 70 years many eastern Christians gave up their idolatrous ways and began crying out to God to forgive them for their sins. That was not the end of it. In the *Chronicle of Theophanes* (the author died in 818 C.E.), he wrote of events in 749 C.E. He said:

“In this year there was an earthquake and a great and fearful collapse [of ground] in Syria. Some cities were razed, others partially, and others shifted – walls, buildings, and all – from the mountains to the plains below, moving as much as six miles or even a bit more [emphasis mine]. Eyewitness observers say the land of Mesopotamia was torn asunder to a depth of fully two miles [a new canyon was formed that was two miles deep], and from this depth new earth, very white and sandy, was brought up.”

- ***The Chronicles of Theophanes*** ⁷

This was a most devastating earthquake that changed the very face of areas east of Anatolia. ⁸ This great seismic disaster occurred a little over 1250 years ago — well within our period of recorded history. Just imagine what this one event did. Some cities in Syria were dislodged and then displaced from their former sites six miles and more. The new canyon that formed in northern Mesopotamia was half again deeper (not wider, but deeper) than the Grand Canyon in Arizona.

Then in the year 763 C.E., Theophanes as an eyewitness, said a bitter cold came from the north starting in October the like of which had never been seen in history. The Black Sea (which is, of course, salty ocean water) began to freeze and finally froze to a depth of 45 feet for a hundred miles south of its north shore. Then in February, fierce winds blew the ice in the form of icebergs toward Constantinople. Those icebergs were so large and thick that they jammed the Bosphorus (the waterway between Europe and Asia). The waterway became so clogged that Theophanes said he and his companions could walk on the icebergs to the Asian shore of the Bosphorus. Friends, those icebergs that came in great profusion occurred to a region of earth that was located at the same latitude as about 100 miles north of San Francisco, California! The people of southern Europe were utterly stunned at those unheard-of icebergs. That was quite a winter! All of the above information on these disasters is provided by eyewitness reports recorded by Theophanes (who was a Christian monk born of high-ranking and wealthy parents and known for his outstanding devotion to his faith).

While the 12th century and the early part of the 13th century were warmer periods (and the earth benefited from the climate

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 12, 2022 --- Issue No. 58
Special Edition

change), the period from the middle 13th and much of the 14th centuries in Europe and in North America was a disaster. Then occurred a “cold phase” of such a fury that great sociological disturbances began to afflict those who lived at the time. It was like a “little ice age” pounced on the area of Europe (and it had effect in other areas of the world). For some years during this period, it was rainy all year long without any summertime (with droughts in America). Besides that, there was the plague of the “Black Death” that devastated the world. The world even began to return to a type of barbarism in some areas.

But then, with the discovery of the New World in 1492, a “warming trend” again set in. The world started into a period of warming which produced a relative tranquility. This is historically shown in many ways. Look at the Dead Sea in Palestine. Before the time of Columbus pictures of it that were drawn by eyewitnesses show it normally having smoke arising from its center (as though it was a **“Lake of Fire”** — and the Dead Sea was indeed the **“Lake of Fire”** of the Holy Scriptures).⁹ But matters began to change. No one in the past 500 years has seen any smoke whatever coming from its bowels. The whole of the earth then went into a quieter phase as far as natural disasters were concerned. It is prophesied, however, that the Dead Sea (among other areas) will once again ignite and spew forth its sulfuric fumes and fiery outbursts for the entire world to witness. But for the past 500 years, the Dead Sea (and most other volatile areas of the earth) have been relatively quiet. True, we have our volcanic explosions, floods, droughts, and earthquakes (some of the earthquakes have been gigantic in our view), but none of our modern natural disasters can compare to some that are recorded in the earlier history of the earth.

This “warming phase” in climate these past five centuries has been good for the earth. The past 500 years have been the best this world has ever witnessed in environmental tranquility and in beneficent productiveness. God has been in the picture during this whole period to accomplish this benign phase. Actually, God is not through giving the earth even more blessings in the next few years before the End-Time holocaust hits us with its fury. You are living in the best of times that the world has ever experienced, and there are yet a few years left for more of those outstanding overall blessings. I have been mentioning these things for over twenty-five years, and I am as sure today of their happening as I was when God first allowed me to understand biblical teachings.

