

“Fruitful, Multiply, and Fill”

Tracing the Theme through Genesis

The Promise in Exodus

Exodus 1:6–7 (ESV)

⁶ Then Joseph died, and all his brothers and all that generation. ⁷ But the people of Israel were **fruitful** and increased greatly; they **multiplied** and grew exceedingly strong, so that the **land was filled** with them.

- * “Fruitful” [פָּרָה/פָּרָה] = to flourish; produce offspring/harvest (implying abundance)
- * “Multiply” [רָבָה] (rā ḥā(h)) = to be numerous; increase in quantity; thrive (can also be associated with an increase in status). In this context multiplication is specifically attached to offspring/people.
- * “To fill” [מָלֵא] (mā lē(‘)) = to fill or fill up; to have a quantity of space or container filled up with something. In this context the container being filled up is the land/earth.

Tracing the Promise through Genesis

- * Fifth day of creation (birds and fish)

Genesis 1:22 (ESV)

²² And God blessed them, saying, “Be **fruitful** and **multiply** and **fill** the waters in the seas, and let birds **multiply** on the **earth**.”

- * Sixth day of creation (humans)

Genesis 1:28 (ESV)

²⁸ And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be **fruitful** and **multiply** and **fill the earth** and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the **earth**.”

- * Noah and the flood

Genesis 6:1 (ESV)

¹ When man began to **multiply** on the face of the land and daughters were born to them,

Genesis 6:13 (ESV)

¹³ And God said to Noah, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for **the earth is filled** with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the **earth**."

Genesis 8:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the **earth**—that they may swarm on the **earth**, and be **fruitful** and **multiply** on the **earth**."

Genesis 9:1 (ESV)

¹ And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be **fruitful** and **multiply** and **fill the earth**."

Genesis 9:7 (ESV)

⁷ And you, be **fruitful** and **multiply**, increase greatly on the **earth** and **multiply** in it."

* **Covenant with Abraham (words not mentioned, but idea is present)**

Genesis 15:1–6 (ESV)

¹ After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." ² But Abram said, "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³ And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir." ⁴ And behold, the word of the Lord came to him: "This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir." ⁵ And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "**So shall your offspring be.**" ⁶ And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

* **God to Hagar in the wilderness**

Genesis 16:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ The angel of the Lord also said to her, "I will surely **multiply** your offspring so that they cannot be numbered for **multitude** [too numerous to count]."

* **Covenant with Abraham renewed (circumcision)**

Genesis 17:2 (ESV)

² that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may **multiply** you greatly.”

Genesis 17:6–8 (ESV)

⁶ I will make you exceedingly **fruitful**, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you. ⁷ And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. ⁸ And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.”

* **Regarding Ishmael**

Genesis 17:20 (ESV)

²⁰ As for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I have blessed him and will make him **fruitful** and **multiply** him greatly. He shall father twelve princes, and I will make him into a great nation.

* **Offering Issac**

Genesis 22:17–18 (ESV)

¹⁷ I will surely bless you, and I will surely **multiply** your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, ¹⁸ and in your offspring shall all the nations of the **earth** be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.”

* **Promise to Issac**

Genesis 26:4 (ESV)

⁴ I will **multiply** your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these **lands**. And in your offspring all the nations of the **earth** shall be blessed,

Genesis 26:22–24 (ESV)

²² And he moved from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it. So he called its name Rehoboth, saying, “For now the Lord has made room for us, and we shall be **fruitful** in the **land**.” ²³ From there he went up to Beersheba. ²⁴ And the Lord appeared to him the same night and said, “I am the God of Abraham your father. Fear not, for I am with you and will bless you and **multiply** your offspring for my servant Abraham’s sake.”

* **Issac blesses Jacob.**

Genesis 28:3 (ESV)

³ God Almighty bless you and make you **fruitful** and **multiply** you, that you may become a company of peoples.

* **God blesses and renames Jacob to Israel.**

Genesis 35:11 (ESV)

¹¹ And God said to him, "I am God Almighty: be **fruitful** and **multiply**. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body.

* **Joseph names his son.**

Genesis 41:52 (ESV)

⁵² The name of the second he called Ephraim, "For God has made me **fruitful** in the **land** of my affliction."

* **Jacob and Joseph before Pharaoh**

Genesis 47:27 (ESV)

²⁷ Thus Israel settled in the land of Egypt, in the **land** of Goshen. And they gained possessions in it, and were **fruitful** and **multiplied** greatly.

* **Jacob blesses Joseph's sons**

Genesis 48:4 (ESV)

⁴ and said to me, 'Behold, I will make you **fruitful** and **multiply** you, and I will make of you a company of peoples and will give this **land** to your offspring after you for an everlasting possession.'

* **Jacob blesses Joseph**

Genesis 49:22 (ESV)

²² "Joseph is a **fruitful** bough, a **fruitful** bough by a spring; his branches run over the wall.

* **Beginning of Exodus**

Exodus 1:6–7 (ESV)

⁶Then Joseph died, and all his brothers and all that generation. ⁷But the people of Israel were **fruitful** and increased greatly; they **multiplied** and grew exceedingly strong, so that the **land was filled** with them.

God keeps his promises and will continue to do so.