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1 The Implications of the Immanence of God in Genesis 1:1-2 for  
2 Rectification of Environmental Crises in Owerri West Local  
3 Government Area

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7 **Abstract**

8 Several authors claim that Christians are responsible for the developing ecological problems  
9 because they have used the idea of being made ?in the image of God? (Gen. 1:26-27) as an  
10 excuse to justify exploiting the planet?s resources. Given the changes, Owerri-West is  
11 experiencing concerning seasons like rain, harmattan, and dry seasons, the issue of  
12 environmental crises is clear. In response to the environmental difficulties in Owerri-West, the  
13 article examines God?s presence, also known as the ?Immanence of God.? The data for the  
14 study was gathered through a literature review done through an analytical-critical discursive  
15 approach.

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17 **Index terms—**

18 **1 Introduction**

19 one of the most serious environmental problems our planet is currently facing is climate change.

20 To stop the damage it poses to the world, various animal species, and people's livelihoods, immediate action  
21 is required. Climate change is being caused by an increase in cars, industry, and power plants, etc. 1 The world  
22 that humans treasured gained more attention in the latter half of the 20th century. Many arguments have been  
23 developed on who is to be blamed regarding climate change, global warming, and the devastation of so many  
24 natural resources. Some writers have argued that the exploitative attitude to nature, typical of the twentieth  
25 century, directly results 1 from the Christian doctrine of creation. Others argued that the Judeo-Christian idea  
26 of humanity having dominion or authority over creation has led to the view that nature exists to serve human  
27 needs, thus legitimating a highly exploitative attitude. Christianity thus bears a substantial burden of guilt  
28 for the current ecological crisis. 2 In particular, Lynn White Jr. argues that Christianity was to blame for  
29 the emerging ecological crisis because of using the concept, the "Image of God," found in the creation account  
30 (Gen. 1: 26-27), as a pretext for justifying human exploitation of the world's resources. He argues that the  
31 book of Genesis legitimates the notion of human dominion over creation, leading to its exploitation. 3 While  
32 others believe that a closer reading of the Genesis text indicates that such themes as "humanity as the steward  
33 of creation" and "humanity as the partner of God" are implied by the text rather than that "humanity as the  
34 lord of creation." Far from being the enemy of ecology, the doctrine of creation affirms the importance of human  
35 responsibility towards the environment. The biblical concept of "dominion" was to be understood primarily in  
36 terms of "stewardship," no matter what interpretation might be placed on the word in a secular context. To put  
37 it simply: the Old Testament sees God's creatures as the possession of humanity; it is to be seen as entrusted to  
38 humanity, who is responsible for its safekeeping and tending 4 .

39 The human relationship with the environment depicts an understanding of God's manifestation in His creation.  
40 Unfortunately, the environment has been abused by human activities. These activities include gas flaring, littering  
41 of the environment, improper waste management, and the building of irrelevant structures on waterways. Others  
42 are indiscriminate felling of trees and burning of bushes. The world is going through ecological crises such as  
43 global warming, climate change, ozone layer depletion, acid rain, and food and water shortage, which may not  
44 be unconnected to the ignorance of humans of their responsible stewardship role over creation and as well as the

### 3 III. THEOLOGICAL VIEWPOINT ON GOD'S IMMANENCE

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45 misconception and misinterpretation of God's injunction in Genesis 1:1-2 and 1:26, 2:15, among other places in the  
46 Bible. The scripture echoes man's responsibility to his environment. This misconception and misinterpretation  
47 have led to the widespread exploitation and destructive use of natural resources, the detriment and the demise  
48 of several habitats and their life forms. Instead of destruction, Christians are mandated by God to care, which  
49 means going to the extreme to prevent environmental crises to show appreciation to God for creation.

50 Practices such as improper waste management, deforestation, large-scale urbanization, environmental degradation,  
51 and pollution in various forms are significant ecological crises. The subject of global warming is no longer  
52 unfamiliar in local and global discussions of environmental and ecological concerns. It is seriously threatening  
53 the world as the entire globe is experiencing an abnormal temperature increase due to deforestation from various  
54 agricultural and industrial activities. One of the concerns of this article and the motivating factors is how some  
55 plants in existence many years ago, which would have been beneficial to man and his health, are gradually phasing  
56 out of existence. Such plants include: 'ukazi,' 'uziza,' 'aha' etc., a side that rivers are no longer safe for swimming  
57 and drinking because they have been tampered with and defaced by man. Erosion has its effect on all parts of  
58 the nation Nigeria, with the man doing little or nothing about it even when they are the primary cause of it.  
59 Many have suggested ways out, but few implementations are being made, and less attention is being given to  
60 teaching it.

