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Be Fruitful And Multiply: World Population Reaches 6 Billion

"And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the Earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the Earth"

(Genesis 1:27-28).

by Tom Stewart
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The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) released on September 22nd 1999 their annual "The State of World Population" report for 1999, entitled "6 Billion: A Time for Choices". In this report, Tuesday, October 12th 1999 marks the "Day of 6 Billion", when global population surpasses 6 billion-- twice what it was in 1960. World population was estimated to be about 1 billion in 1804, and it is projected to be 7 billion in 2013 (14 years from now). "27 So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the Earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the Earth" (Genesis 1:27-28).

In 1798, Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834), an English political economist, demographer, and pessimist, published "An Essay on the Principle of Population as it affects the Future Improvement of Society", where he propounded the now popular position that population would always outstrip the growth of production, i.e., population would always exceed the production of food and the other means of human subsistence. "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts" (Psalm 10:4). Population, Malthus said, would increase geometrically, if unchecked by war, famine, and ill health. For example, it took 123 years for world population to double from 1 billion to 2 billion from 1804 to 1927. Another 47 years elapsed before world population again doubled to 4 billion in 1974. And, it is projected that this geometric progression of doubling will occur again in 2028-- 54 years later-- when world population is projected to be 8 billion. Concerning Malthus: "That we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith" (2Thessalonians 3:2).

On the other hand, Malthusian economics reckoned that the means of human subsistence would only progress arithmetically-- increasing incrementally and gradually-- thus, mankind would forever be in a cycle of poverty. For example, it is estimated that 1.1 billion people lacked clean drinking water in 1994. Also, an equivalent of a sixth of the world's land area-- already degraded by overgrazing and poor farming practices-- is added to annually by about 66,717,000 acres of newly degraded agricultural land, newly urbanized land, lost tropical forests, and lost woodlands. Additionally, about a fourth of the adults in the world-- about a billion-- cannot read, write, or do even simple arithmetic. Concerning the world's future prospects: "Having no hope, and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:12). But, for the Saints: "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

Though death rates have fallen by half since 1950, and fertility rates have decreased during the last 30 years through birth control and family planning, the "population momentum" still causes a net increase of 78 million people each year. AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is now the fourth most common cause of death in the world, and it is now the primary cause of death in Africa. The developed nations have an increasingly lower fertility rate, while less-developed regions typically have higher fertility rates. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN, food production must double in order to have enough food for the 7.8 billion people expected by 2025. And, in 2050, India is projected to have slightly more people than China-- if the LORD should tarry. "For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Hebrews 10:37).

The All Wise God certainly knew man's prospects when He gave the command to "be fruitful, and multiply" (Genesis 1:28). Because ungodly man holds the "Truth in unrighteousness" (Romans 1:18), the fruitfulness of having children that God intended to be a blessing for him, has become his curse. "Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is His reward" (Psalms 127:3). "If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto My Name, saith the LORD of Hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart" (Malachi 2:2). But, could not the All Powerful God have miraculously multiplied the planet's resources to have supplied man's needs, if they had walked in obedience? Certainly. "Thou gavest also Thy Good Spirit to instruct them, and withheldst not Thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst" (Nehemiah 9:20).

But, in the Providence of God, the Eternal God understood that rebellious mankind would reach a conclusion, beyond which He would not allow them to continue. "Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man [Christ Jesus] Whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised [Jesus] from the dead" (Acts 17:31). It was a belief of the Early Church, as written in the extra-biblical Epistle of Barnabas, that man's time on this planet corresponded to the Creation Week. "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the LORD as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2Peter 3:8). 6,000 years compared to the first six days of the Creation Week, while the Millennium (Revelation 20:4) would correspond to the Seventh Day or Sabbath; thus, some have termed it the Sabbath-Millennium Theory. "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made" (Genesis 2:2).

Those, as myself, who believe in six literal days for Creation-- commonly called Creationists, as opposed to Theistic Evolutionists-- believe in a Young Earth. Most Creationists-- including many Christians, who are scientists-- would say that the Earth is less than 10,000 years old. In fact, the Anglo-Irish prelate Archbishop James Ussher (1581-1656) of the Church of England-- who wrote widely against Roman Catholicism-- from his scholarly studies of Old Testament chronologies (published in the 1650's), believed that Creation took place in 4004 BC. Many of the Bibles from the Authorized King James Version (1611) contained annotations that perpetuated Ussher's Chronology. In modern times, older editions of the Scofield Reference Bible proliferated the Chronology. And, with the approximately 4,000 years before Christ (BC) and the almost 2,000 years after Christ (AD), the history of man would be about to conclude with 6,000 years, before the seventh thousand year period of the Millennial Reign of the LORD Jesus Christ on Earth would begin. So we believe. "And

Hope maketh not ashamed; because the Love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Romans 5:5).

The prophet Hosea (8th century BC) wrote of the unfaithfulness of Israel, i.e., "the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no Truth, nor Mercy, nor Knowledge of God in the land" (Hosea 4:1), in the face of the unceasing love of Jehovah, i.e., "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love" (11:4). Hosea writes prophetically of a time when Israel will be smitten, i.e., possibly corresponding to the days of Christ when the Pax Romana was heavy on the land of Israel to a future time, again, when the hand of Antichrist-- whose number is 666 or man-man-man-- will press hard against modern Israel. "Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up" (Hosea 6:1). The 2,000 year period known as the Church Age points to the "two days" before which Israel is revived-- turned to the Messiah Jesus-- while the "third day" refers to the Millennial Reign of the LORD Jesus Christ, which pagans and secularists are also inadvertently terming the New Millennium. "2 After two days [the Church Age] will He revive us: in the third day [the Millennium] He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight. 3 Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the Earth" (Hosea 6:2-3).

When UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan stood in front of the cameras in Sarajevo holding a newly born Bosnian baby boy-- given the symbolic honor of Baby Six Billion-- on the Day of 6 Billion, he affirmed the importance that man's world government places in the significance of the number six as identifying man-- especially as this sixth millennium draws to a conclusion. "Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the LORD of Glory" (1Corinthians 2:8). And, to those who have "understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do" (1Chronicles 12:32), these represent the momentous days of the Saints' preparation for the soon return of Jesus Christ, the King of Glory. "8 Who is this King of Glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. 9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. 10 Who is this King of Glory? The LORD of Hosts, He is the King of Glory. Selah" (Psalm 24:8-10).

If you, as I, believe that the LORD Jesus Christ is about to return, then pray fervently for His speedy and timely return. "Thy Kingdom come" (Matthew 6:10). We, the Saints of God, are to participate in the fulfillment of prophecy through believing prayer that it shall come to pass. "Thus saith the LORD GOD; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them" (Ezekiel 36:37).

"[Jesus] which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, LORD Jesus" (Revelation 22:20).