

And Hashem spoke to them: Be fruitful and multiply. (1:28)

Hashem blessed both Adam and Chava, and to both of them He gave the command to fulfill the mission of mankind on earth. However, the increase of the human race presupposes something more than just begetting children. If the development of all species depends on the care which they give their young, how much more so is that true of humans. From the purely physical point of view, a child would have no chance of survival were it not for parental care. But the real increase of the human race lies not in the actual birth, but rather in the attention given to the child's development and preservation. The word "multiply", to increase, implies a concept of a higher nature. Parents are to multiply **themselves** by their children, their essence being reflected in their offspring. Children are to be replicas of their parents not only physically, but also spiritually, intellectually and morally. Accordingly, parents plant, nurture, and imbue their offspring with the "best" of their spiritual and moral aspects, carefully overseeing their development into maturity. Only then have parents increased **themselves**, by reproducing themselves in their offspring, thereby not only discharging their duty of "be fruitful" but also of "be increased".