## 61 2 II. Biblical View of God's Immanence in Creation

62 Understanding God's reality and how He interacts with the created world depends heavily on God's immanence.  
63 It also involves His involvement in history, human nature, and natural phenomena. 5 From Genesis through  
64 Revelation, the Bible provides numerous examples of God's interactions and activities with His creation. God  
65 makes certain aspects of Himself known to humans in all His interactions with His creation. God's immanence  
66 is demonstrated in the creation story in Genesis 1:2 when the divine Spirit appears to hover above the water. 6  
67 God is immanence in the creation through His Spirit.

68 According to Genesis 3:8-9, Adam and Eve's association with God in the Garden of Eden represents another  
69 facet of God's immanence. God would visit the garden in the cool of the day for a stroll in the evening to 5  
70 Millard J. Erickson, Christian Theology, second edition (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1985), 325. 6  
71 Tokunboh Adeyemo, African Bible Commentary, (Kenya: Word Alive Publication, 2006), 13. converse with and  
72 fellowship with them. God is shown to be a relational being who interacts with His creation. 7 All things are seen  
73 to be sustained by Him, and they all rely on Him to survive. In chapter 104: 29-30, the Psalmist emphasized the  
74 natural world's reliance on God. All living things depend on God for survival and are under his whim. The key  
75 to all life's physical existence is God's breath. 8 If God turns away from them, all living creatures will feel the loss  
76 immediately. Every living thing depends on God's favour because he is the one who gives it to them and keeps it  
77 alive. 9 The incarnation of the person of Christ is another way that God's divine presence is depicted in the New  
78 Testament. 10 He came as Immanuel, but He also came to live among His people for all eternity. He set up His  
79 tent close to His followers. 11 In the person of Christ, God has chosen to reside among His creation permanently.  
80 John's claim that the word became flesh and lived among humans is another example of the incarnation of Jesus  
81 (1:14). 12 Paul described Jesus as the representation of God (Col. 1:15). Other allusions state that everything  
82 in creation is the work of God and is under His direction, including the bringing of rain and sunshine.

83 The sun's brightness is not considered to be a natural occurrence. God is the one who creates the sun. God  
84 provides for all He has made, not just one specific group of people. Regardless of who they are, he randomly  
85 offers gifts to everyone (Matthew 5:45). 13 Therefore, God must be a God of provision. Dressing the grasses  
86 in the fields and providing food for the avian birds are both works of God (Matt. 6: 25-30, 10: 29-30). The  
87 strength of God can be seen in His concern for even the smallest of His creations; He is attentive to even the  
88 most minute aspects of those He has created in His image. Given this, Jesus emphasized the futility of worry and  
89 the good reasons for trusting God, who is actively involved in caring for and maintaining His creation. 14 Paul  
90 further stated in his theological treatise to the philosophers at Mars Hill that God is not remote from anybody  
91 and that humans are created in God (Acts 17: 27-28). Paul's argument for God was that He provides life, breath,  
92 and everything else, but also the sum and substance of everything else. He is the one who guides people toward  
93 knowledge of Himself and provides the tools necessary for doing so. Even though God is far from everyone, He  
94 is close to everyone on the planet. 15

## 95 3 III. Theological Viewpoint on God's Immanence

96 God is first and foremost in charge of the universe. Because of His sovereignty, He has the right to rule the  
97 universe He made for His glory in the manner that pleases Him. God's omnipotence indicates that He can  
98 act; however, He pleases without being held responsible or accountable to anybody. This was confirmed by the  
99 Psalmist when he said that God lives in the skies and does whatever He pleases (Ps. 115:3). He also said that  
100 He works following His own will (Dan. 4:35). The idea of God's sovereignty also suggests that He is autonomous,  
101 not depending on any other entity or force than Himself (Acts 17:25). God is self-sufficient. He created the world  
102 out of His own volition (Rev. 4:11). 16 The creation demonstrates God's omnipotence. The sovereignty of God  
103 is demonstrated in the book of Genesis story of creation, and throughout the Bible. Without seeking advice or  
104 requesting an architectural design from anyone, He produced what He desired and how He wanted it to be. The

