

Pru U'revu: Be Fruitful and Multiply

The mitzvah to bear children

Genesis 1:28

וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת הָאָרֶץ וּכְבֹּשׁוּהָ...
...and G-d said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it

Genesis 9:7

וְאַתֶּם פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ שִׁרְצוּ בָאָרֶץ וּרְבוּ בָהּ
And you, be fruitful and multiply; swarm upon the earth and multiply thereon.

Maimonides: Positive Commandment #212

The 212th *mitzvah* is that we are commanded to be fruitful and to multiply, and to have the intention of perpetuating the species. This is known as the *mitzvah* of *pirya v'rivya* (be fruitful and multiply).

The source of this commandment is G-d's statement (exalted be He), "Be fruitful and multiply."

Our Sages have explained that a groom who has wed a virgin is exempt from the *mitzvah* of reciting the Shema [before consummating the marriage]; and have given the reason that he is "occupied with a *mitzvah*."

The details of this *mitzvah* and its obligations are found in the sixth chapter of *Yevamos*.

Women are exempt from this *mitzvah*, as our Sages said explicitly, "Men have the obligation to be fruitful and multiply, not women."