

Be fruitful and multiply

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“ Be fruitful and multiply. ” This is a line we commonly hear at Mass, but what does it really mean? If we read the bible, we can find this line in Genesis, at that moment after God has created heaven and earth, plants and animals, and Adam and Eve. This sentence is redundant and simple, yet it holds a deep meaning.

“ Be fruitful and multiply”—this is God’s way of telling us to reproduce, to have children who represent God as we represent Him as we are created after His likeness. In the bible, however, there are certain instances that somehow contradict this line’s purpose.

Two examples are the tower of Babel and the pharaoh’s order to gather and eliminate all Hebrew male babies. The tower of Babel was constructed after the Great Flood. Noah’s descendants have already multiplied—they have formed a very large family that uses the same language.

They have built the tower to raise themselves to the heavens and seek glory higher than God’s. At such insolence, God punished them by scattering them throughout the world and confusing their language. Thereafter, God’s people continue to multiply and be fruitful. However, they started to bear fruits of different natures, different colors, and different tongues.

The pharaoh, at the time of Moses’ birth, ordered for all male Hebrew babies to be killed and cast to the sea for fear that, as their population continued to thrive, the Egyptians will be overthrown. This act contradicted God’s command of being fruitful and multiplying. However, though this had been the case, God’s words still found its way to being made possible.

The Hebrews, led by the grown-up Moses, were able to break free from the Egyptians' oppression. They were able to reach the Promised Land that overflows with milk and honey, and since that time, they were again able to be fruitful and multiply.