105 world was formed by Him alone; when He spoke, it materialized (Gen. 1:3). He decided to construct the universe  
106 in six days, with a day of rest. He produced a variety of species, including oversized, short, petite, tiny, crawling,  
107 walking, swimming, and flying. He put each creature in its appropriate habitat. He created people in His likeness  
108 and entrusted the guardianship of everything He had formed to them out of the sovereign will. He instructed  
109 Adam and Eve to refrain from eating fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:16-17). His  
110 authority is also demonstrated in condemning and judging offenses (Gen. 3:14-15). He chose Abraham so that  
111 He might use him to create a powerful country (Gen. 12:2). He chose Joseph to maintain the nation He had  
112 created and carry out His purpose. He gave Moses a purpose: to free His people from slavery in Egypt. The Old  
113 and New Testaments reflect His preference for selecting people for particular roles and objectives. Everything  
114 that He does is for His benefit (Romans 8: 28). ??7 God is in charge of providence as well. He is in charge of  
115 all He has made, trying to make things happen the way He pleases. The sovereignty of God is manifestly global  
116 from the perspective of the Bible. It is unchangeable and unalterable. God's sovereignty is manifested in several  
117 ways, including the creation of the laws that govern all things, the determination of the nature and abilities of  
118 each created order, the placement of each creature in its suitable habitat, and the distribution of His favour.  
119 Although it is the sovereignty of "knowledge, holiness, and love," God's sovereignty is global and absolute.

120 Given that God is the author of all creation, it relies on God's omnipotent power for upkeep, sustenance, and  
121 preservation. God maintains the creation and continually rules over it in a sovereign manner. If God were to  
122 leave creation, it would cease to be. 18 God, who created the universe and the planet, is in charge of and controls  
123 every event. The ongoing execution of His divine will is necessary for the continued existence of creation. 19  
124 God maintains the world to establish His reign and bring creation back to life. This suggests that God interacts  
125 with His creation in a way that ensures the accomplishment of both His will and His purposes. According to  
126 Henry, nothing escapes God's intent and concern. God works out His plan not simply in life's generalities but  
127 in the details and intricacies. 20 This implies that God has a purpose for everything He has made and carries  
128 that purpose out following His will. Because He created the earth, God has dominion over it, and the earth is  
129 subject to His will. As noted by Packer, God nonetheless sustains the universe by managing its affairs even if  
130 He is separate from it and independent of it. This is because the universe depends on God for survival. After  
131 all, it cannot sustain itself. 21 All things are sustained and preserved by God, who directs them to maintain and  
132 behave following their outward appearance. He makes creation reliant on Him alone for existence. In order to  
133 maintain the earth, God directs the stars in heaven (Job 38:32), causes the sun to rise (Ps. 104:10), and causes  
134 the grass to grow for people and animals (Job 38:12, Matt. 5:45). He looks after the field grasses and the avian  
135 population (Matt. 6:26, 18:29). 22 According to Berkouwer, God's divine nourishment is directly related to Him  
136 and is the source of all that exists in the world. God stills the storm, and the sea waves are quiet (Ps. 107:29).  
137 23 According to Packer, God is actively involved in the creation and in redeeming actions. The world is shaped  
138 and controlled in such a way by God's influence that the cosmos continues on its intended course. 24 The fact  
139 that God maintains the universe He created is quite apparent. The universe depends on God for survival because  
140 it cannot support itself. God is still with His creation, revealing and tending to it. He has never abandoned the  
141 earth to run its course on its own. Though separate from it, God is constantly present. 25 God has revealed  
142 His existence and might in nature through the immanence of His creation. In Isaiah 55:12, the trees clap their  
143 hands in worship as the hills and mountains praise God. According to Boyce, God's presence causes the planet  
144 to be filled with His essence. The infinite deity is exclusively, undividedly present at each point of creation and  
145 at every instant of time, filling the entire world, not just parts of it. 26 This implies that God is comparatively  
146 close to His creation. He resides in and beside His creation.

147 In order to make known His intent and purpose, He engages with and interacts with His creation at all times.  
148 The deistic viewpoint, which holds that "God is present in creation only by His force, not in His being or nature,"  
149 stands in opposition to this one. 27 According to deism, the universe is governed by natural laws that God created  
150 and imbued with specific characteristics in His created beings before allowing them to fulfill their purposes. He  
151 made the universe to serve His purposes, to manifest His glory, and to carry out His will. He is present to reveal  
152 a specific facet of His grandeur, and the creation reflects God's majesty. Although separate from the world, God  
153 is immanent in it. He differs from the rest of the world. Everything is under His authority, and nothing takes  
154 place against His will. He will preserve and protect the creation that He has made to display His splendor. In  
155 order to properly care for the earth that the Creator has entrusted to them, humanity must consequently take  
156 the essential steps.

#### 157 IV. Environmental Crises in Owerri-West l.g.a.

158 The threats that climate change poses to ecology are severe. There are unmistakable indications that  
159 environmental threats caused by climate change are on the rise and constantly work against Owerri's natural  
160 security. Most nations around the world are affected in terms of socioeconomic security. Today, dry spells,  
161 flooding, persistent droughts, and off-season rainfall are too typical. For instance, in Owerri-West, the effects of  
162 the environmental disaster may be felt 24 Packer, 276-277. 25 Geister, 527. 26 Boyce, Abstract on Systematic  
163 Theology, pdf. 27 The belief that God exists and is a transcendent being who created the cosmos was known  
164 as deism, which emerged due to the Enlightenment in the 17th and 18th centuries. He has nothing to do with  
165 creation and is far from it. Gyang D. Pam, A Compendium of Theology (Jos: mSele Printing and Publishing  
166 House, 2012), 306.

