The 5 Blessings of Genesis 1:26-28 – What Are They?

*26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 So God created man in His [own] image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then **God blessed them**, and God said to them, "**Be fruitful** and **multiply**; **fill** the earth and **subdue** it; **have dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." 29 And God said, "See, I have given you every herb [that] yields seed which [is] on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. (Gen 1:26-29)*

I. What Are They? Authorizations, Blessings, Commands, Directions, or Enablements?

A. Authorizations? (The <u>Right</u> to Do These)

All that we are allowed to do is determined by God. What is moral vs immoral, our domain vs God's domain, our realm vs. the realm of our neighbor, etc. is involved. God gave us permission to carry out these five blessings.

B. Blessings? (The <u>Privilege</u> to Do These)

"Then God blessed them…"

Blessing = something good, to be desired

Compared to Beatitudes

C. Commands? (The <u>Responsibility</u> to Do These)

Each of the five is an imperative – a command. These are the first 5 commands in all the Bible to human beings.

D. Directions? (The <u>Path</u> Which Will Be Taken)

God set in motion a path which all of mankind will take, whether we cooperate with God or not. Though some of these mankind seeks to eliminate, each is a course that is determined by the Creator. God set each of these laws in motion that will be in some way kept by all of mankind in spite of man's knowledge or efforts to change.

Consider God's similar commands to the creatures of the sea and birds of the air. These commands do not require an active mental assent or moral involvement, yet the creatures fulfill God's design:

20 Then God said, "Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens." 21 So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that [it] was good. 22 And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." (Gen 1:20-22)

E. Enablements? (The <u>Ability</u> to Do These)

The blessings were also enablements: Each involves the ability and capacity and desire to do the things commanded.

Consider Abraham being given the ability to bear children after his physical ability to do so ceased,

18 who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be." 19 And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. 20 He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, (Rom 4:18-20)

APPLICATION:

* *God Is the <u>Creator</u>: We are to understand God's design and desire, and work by and with His plan.*

* *God Is the <u>Explainer</u>: We must interpret life and culture by God's revelation, not by man's practice or culture's direction.*

* *God Is the <u>Sustainer</u>: We can see God's creative work still in force today, though marred and actively rejected by man.*

II. What Do They Mean?

The first three directly involve procreation (bearing children). The last two involve man's relationship to God's creation (specifically the earth, and the creatures within it).

A. **Be Fruitful (to bear fruit) – to have <u>children</u>**

B. **Multiply (to become many, to become numerous) – to have <u>lots</u> of <u>children</u>**

C. **Fill the Earth (to fill) – to have <u>lots</u> of <u>children</u> to the point of <u>filling</u> the <u>earth</u>**

D. **Subdue It (to take control of) – to become <u>master</u> over the earth, and <u>responsible</u> for it**

E. **Have Dominion – to rule over the <u>creatures</u> and <u>creation</u> of the earth**

     1. **Over the Fish of the Sea**

     2. **Over the Birds of the Air**

     3. **Over Every Living thing that Moves on the Earth**

III. Are They for Today? In Effect Today? (Do They Apply to Us Today?)

A. **There Are No Commands to Rescind**

B. **There Is No Evidence of Stopping (any of them)**

C. **Some Commands Are Repeated**

D. **The Enablement Continues**

E. **The World Is Not Full**

F. **People Still Embrace the Last Two (without hesitation or question)**

G. **Throughout Scripture, God blessed and cursed by means of children**

7287 רָדָה radah {raw-daw'}
Meaning: 1) to rule, have dominion, dominate, tread down 1a) (Qal) to have dominion, rule, subjugate 1b) (Hiphil) to cause to dominate 2) to scrape out 2a) (Qal) to scrape, scrape out
Usage: AV - rule 13, dominion 9, take 2, prevaileth 1, reign 1, ruler 1; 27
08798 Stem - **Qal** (See 08851) Mood - **Imperative** (See 08810) Count - 2847

     Gen 3:16 the shall RULE over you"
     4910 מָשַׁל mashal {maw-shal'}
     Meaning: 1) to rule, have dominion, reign 1a) (Qal) to rule, have dominion 1b) (Hiphil) 1b1) to cause to rule 1b2) to exercise dominion
     Origin: a primitive root; TWOT - 1259; v
     Usage: AV - rule 38, ruler 19, reign 8, dominion 7, governor 4, ruled over 2, power 2, indeed 1; 81
     08799 Stem - Qal (See 08851) Mood - Imperfect (See 08811) Count - 19885

6509 פָּרָה parah {paw-raw'}- **same as animals in 1:22**
Meaning: 1) to bear fruit, be fruitful, branch off 1a) (Qal) to bear fruit, be fruitful 1b) (Hiphil) 1b1) to cause to bear fruit 1b2) to make fruitful 1b3) to show fruitfulness, bear fruit
Usage: AV - fruitful 19, increased 3, grow 2, beareth 1, forth 1, bring fruit 1, make fruitful 1; 29
08798 Stem - Qal (See 08851) Mood - **Imperative** (See 08810) Count - 2847 .

7235 רָבָה rabah {raw-baw'}
Meaning: 1) be or become great, be or become many, be or become much, be or become numerous 1a) (Qal) 1a1) to become many, become numerous, multiply (of people, animals, things) 1a2) to be or grow great 1b) (Piel) to make large, enlarge, increase, become many 1c) (Hiphil) 1c1) to make much, make many, have many 1c1a) to multiply, increase 1c1b) to make much to do, do much in respect of, transgress greatly 1c1c) to increase greatly or exceedingly 1c2) to make great, enlarge, do much 2) (Qal) to shoot
Usage: AV - multiply 74, increase 40, much 29, many 28, more 12, great 8, long 3, store 2, exceedingly 2, greater 2, abundance 2, misc 24; 226
08798 Stem - Qal (See 08851) Mood - **Imperative** (See 08810) Count - 2847

4390 מָלֵא male' {maw-lay'} or מָלָא mala' (Esth. 7:5) {maw-law'}
Meaning: 1) to fill, be full 1a) (Qal) 1a1) to be full 1a1a) fullness, abundance (participle) 1a1b) to be full, be accomplished, be ended 1a2) to consecrate, fill the hand 1b) (Niphal) 1b1) to be filled, be armed, be satisfied 1b2) to be accomplished, be ended 1c) (Piel) 1c1) to fill 1c2) to satisfy 1c3) to fulfil, accomplish, complete 1c4) to confirm 1d) (Pual) to be filled 1e) (Hithpael) to mass themselves against
Origin: a primitive root; TWOT - 1195; v
Usage: AV - fill 107, full 48, fulfil 28, consecrate 15, accomplish 7, replenish 7, wholly 6, set 6, expired 3, fully 2, gather 2, overflow 2, satisfy 2, misc 14; 249
08798 Stem - Qal (See 08851) Mood - **Imperative** (See 08810) Count - 2847 .

3533 כָּבַשׁ kabash {kaw-bash'}
Meaning: 1) to subject, subdue, force, keep under, bring into bondage 1a) (Qal) 1a1) to bring into bondage, make subservient 1a2) to subdue, force, violate 1a3) to subdue, dominate, tread down 1b) (Niphal) to be subdued 1c) (Piel) to subdue 1d) (Hiphil) to bring into bondage
Usage: AV - subdue 8, bring into subjection 3, bring into bondage 2, keep under 1, force 1, ; 15
08798 Stem - Qal (See 08851) Mood - **Imperative** (See 08810) Count - 2847