

Blessing or Command

READING

Genesis 1
1 Corinthians 7
Matthew 19

"Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, subdue it"

In Genesis 1 Yahweh says, "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, subdue it".

I've always thought of that as a command. In which case I'm doing the wrong thing not having as many children as I can, right? Like you.

I have only one friend who has 8 children. I'd say he's doing his best.

But is this really a command?

In context, this is the creation week. Yahweh is day by day creating everything we see around us. The planet, the moon, the sun, stars, sky, oceans, land, and populating them, with plants, fish, birds, animals, and finally mankind.

In this context, when he has finished creating mankind, we read that he blesses them and says, "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, subdue it".

But if we back up a few verses, when he finishes creating the fish and the birds on day five we also read there... God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth."

So, we have the same syntax, lines apart in the same story of the same chapter of the Bible.

I have never heard anyone teach that fish are disobedient if they aren't taking every opportunity to produce offspring. Or that birds are bad if they aren't doing everything they can to multiply on the earth.

But I've heard it said plenty of times about people who aren't procreating, or more particularly, those who are choosing some form of birth control, or even abstinence. I've heard it taught as a way of judging those who choose not to have children.

And I've seen the consequence of that teaching on those who want to have children but who find themselves unable to. And how it makes them feel like they must, or face the constant judgement and disdain of other Christians.

I wonder if Yeshua felt that way. 33, popular, tradesman, ... how come he wasn't married already and having kids?

Here he was off on some "mission" to change the world, when clearly God's very first, (and therefore most important), command ever given to people was, "Be fruitful and multiply". That should come first, and he seems to be ignoring it all together.

In fact, in Matthew 19, he even seems to say it's OK to choose to be a eunuch for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.

And then Paulus comes along, heretically preaching that we should consider not even getting married, let alone having children. So we can devote ourselves fully to serving God.

No wonder the Jews wanted to stone him.

Just because he couldn't get a girlfriend he was suggesting that we should all break rule number one and all be single.

"Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, subdue it", was not a command from Yahweh, it was his blessing on the mankind he had created. And it has come to pass. We have been fruitful, we have multiplied, we have filled the earth, and we certainly have subdued it.

Rejoice in the blessing, and stop feeling guilty that you have disobeyed a command that was never there in the first place. Perhaps even politely suggest that the old busybodies in church go back and spend time reading the book instead of gossiping and judging everyone else. (Because there **is** a command about that!)