167 everywhere due to the heat stress, lack of harmattan, irregular rainfall patterns, higher rains, gully erosion,

## 4 A) THE SUMMARY OF THE BOOK OF GENESIS

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168 flooding, and landslides. These risks have impacted agricultural lands, water and forest resources, settlement  
169 infrastructure, soil fertility, and other considerations.

170 Because God is present in all creation, Owerri residents West must protect the environment. This is so that  
171 God's beauty and splendor can be seen in His created world. God put people on the planet to take care of His  
172 creation and made it for His glory (Isa. 43:7). (Gen. 2:8). The preservation of creation is the preservation of  
173 God's honour. Ecological problems include flooding, deforestation, climate change, all types of pollution, and  
174 improper waste management; Owerriwest, one of Imo State's most populated places, needs to step up to the  
175 plate and take care of God's creation. This would be accomplished by informing the residents of Owerri-West  
176 of the importance of protecting God's creation. People in Owerri-West should also be aware that God created  
177 humans and other animals to live on the land. God gave humans and other animals the world as a place to live.  
178 Humans are assigned the duty to take care of creation since they are the pinnacle of God's creation and were  
179 made in his likeness (Ps. 8). Humans are therefore not to see themselves as Lord over creation but to have a  
180 sense of responsible stewardship for the care of creation.

181 V. Exegetical Analysis of the Passage(GEN 1:1-2)

### 182 4 a) The Summary of the Book of Genesis

183 In terms of prominence in announcing or confessing "the will and mind of God," the book of Genesis is  
184 unsurpassed. The entire body of the canonical scriptures' literary and theological foundation is presented.  
185 Without Genesis, the Bible would lack a solid foundation and could not exist. In other words, Genesis serves as  
186 the cornerstone for the entire Bible. The Greek term used for the book of Genesis can be translated as "source"  
187 or "generation," but the original Hebrew title is simply ????? ?????? ????, which means "in the beginning"  
188 and is the first word in the book.

189 This book of introduction lays out at the outset what people learn, observe, and confirm across the entire  
190 body of Holy writing. The book of creation and blessing contains a microcosm of what is said about God, human  
191 nature, the world, and salvation history. There is "nothing new under the sun," according to the precursory light  
192 of Genesis, yet those volumes do not identify, confirm, or clarify facts that can be explained. 28 In a technical  
193 sense, the author of the book was unknown. However, the consensus among Jews and early Christians is that  
194 Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible, collectively known as the Torah (Hebrew) and Pentateuch (Greek),  
195 or the law (English). In other terms, Moses is said to have written the book. Although they do not dispute  
196 Mosaic authorship, most contemporary authors attribute the Torah, including Genesis, to the sources J, E, D,  
197 and P. The writing of Genesis dates to around 1445 BCE. The phrase "in the beginning" ( ????) announces a new beginning while also hinting at the "end" of the cosmos and human history. In the  
198 Old Testament, "beginning" (résit) and its antonym "end" (acharit) are frequently used to denote an inclusive  
199 period (Job 8:7; 42:12; Eccl 7:8; Isa 46:10).2 9 F 30 "Beginning" (ré'sit) appears in 1:1, which shows that it was  
200 chosen because of its relationship to "end" (acharit). If this is the case, the author has already established that  
201 the "beginnings" of creation were started with an eschatological purpose in mind. As a result, the apostles and  
202 prophets might refer to the new heavens and earth as the beginning of the end (Isa. 65:17; Rev. 21:1). The  
203 text states that God, who is Sovereign, understands and is in control of the "end from the beginning" at the  
204 beginning of the creation account (Isa 46:10).3 0 F 31 2) God Created?(1:1b): The word "created" (bara') is  
205 frequently used in the Old Testament to describe a new activity. With the prior "in the beginning," it creates a  
206 good play because the first three letters are the same: br'sytr'. The term's derivation is contested and of little  
207 use, but because it occurs so frequently in the Old Testament, we can define its meaning reasonably. The word's  
208 defining characteristic is that God is always its subject. As a result, it suggests that a unique task carried out by  
209 a 29 Holman Illustrated Pocket Bible Handbook (Pocket Reference Edition (Nashville, Holman Bible Publisher,  
210 2004). 30 Kenneth A. deity alone results in something fresh or renewed. Bara' refers to the finished item rather  
211 than the substance used to make it. Because of these factors, commentators have usually understood the word as  
212 a technical term for creatio ex nihilo (literary "creation out of nothing"). It is sometimes contrasted with the verb  
213 'asa, which means "to make" or "do," and which may have human action as its subject (as well as divine). Asa  
214 is specifically utilized when "creating" with preexisting materials. -' Therefore, "asa" can describe human action  
215 in which preexisting material is altered, while "bara" is only used to describe God's activity in which preexisting  
216 material is not there. 32 The word "created" appears twenty times in Isaiah (chapters 40-66), where the prophet  
217 identifies Israel's God as the actual Creator and Lord of history. Isaiah praised Yahweh as the Creator who acts in  
218 history, creating Israel for himself (42:5; 43:1,7,15) and carrying out a "new thing" by delivering his people in the  
219 backdrop of Babylon's religious practices of astrology and idolatry (Isa. 40:26; 43:15-19; 48:6-8). Consequently,  
220 God starts history at creation and continues to "create" history through his absolute sovereignty over all peoples.  
221 God is the Creator of everything that exists; thus, he is prior to it, separate from it, and yet intimately associated  
222 with it. In ancient Near Eastern mythology, the powers of land and water were controlled by gods, who were  
223 numerous in heaven. Israel claims that the universe is nothing more than a creature, in contrast to the earlier  
224 mythology, which did not adequately distinguish between the Maker and the creation. This view liberated the  
225 sky and the earth from superstition and gave modern science its ideological foundation. The phrase "the heavens  
226 and the earth" refers to the entirety of the cosmos. 33 3) "Now the Earth" (1:2a): Before it is altered to become  
227 a fit home for human life, the "earth" is initially described in its pure state at the beginning of creation. The  
228 description is from the terrestrial viewpoint of a human seeing the transformation throughout the six "days" of  
229