Indeed, we now have scientific evidence that our present warming trend has been beneficial. Keep your eyes on the publication of a new book titled: *The Skeptical Environmentalist*.¹⁰ The author (who at first in his research thought the warming phase was bad) will show the many benefits that have accrued to the earth and our environment over the past years that can be attributed to this warming trend. The book was summarized in an excellent report by *The Economist* magazine for August 2nd, 2001. It is written by the Danish scientist Bjorn Lomborg.¹¹ This is an excellent study, and a great book of research. And while no one would venture to state that every detail of the book is relevant, the bulk of it is so plainly evident as being true that I recommend it to those who think our environment is going to pot. It is not! What you will discover is the fact that our present environment is in remarkably good shape.

God is in full control of our present environment for mankind’s good and welfare. In my perspective, the moderate view that President Bush has adopted for pursuing the exploration of resources for mankind’s use is a valid one. All of our industrial activities, however, must be constantly monitored and mankind must show balance in his “subduing” of the earth.

It is simply prudent and right that we care for our environment in a religious and common-sense manner. It is always incumbent on mankind to **“dress and keep”** our habitat from the excesses to which we humans are prone to subject the earth from time to time. But in spite of the many faults that we muster (or have done), our earth is really in quite good shape. It should remain that way for the foreseeable future (unless God soon steps in to alter the present tranquility). God has put the earth here for us to inhabit — to “subdue” and to “master.” Though we should always be judicious (and be benign in our treatment of the earth), we should never be afraid to tap its resources with the scientific expertise that God has given us at this time.

True enough, no human is perfect in his ways. If we humans “mess up” (so to speak), we have God who still watches over the earth with great precision to come to our rescue. He can (and does) create new species of things (if He has to) to keep this beautiful earth of ours in its microcosmic areas in its good shape. God will not let us down. If we abide by His reasonable requirements for the preservation of the earth, God will respond with His overall providential care. After all, we are His children.

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 12, 2022 --- Issue No. 58
Special Edition

How God Shows His Present Creative Abilities and Powers

If you worry about the condition of our world environment, and whether or not it is on the verge of being ruined and destroyed by our own hands, you are wrong. You should read the marvelous promise that has been given to us by our heavenly Father — the **Creator** of all things. I have recorded below a section of Scripture from Isaiah about God’s provident care of our earth. It is a promise from God to mankind.

“For thus says the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he has established it, he created it not in vain [“not to be in chaos”], he formed it to be inhabited [“to be lived in” by mankind]: I am the Lord; and there is none else. I have not spoken in secret in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek you me in vain: I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right [that are true]

....

Who has declared this from ancient time? Who has told it from that [ancient] time? Have not I the Lord? And there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Savior; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be you saved [that is, be protected and secure], all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.”

- **Isaiah 45:18–19, 21–22**

The trouble with mankind is its normal reluctance to believe what God has revealed in His Holy Scriptures (I mean the teachings of the Old and New Testaments). The world finds it difficult to accept that God is actively interested in the creation. But God made the creation for mankind to use and enjoy. God dearly loves humanity.

Yes, as God states in His divine word: **“I created the earth not to be in chaos, but to be inhabited by mankind”** (Isaiah 45:18 *New Jerusalem Bible*). God will see to it that we are in His good and protective hands. True, there are the End-Time judgments that will be severe and traumatic, but for these last few years before the times of judgment set in, God shows that this present generation in which we are now living is meant to be of benefit to all in the world. Having this present beneficence is a prelude to the soon coming administration of Christ Jesus on this earth during the Millennium, which will be even better.

The Prophesied Judgments to Come

These glorious times we are now experiencing will come to an abrupt end just before the Second Advent of Christ. Then is when the dire predictions of the Book of Revelation (and those found in various places of the Old Testament and in the Olivet Prophecy of Christ) commence on the earth. They will be traumatic indeed. But in the main, our present good times we have been encountering will continue, even up to and through the period of the Antichrist.

That’s right. Most people (and scholars and theologians) who have studied the Bible have long misjudged the time of the Antichrist. They normally think that the period of the Antichrist will be one of utter chaos and destruction on earth (with a rampant type of heathenism and idolatry with flagrant immorality prevailing in all society). Nothing could be further from the truth. Just the opposite will prevail. The prophet Daniel said the Antichrist’s time will be one of “great prosperity,” a time when **“craft will prosper in his hand”** (Daniel 8:24–25). The general prosperity that we now witness will continue (with some ups and downs) until the period when the Antichrist will rule on earth.

