



Type: Magazine Article

"Multiply and Replenish"

Author(s): Joseph Fielding Smith

Source: *Improvement Era*, Vol. 60, No. 2 (February 1957)

Published by: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Page(s): 78–79

Abstract: This article gives an explanation of the Hebrew root behind "replenish" in Genesis 1:28.

The Editor's Page

(Concluded from preceding page)

thought and conduct which have become habitual, an acquisition of real substance, so firmly fixed in the conscience, and, indeed, in the body itself as to insure unhesitating rejection of an impulse to do wrong.

Reverence for life in created things—faith in God, in his Beloved Son—an assurance that spiritual communion with them may be actual—the joyous experience of living

uprightly—practising honor, truth, integrity, fair dealing; these are eternal verities which give happiness and spiritual expansion.

The world needs fundamental truths that never change—the eternal truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matt. 16:26.)

Your Question

by Joseph Fielding Smith

PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE



“Multiply and Replenish”

Question: “When I served as a stake missionary a woman whom we interviewed said when the Lord spoke to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, he commanded them to ‘Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it.’ ‘Therefore,’ she said, ‘there must have been people on the earth before Adam and Eve, or they could not replenish it.’ The dictionary seems to confirm this view. How can we answer her? Will you please do so in the ERA?”

Answer: It is true that the original meaning of the word *replenish* connotes something is being filled again that was once filled before: *Re*—again, *plenus*—full. Why the translators of the King James Version of the Bible used the word *replenish* may not be clearly known, but it is not the word used in other translations and is not the correct meaning of the Hebrew word from which the translation was originally taken. It is true that the Prophet Joseph Smith followed the King James Version in the use of this word, perhaps because it had obtained common usage among the English-speaking peoples. *Replenish*, however, is incorrectly used in the King James translation. The Hebrew verb is *Mole* (מִלֵּא) meaning fill, to fill, or make full.¹ This word *Mole* is the same word which is translated *fill* in Genesis 1:22, in the King James Bible, wherein reference is made to the fish, fowl, and beasts of the earth: “And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.”

In other translations the word *fill* is used correctly, in the English translations as well as in other tongues. Here are a few quotations:

¹Hebrew Lexicon by Joshua W. Gibbs, A.M., p. 120.

Smith and Goodspeed: Copyright 1931, by the University of Chicago.

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created 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 air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”

Challoner-Douay Text:

“Then God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it.’ Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the cattle and all the animals that crawl on the earth.”

Revised Standard Version: 1952:

“And God blessed them, And God said to them. ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it.’”

American Baptist (Improved) Version: “According to the Masoretic Text.”

“And God blessed them; and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it.’”

The Septuagint Bible. This edition of the Bible was published in 1954 and is taken from the English translation of the Septuagint Bible which was translated by Charles Thompson, who was secretary to the Continental Congress of the United States, and recently revised and compared with the Septuagint text. The publishers state that this is the Bible that the Savior used and is the oldest version in existence of the pre-Christian Hebrew manuscripts:

“Let us make man after our image and after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fishes of the

THE IMPROVEMENT ERA

sea, and the fowls of the air, and the cattle, and the whole earth, and all reptiles which creep on the earth. So God made man, After an image: Increase and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it."

The 1585 Edition. This edition was printed by Christopher Barker, "Printer to the Queenes Majestie, 1585, before the issuing of the King James Version."

"Thus God created ye man in his image: in the image of God created hee him: hee created them * male and female.

"And God bleffed them, and God faid to them * Bring fourth fruite and multiplie and fill the earth, and fubdue it."

The "Breeches" Bible of 1587. "Translated according to the Ebrew and Greeks, and conferred with the best tranflattions dieuers languages."

"And God bleffed them, and God faid to them, * Bring forth fruite and multiplie, and fill the earth and fubdue it."

Danish Translation:

"Og Gud velsignede dem, og Gud sagde til dem: vorder frugtbare og mangfoldige, og opfylder jorden."

"And God blessed them, and God said to them: be fruitful and multiply, and fill up the earth."

Swedish Translation:

"Och Gud välsignade dem; God sade till dem: Varen fruktsamma och föröken eder, och uppfyllen jorden."

"And God blessed them; God said to them be fruitful and multiply yourself, and fill up the earth."

French Translation:

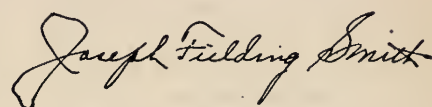
"Et Dieu les benit, et il leur dit: 'Soyez fecons, multipliez, remplissez la terra et soumettez la.'"

"And God blessed them, and said to them Be fruitful, multiply, and fill up the earth."

German Translation:

"Und Gott segnete sie und sprach zu ihnen: Seid fruchtbar und mehret euch und füllet die Erde."

"And God blessed them and said to them: Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth."



The Courage to Face Facts

Richard L. Evans

IN THE PROCESS of adjusting to life, we all have some problems. And growing up is part of the process and the problem—sometimes a rather painful part. As Paul comments: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things."¹ Discipline, whether imposed by others or self-imposed, isn't easy to take; nor are facts always easy to face. Pride and habit, and comfort and convenience, and prejudice and pleasure often come in conflict with facts, with truth and reality, with law and order. And in moving toward maturity, sooner or later we learn that there are some things that will adjust to us, and some things we have to adjust to. Some people will adjust to us—especially if they love us. (Blessedly, there are those who will give a little more than they demand.) Some situations will adjust to us. We can alter our environment—somewhat; and there are more and more things that we can modify for our comfort and convenience. But there are some things that no man can modify, regardless of his comfort or convenience, or his pride or prejudices, or his appetites or pleasures. To quote a much-quoted sentence: "We have to learn to change what we can change, and to accept what we cannot change—and to learn the difference between the two."² We have to adjust to truth. Truth doesn't adjust itself to us. We have to adjust to law. We have to learn to keep command-

ments. They are not always convenient, but they are always there, and they don't bend with our bending, or yield with our yielding. Yet too many of us go through too much of life resenting and resisting the irrevocable realities—the facts, the laws, the commandments that we don't find it convenient to keep. We acquire habits and prejudices, and hold them to our hearts. We accept theories, and resist the inroads of further facts and findings. Sometimes it is almost as if a rock were to say to gravity: "I will ignore your pull upon me." The rock may resist—but sooner or later gravity will get it. There are causes and consequences in all things, and no one ever ignores them without sometime finding that they are in full force. "There is a law, irrevocably decreed . . . upon which all blessings are predicated."³ And the sooner we learn to live within law, the sooner we learn to respect facts, the sooner we learn to keep commandments, the sooner we learn to adjust to truth (and learn that it will not adjust to us, that it will not yield to our yielding, or bend to our bending), the more happiness we shall have, and the more peace we shall find inside ourselves.

¹1 Cor. 13:11.

²An approximate quotation. Author unknown.

³D & C 130:20.

"The Spoken Word" FROM TEMPLE SQUARE
PRESENTED OVER KSL AND THE COLUMBIA BROADCASTING
SYSTEM, DECEMBER 16, 1956

Copyright 1956