230 creation. Additionally, in verse 1, the words "earth" and "heavens" together allude to the universe, while the  
231 word "erets" is used in verse 2 to imply the "land" of Israel's abode. "erets" denotes "land," which typically  
232 refers to a territorial holding. The themes of "land" and "blessing," first mentioned in 1:1-2:3, are recurrent  
233 themes throughout the patriarchal narratives and Pentateuch. The country was God's excellent gift to Israel,  
234 which he had prepared for their possession. God's good "land/earth" was prepared via creation for man to enjoy  
235 (1:10,12,31) and for Israel to possess.

236 According to Matthew, verse 2's three parallel clauses explain the earth's initial conditions: "Now the earth  
237 was formless and empty (tohuwabohu)." "The surface of the deep was covered in darkness" (tēhom) "The Spirit  
238 of God was over the waves" (mayim).

239 The term "tohuwabohu" has been interpreted by some as a negative emptiness, a dark abyss, similar to the  
240 Greek concept of primordial chaos, or, alternately, as a disorganized mass, a sort of watery mass that opposes  
241 creation. The LXX's use of the words "unseen" and "unformed" may have contributed to the current notion  
242 of "chaos" as an indistinct mass or empty nonentity. It turns out that tohuwabohu refers to an "empty" and  
243 "wasteland" land. Bohu is only found in tohuwabohu, where it appears in Jeremiah 4:23 and 1:2. Isaiah 34:11 also  
244 uses the phrases in parallel. The meaning of tohu is all left to help one understand the couplet's meaning since  
245 the word's etymology is still a mystery. 34 Although tohu's derivation is likewise ambiguous, the word appears  
246 enough (20 times) in the Old Testament to give away its meaning. It carries a sense of futility and nonexistence  
247 and refers to unproductive, desolate land. In the Song of Moses (Deut 32:10), it is encountered once more in the  
248 Pentateuch, where tohu mirrors "desert" (midbar), denoting a "desert place." The next verse of the Song (32:11)  
249 compares God to an eagle that "hovers" over its young and uses the same word "hover" (rchp) that appears in  
250 Gen 1:2. Deuteronomy 32:10-11 is likely a deliberate repeat of Genesis 1:2 because the word "rchp" only appears  
251 in one other place, where it means "tremble." Moses' Song recounts how God provided for and cared for his people  
252 throughout their desert trip, where they would not have survived without him (32:10-14). In Genesis 1, the word  
253 tohuwabohu has the same meaning, describing the earth as uninhabitable and hostile to human life. Despite the  
254 dangerous desert, God preserves and develops Israel during its trying times. Similar to how the world could not  
255 support terrestrial life as it existed, God, whose "Spirit" controlled it, was unaffected by this fact. Tohu did not  
256 interfere with God's objectives because "he did not form it (earth) to be tohu (inhabited)" (Isa 45:18; cf. Job  
257 26:7). Additionally, "hovering" (rchp) carries a hint of motion. The movement of God's "Spirit" suggests that  
258 the forces for change that are creative begin when God is present.