The truth is, God has **created** a divine plan of action that He will fulfill in detail throughout all periods of history (Acts 15:18). It involves mankind experiencing “good” and “evil” within every generation. In the **creative plan of God**, it is determined by God that the period of the Antichrist will be so good and prosperous to all on earth that the world will have to be totally deceived to get them to believe the LIE of the Antichrist. That *lie* is to accept the Antichrist as being (mistakenly) Jesus Christ returned to earth. The world will be worshipping Satan the Devil while thinking he is Jesus Christ. Remember that the future businesspeople of the earth will mourn when the time of the Antichrist ends. **“The merchants of the earth have waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies”** (Revelation 18:3). The period of the Antichrist will actually be like that of Christ during the Millennium. That is why the word “Antichrist” means “Anti” [stand in place of] “Christ” [he will mimic Christ]. This is what the apostle Paul stated in 2 Thessalonians 2:11. **“God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie** [Greek: **“the lie”** — that is, **“the lie”** that the Antichrist claims to be the true Christ, when he is actually an instrument of Satan and fully inspired by the Evil One].”

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 12, 2022 --- Issue No. 58
Special Edition

Throughout the Old Testament God uses a pre-ordained method of keeping the truth from people at certain times by “blinding their eyes” so they cannot understand the truth (see Isaiah 29:9–24; Romans 9:9–23; Romans 11:25–36). God uses such methods often, as many times as He pleases (see Isaiah 30:28; Jeremiah 4:10 and especially read all of Micaiah’s prophecy recorded in 1 Kings 22:1–23). These scriptures show that God is in charge of all things on earth (even things that the Bible calls *evil*). It is God who has **created** a plan to be fulfilled on earth, and it will be accomplished precisely as God has determined. In the fulfillment of that plan, God sometimes keeps the truth of His ways from the knowledge of man. He particularly does it in regard to the chronological time periods in which He has designed to accomplish His pre-ordained plan for mankind.

Sometimes the truth is not given by God to mankind at crucial times when God wants to teach mankind a lesson to show the result of man’s ways. God does not always let the truth prevail on this earth, but at times He uses what is called “delusion” by perpetuating “the lie” (by bringing blindness to the eyes of mankind). God uses that “blindness” to shield from mankind the truths that God eventually wants mankind to know.

All of these things which God controls reveal that God is the true and only **creator**. He is the boss. Remember that Isaiah 45:7 shows that God is the **creator** of both *good* and *evil*. In a word, God is in charge of all things, no matter what they are on earth or in the universe. What will prevail, however, is the wisdom of God that He shows throughout history. God will eventually bring about an environment of truth and nothing but the truth. God will one day bring this happy condition to pass.

Conclusion

In this generation, however, we are experiencing one of the best times in the history of the world for human happiness. Our present prosperity and benign existence is unique in the earth. This is because the past 500 years has been relatively quiet and tranquil. It will continue that way for a few years ahead of us. God allows this prosperity among other things, to allow us the opportunity of disseminating the teachings of the Gospel of Christ Jesus to the world. And we should be about our Father’s business in doing that very thing.

That is why God has called you (even from before the foundation of the earth — 2 Timothy 1:9), for you to know the truths of God at this time in order to bring the knowledge of God to the world. I hope that all of us will respond to our calling and that we will be about our Father’s business of getting the job done. God has **created** us, among other things, to accomplish this very task. We are His divine children (the very Sons and Daughters of God) appointed to do His will.

And, for us who are part of the New Testament congregation and to whom God has revealed the truth in order to understand the teachings of the mature doctrines of Christ (which are called in the Scripture “**the Mystery**”), God has a message for us in a very personal way. We read in Romans chapter 8 the comforting teaching of our apostle Paul (our brother in Christ). He said that God will bring His **creation** to a very successful conclusion. In order to do that, God has raised us up in this generation to know His truths and to benefit from them. To help us achieve His goals at this crucial period in history, God prompts the apostle Paul to comfort us with this universal truth:

“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

- **Romans 8:38–39**

¹ In this Internet Edition I will often highlight the words “**create**” or “**creation**” to be bold characters to emphasize this subject in the context of the research. *ELM*

² I have not been able to locate a website or the CD with this information. However, see the March 5, 2002 article “Team Races to Catalog Every Species on Earth” by Brian Handwerk of the *National Geographic News* that reports on the same issue:

“To date, taxonomists have identified less than two million distinct species, mostly mammals and birds.

