

MUSTARD SEED

In Scripture

Matthew 17:14-20

(verse 20) *“He (Jesus) replied, ‘Because you have so little faith, I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.’”*

According to Eerdman’s “mountain” may also be taken figuratively of any seemingly immovable obstacle, representing the unlimited power of God through faith.

Luke 17:1-6

(verse 6) *“He (Jesus) replied, ‘If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it will obey you.’”* Faith is the greatest force in the world. We must remember that Eastern custom used language in most vivid possible terms. This means that even that which looks completely impossible, if approached with faith, becomes possible.

(William Barclay)

Parable of the Mustard Seed (Matt. 13:31-32, Mark 4:31-32, Luke 13:19)

(Matthew 13:31-32) *“He told them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches.’”*

The point is that from small beginnings there are eventual enormous results. “The birds of the air” are generally taken to be the Gentile nations (cf. Daniel 4:20-22). The extent of the spread of the gospel could hardly have been imagined by Jesus’ contemporaries. *(Eerdmans).*

In the East a regular symbol of a great empire was a mighty tree; and the tributary nations who found protection within it are typified by birds in the branches (cf. Ezek. 31:1-6). In Ezekiel, Assyria is a cedar in Lebanon with birds in its branches. *(William Barclay)*

The main point of this parable is that the kingdom of God seemingly had insignificant beginnings. It was introduced by the despised and rejected Jesus and his 12 unimpressive disciples. But a day will come when its true greatness and power will be seen by the whole world. *(NIV Study Bible, Zondervan)*