259 The couplet tohuwabohu also appears once other than in 1:2 of the book of Jeremiah. The prophet's account of  
260 Judah's destruction at the hands of God's wrath serves as its background. Similarly, Isaiah 34:11 predicts divine  
261 judgment over Edom and uses both phrases (in parallel lines). The creation language of Genesis 1 is strongly  
262 reflected in Jeremiah 4:23-26, and the prophecy has traditionally been interpreted as a figurative "reversal" of  
263 creation that results in primordial "chaos." As a result of God's judgment, Judah would be "uncreated," according  
264 to Jeremiah. Jeremiah announced that the "land" of Judah would turn into a "desolate" location, much as the  
265 "earth" ('erets) was before it was created, that is, a land lifeless without the blessing of God, rather than a  
266 primordial "chaos." The subsequent oracle (Jer. 4:27-29), which states that the "whole land (kol-ha'erets) will  
267 be devastated," explains this. Isaiah 34:11 similarly depicts Edom as "desolate" (tohu) and "empty" (bohu), a  
268 land that is unsuited for habitation and so devoid of life, save for that of the desert fowl.

269 Furthermore, we are not required to infer from the prophets' usage of tohuwabohu that the earth in 1:2, as  
270 a first creation, is under God's wrath. 35 Instead, Jeremiah used creation imagery to declare that God would  
271 destroy the country. God placed Judah in the land alive and prosperous, just as God made the earth habitable  
272 and alive. However, God would drive out Judah's inhabitants in his fury, making the region as dark and lifeless  
273 as the world at its creation, with no birds flying above. 36 4) "Darkness was over the surface of the deep?" (1:2b):  
274 "over the surface of the deep" is analogous to the following clause's phrase "over the waves." It is best to view the  
275 "depth" (tehom) as a component of the "earth" ('erets) rather than a separate entity. These waters gradually  
276 separated from the expanse and land masses on the second and third days, referred to as "seas" (Vv. 6-10).

277 Deep may refer to "depth" (Ps 71:20), underground oceans (Gen 7:11; 8:2), or seas, which are frequently seen  
278 in parallel with "water/waters" (yam/mayim). Genesis describes the waters merely as what they are, God's  
279 creations under his supervision. 37 5) "The Spirit of God was hovering over the waters?" (1:2c): God's "Spirit  
280 (ruach) was hovering" over the planet, governing it and preparing it for the creative word that would come next.  
281 Only the "Spirit" is alive and moving, while the inert elements of the lifeless earth are still waiting for their  
282 order. This text, ruach, may refer to either a spirit or a breeze. Although 35 Volume XXIII Issue II Version  
283 I 60 ( ) traditionally translated as "Spirit," denoting the heavenly Spirit, "wind" is another potential reading  
284 that lexically makes sense and also fits the context of verse 2. (cf. 8: 1). 38 Another critical issue centers  
285 on whether ruach or God's Spirit, is a person or an impersonal force acting under God's authority. Due to its  
286 apparent allusion to 2:7, Job 33:4 is not helpful; however, Psalm 104:30 resonates with a unique interpretation  
287 ("your Spirit"). Psalm 104:30 shows that the poet confirmed God's Spirit's personal participation in the creation.  
288 However, because of Israel's experience at the Red Sea, where God sent a mighty "wind" to separate the waters  
289 and free Israel from the Egyptians, the Mosaic society may have regarded ruach as having a dual meaning, with  
290 "wind" serving as the prototype of the "Spirit" (Exod. 14:21; 15:10; cp. Exod. 10:19; Num. 11:31). Since God  
291 was also at work in creation, where his "wind" (1:2) encircled the mighty waters of the earth as he prepared to  
292 convert them, they understood that God was also their God of salvation. The "wind" (ruach) in the flood story

293 also blows across the "earth" ('erets) under God's command, taming the floodwaters (8:1a), ready for the return  
 294 of the dry earth-creation anew. The Hebrews could understand the idea, whether it is translated as "wind" or  
 295 "Spirit": God was sovereignly overseeing the state of the planet and paving the way for his creative word. The  
 296 divine presence ensures the earth's continued existence "by the covert efficacy of the Spirit" despite its vulnerable  
 297 position and static state, making it ready for God's activity to make it productive and bloom with beauty and  
 298 life.

299 Despite its vulnerable position and static state, the divine presence secures the earth's continuous existence  
 300 "by the covert effectiveness of the Spirit," preparing it for God's activity to make it productive and bloom with  
 301 beauty and life. There is no reason to worry that deified entities, like runaway prisoners, are wreaking havoc  
 302 on the environment and civilization throughout the universe. According to the biblical account of creation, the  
 303 barren land is turned productive by the almighty royal word, which gives and ensures productivity and life.