The “New” Church of God Messenger
A Newsletter for the People of God
March 12, 2022 --- Issue No. 58
Special Edition

But it's estimated that the number of undiscovered species—primarily fish, fungi, insects, and microbes—ranges from ten million to more than one hundred million. Even at the low estimate, it's an enormous number.”

The article is at http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2002/03/0305_0305_allspecies.html. DWS

3 My book *101 Bible Secrets that Christians Do Not Know* first introduced the modern world to this “second creation” in my “Secret Number Three.” ELM See <http://www.askelm.com/secrets/sec003.htm>. DWS

4 The passage from Herodotus begins at 2.75.1 and continues through 2.75.2: <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0126&layout=&query=chapter=#292&loc=2.75.1>. An ibis is a stork-like wading bird.

“There is a place in Arabia not far from the town of Buto where I went to learn about the winged serpents. When I arrived there, I saw innumerable bones and backbones of serpents: many heaps of backbones, great and small and even smaller. This place, where the backbones lay scattered, is where a narrow mountain pass opens into a great plain, which adjoins the plain of Egypt. Winged serpents are said to fly from Arabia at the beginning of spring, making for Egypt; but the ibis birds encounter the invaders in this pass and kill them. The Arabians say that the ibis is greatly honored by the Egyptians for this service, and the Egyptians give the same reason for honoring these birds. Now this is the appearance of the ibis. It is all quite black, with the legs of a crane, and a beak sharply hooked, and is as big as a landrail. Such is the appearance of the ibis which fights with the serpents. Those that most associate with men (for there are two kinds of ibis) have the whole head and neck bare of feathers; their plumage is white, except the head and neck and wingtips and tail (these being quite black); the legs and beak of the bird are like those of the other ibis. The serpents are like water-snakes. Their wings are not feathered but very like the wings of a bat.

- **Histories, 2.75.1–2** DWS

5 See my article: “The Damascus Phase in Prophecy” for details that you can read on our Web Page on the Internet at <http://www.askelm.com/temple/t991101.htm>. ELM

6 Search the internet on www.Google.com or www.Yahoo.com under the term “iconoclastic controversy.” DWS

7 Theophanes was a Christian monk born of high-ranking and wealthy parents and known for his outstanding devotion to his faith. See *The Chronicles of Theophanes: An English Translation of anni mundi 6095–6304 (A.D. 602–813) with introduction and notes*, translation, and commentary by Harry Turtledove (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), pp. 115–116. DWS

8 This is the territory of eastern Turkey today. This same earthquake destroyed the large ancient city of Beth Shean, 17 miles south of the Sea of Galilee, on January 18, 749 C.E. See the photos of this archaeological site at <http://www.bibleplaces.com/bethshean.htm>. DWS

9 See Dr. Martin’s article on the subject of the Lake of Fire at “Appendix Five – Where Is the Lake of Fire” from his book *101 Bible Secrets* at <http://www.askelm.com/secrets/sec106.htm>. DWS

10 Cambridge University Press, 2001. Professor Lomborg is an economist and statistician. See a descriptive webpage for the book at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Skeptical_Environmentalist. DWS

11 That article is available online complete in the August 2, 2001 issue of *The Economist* at http://www.economist.com/science/displayStory.cfm?Story_ID=718860. DWS

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Iron Sharpening Iron

New American Standard Bible (Proverbs 27:17)
As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

In regard to: You Are King

Article by Nathaniel Burson
Comments by Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)

Genesis 1:28 *And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

God gave dominion equally to Adam and Eve. "And God blessed **them**, and God said unto **them**..."

1 Timothy 2:14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

Adam knew better and of his own free will decided on his own to sin. Eve was deceived. There is a difference between being deceived and doing something you know is wrong. Eve did not talk Adam into anything. The result whether by deception or on purpose resulted in sin.

Holy Days 2022

Passover – April 16, 2022 (Observed at Sunset the Evening Before)

Unleavened Bread – April 16-22, 2022

Pentecost – June 5, 2022

Trumpets - September 26, 2022

Atonement – October 5, 2022

Tabernacles – October 10-16, 2022

Last Great Day – October 17, 2022