## 304 5 VI.

305 Implications for Rectification of Environmental Crises in Owerri West lga According to Ajibade, God anticipates  
 306 that people will make an effort to ensure the environment's cleanliness. This is so because a clean atmosphere  
 307 suggests a reverent attitude. ??9 They are in the environment to worship, praise God, and take care of the  
 308 ecosystem. In a significant part, human survival is reliant on environmental preservation. Protecting the  
 309 environment is also protecting human lives. The residents of Owerri-West will be healthy if the environment  
 310 is. As a result, they are accountable to the environment. Additionally, God has provided them with the world as  
 311 a place to live and a source of livelihood. Humans are to benefit from the earth's bounty as they take care of it,  
 312 as it is meant to be a blessing for both them and the rest of creation. This God-given vocation must be carried  
 313 out with a sense of duty to the environment. 4.2 God Assigned Care of the Universe/ Earth/Environment to  
 314 Humankind (Gen. 1:2). Humans were put in the Garden of Eden in Genesis 2:15 "to tend it and care for it."  
 315 This order comes across as being protective rather than exploitative. It implies that everything in creation must  
 316 be worked at and that people were made to be labourers. It is not necessary to destroy the earth in order to use  
 317 it.

318 It must be cared for with the understanding that God is its Owner and that people are the earth's stewards. As  
 319 a result, acts that are contrary to the preservation of the earth, such as deforestation, incorrect waste disposal,  
 320 unhealthy farming methods, indiscriminate bush and tree cutting, and pollution in all its forms, should be  
 321 avoided because they lead to environmental deterioration. Additionally, God designed everything with a purpose  
 322 in mind. Everything in God's creation has a function and is valuable in and of itself. These principles demand  
 323 that nothing in God's creation under human control be destroyed. Humans owe it to the rest of creation to  
 324 respect all living things, mindful that God is the one who created, sustains, and provides for all living things,  
 325 including nonhumans. Humans must live within their means, conserving and preserving resources by exerting  
 326 self-control and living modestly. ??0 4.3 Realization that God is Present/Immanent in His Universe (Gen. 1:2).  
 327 God is active and present throughout the entire creative process. He is deeply interested in the world he has  
 328 made and has complete control over it. He never abandoned the planet after creating it. God is immanent in  
 329 and through creation. Without God, there is no creation. The planet's complexity reflects and shows God's  
 330 splendor, strength, might, and divine essence (Psalm 19:1). (Romans 1:20). Additionally, the continued life of  
 331 creation is entirely dependent upon the sustaining will and strength of God. A close examination of creation  
 332 reveals its order, purpose, and design. The precise organization of the various stages of creative activity in  
 333 Genesis 1 demonstrates order. The design may be recognized in the beautiful and original structure of the world.  
 334 The utility of what God has created reveals its purpose. Everything was created for God's glory; nothing is  
 335 meaningless (Isaiah 43: 7), everything has a function. 4.4 Human Being Owe God's Appreciation for Creating  
 336 the Universe/Earth. Additionally, the creation shows how God manifests himself in it. The heavens display  
 337 God's majesty, and the skies declare his creative efforts in plain sight. They speak out every day, and every night  
 338 they share their wisdom. Every language and dialect can hear them. Their voice is audible worldwide, even at  
 339 the farthest reaches (Psalm 19: 1-4, N.I.V.). God declared everything he created good (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18,  
 340 25, 31). He also described it as precious and holy (Exodus 3:5). He handed authority over the earth to man  
 341 and woman when he created them. God blessed them and gave them the mandate to multiply and populate the  
 342 land, as well as to exercise dominion over all other living things, including fish in the sea, birds in the sky, and  
 343 other animals (Genesis 1: 28). Humans have regenerated, multiplied, and ruled over the earth ever since they  
 344 were first created. God is intimately present and active in his creation; therefore, this charge to rule is to be a  
 345 steward of it. 4.5 Acknowledge that God is the Maker and the Universe/Earth/Environment Owner. God made  
 346 them prosperous and gave them the command to populate the earth and to reproduce, as well as to rule over  
 347 all other living creatures, such as fish in the water, birds in the sky, and other animals (Genesis 1: 28). Since  
 348 the beginning of time, humans have grown, proliferated, and dominated over the planet. Man must obey this  
 349 mandate by eating fruits, herbs, and animal flesh. This mandate to reign is to steward God's creation, which is  
 350 profoundly present and active. ??1 The history of life's beginning is clearly described in the Bible. Only the book  
 351 of Genesis provides a vivid narrative of creation, although there are many theories about the origin of life, such  
 352 as Darwin's Big Bang Theory. According to Darwin's idea, a "whirling mass of material" expanded by drawing  
 353 in nearby solid objects, possibly minor planets. The earth's size changed, which increased gravity and produced  
 354 heat from a compressed inner core. ??2 This idea in no way explains the origin of the mass of substances or the

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355 creation of other solid particles. A being must have been behind its creation because this swirling mass of matter  
356 did not arise by accident.

357 The creation story found in the Bible details the process of creation and identifies God as the universe's  
358 Creator. The Bible explains the cosmos as the creation of God, who spoke into existence out of nothing that had  
359 never existed in any shape or form before. ??3 As declared by Ojo, "The world was created; it did not evolve."  
360 ??4 This is seen through the manifestation of God's power and will in bringing all things into existence. ??5 God  
361 is the ungenerated, initial cause of the existence, continuation, and destiny of all creatures, according to Oden.  
362 According to Swinburne, who agrees with Oden, the assertion that there is a single person who is the source of all  
363 things must be understood with the qualifier "apart from himself" or, more specifically, "separate from whatever  
364 the existence of which is implied by his existence." ??6 Every created object owes its life and existence to God,  
365 the wellspring of all creation.

## 366 **6 VII.**

## 367 **7 Conclusion**

368 Three things are offered in this piece. First, it serves as a reminder that the locals must take a far more active  
369 part if Owerri-West Local Government Area is to build any defense against environmental crises. This is because  
370 faith is also required by physics and chemistry and is the most significant challenge to social justice the world  
371 has ever faced. Second, practical biblical interpretation and a wealth of real-world knowledge about what each  
372 individual and collective effort can and should accomplish form the foundation of defense against environmental  
373 calamity. Thirdly, as the most pertinent of reminders, this article is primarily written from a biblical perspective  
374 on this crucial problem. It has imparted valuable knowledge about how humans fit into the larger scheme of  
375 things and the roles played by the environment and animals. Particular residents of the Owerri-West Local  
376 Government Area are guilty of taking their privileged status as God's children for granted. Even worse, they  
377 frequently misuse their position by utilizing it for their gain.

378 The article concludes by offering recommendations for raising life quality. Among these is the education of  
379 ecological norms to the residents of Owerri-West. However, in a time like this, when the populace's well-being is  
380 sacrificed for minority interest, Owerri-West intellectuals have to act as the leader and conscience of communities.  
381 Therefore, efforts must be made to stop environmental contamination by Christian faith communities and other  
382 interests. Solidarity can assist the populace in managing the world's environment in a spirit of responsibility  
383 and collaboration with God in managing the creation that he has provided for people in the face of humanity's  
384 careless and irresponsible activities against God's creation. It is crucial to motivate people to estimate their  
385 carbon footprints and take action to lower them. The purpose of environmental protection is to promote the  
386 health and welfare of people as well as the other creatures of nature and their environments.

## 387 **8 VIII.**

## 388 **9 Recommendations**

389 The following suggestions are made to encourage Owerri-West to feel committed to the mission of addressing  
390 the environmental catastrophe in light of the research findings as stated above from the review of the biblical  
391 exegesis of the presence or immanence of God in nature and care:

392 ? In the past, Owerri-West Local Government Area residents took part in various initiatives to lessen suffering  
393 and encourage more sustainable living. They should focus on the religious implications of environmental issues this  
394 time. ? The Church should develop a biblical theology of ecological protection with which they can inform people  
395 through public education that the earth is the theatre of God's grace and that, as a result, since humanity is a part  
396 of creation, they must also be actors in this theatre of grace because they are among the recipients of this grace.  
397 They are also called to exhibit this grace in and towards creation by protecting and maintaining the environment.  
398 Government at all levels should ensure that policies to combat climate change are balanced with those to reduce  
399 poverty, create jobs, and build infrastructure, which will necessitate investigating connections between trade  
400 and finance policies. ? It is advised that to accomplish this, laws against environmental degradation and other  
401 environmental vices resulting from the practice of religion should be passed and enforced by the government at all  
402 levels. Educational institutions at all levels are also advised to adopt and integrate eco-ethical studies into their  
403 curricula. ? As a religious organization, the Nigerian Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) should urgently guarantee  
404 that all government policies regarding the practice of religion within the context of sustainable ecosystems are  
405 implemented positively. ? Finally, since religious beliefs are at the root of environmental issues, religion is  
406 necessary to find a solution. Humans must therefore employ their many religions to protect and sustain the  
407 environment because they are creative beings.

Figure 1:

Figure 2:

408 **10 Bibliography**  
409 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

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