

Yahweh, the Almighty God of Israel, is with us

"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet,
and shew my people their transgression,
and the house of Jacob their sins." Isaiah 58:1

The Parables

Study Prayerfully & Study Carefully

The Mustard Seed

Reading:

Matthew Chapter 13: 31-35

1. Small Beginnings

Man's way of doing things is to start with an impressive show, to put on something big, something spectacular, something that will win the attention and admiration of as many people as possible. This is natural and human, but very immature; especially when the end is total failure. Yahweh's way is the very opposite. He begins everything He does in a small way; with a seed, an idea, a word, a baby. But then there is growth, increase and steady progress. Let us examine this spiritual concept of '**small beginnings**' and steady growth and see how the Most High seeks to work in our lives. And if He isn't already doing so, then let us determine to change.

Matthew 13: 31: "*Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:*

32: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."

Points to Note

- The size of the seed. It was the least (smallest) of all the seeds.
- The man sowed it in his own field.
- Its steady and continued growth. It became the largest plant in his garden.

"The common mustard of Palestine is sinapis nigra or black mustard. It grows wild, attaining the height of a horse and rider ... It is also cultivated in gardens for its seed, which is used as a condiment." (Westminster Dictionary of the Bible)

2. What is a Seed?

The seed represents a characteristic of the Kingdom of Heaven. Initially it may appear of small account and not worthy of attention. But, like that tiny mustard seed Yahweh's truth is infinitely powerful and once it takes root in the human mind it can become the most important thing in a believer's life. Yahweh's Kingdom; His Word, His Law, His power, His authority, His fame and His ever-growing influence over all things may initially appear insignificant and small: but never underestimate truth and its power. This fact is encompassed in the parable of the black mustard seed. Let us look at a few examples of this characteristic of the Kingdom of Heaven in the past.

Gideon

Judges 6: 14: "And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?
15: And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, **my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.**
16: And the LORD said unto him, **Surely I will be with thee,** and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man."

In other words "*I don't have the money, my family is poor and I am the least important person in my clan.*" If you study the full story you will see how Gideon, with God's help, routed the enemy and delivered Israel. He didn't think it could be done. But with the Almighty on his side he accomplished the impossible.

The Little Maid

2 Kings 5: 2: "And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife.
3: And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy.
4: And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel."

This little girl knew where healing could be obtained. And she overcame her natural hatred for her captor and imparted that knowledge, small though it appeared to be, to him. As a result Naaman the Syrian was healed of his leprosy and he and his family became worshippers of the God of Israel.

The Little Boy

John 6: 5: "When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?
6: And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.
7: Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.
8: One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,
9: There is a lad here, which hath **five barley loaves, and two small fishes:** but what are they among so many?
10: And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.
11: And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would."

This little lad was probably the most insignificant person in the crowd and his lunch box held so little - even the fish were '**small fish.**' And yet what a miracle was accomplished with his gift. Five thousand people were fed. Imagine for a moment the thoughts of that lad as he witnessed the multiplication of his lunch. Would he ever forget it? All through eternity he will recall the story we know so well. It will never leave his memory; a mighty miracle worked on so small a gift.

The Young Man

Acts 23: 12: "And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.
13: And they were more than forty which had made this conspiracy.
14: And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul.
15: Now therefore ye with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you to morrow, as though ye would enquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he

come near, are ready to kill him.

16: And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul.

17: Then Paul called one of the centurions unto him, and said, Bring this **young man** unto the chief captain: for he hath a certain thing to tell him.

18: So he took him, and brought him to the chief captain, and said, Paul the prisoner called me unto him, and prayed me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee.

19: Then the chief captain took him by the hand, and went with him aside privately, and asked him, What is that thou hast to tell me?

20: And he said, The Jews have agreed to desire thee that thou wouldest bring down Paul to morrow into the council, as though they would enquire somewhat of him more perfectly.

21: But do not thou yield unto them: for there lie in wait for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him: and now are they ready, looking for a promise from thee."

Here was a young man who saved Paul's life. If he had not done so many books of the New Testament would never have been written. This boy saved Paul's life!

Little Creatures

Read (Proverbs 30:24-28) and note the following:

Proverbs 30: 24: "There be four things which are **little** upon the earth, **but they are exceeding wise:**

25: The **ants** are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer;

26: The **conies** are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks;

27: The **locusts** have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands;

28: The **spider** taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces."

- **Ants.** Tiny and apparently weak creatures: but wise, industrious and able to feed themselves.
- **Conies.** Weak and defenceless, but wise enough to shelter in the rock.
- **Locusts.** They have no king, but they are organised and a force to be feared.
- **Lizards.** They can penetrate the palaces of kings.

Can we as believers learn from these tiny creatures? Can we do what they can do? Do we attempt those things? In spiritual matters are we as able as those little creatures? Bear in mind that they were all put on earth by the Eternal to **illustrate spiritual lessons**. Are we learning those lessons? Are we applying them? These little creatures teach us about the Kingdom of Heaven. They are '**object lessons of great spiritual truths**' which you and I may apply on the spiritual plane. Are we wise, industrious, able to shelter in the Rock (Jesus Christ). Are we organised or disorganised? Have you ever penetrated the palace of a king or ruler? Learn from them.

3. What Can We Do?

From these examples we can learn certain facts about the Kingdom of Heaven, of which every believer is a part. Here is a brief - though not complete - list of taboos of which to rid yourself:

- Never imagine that poverty, weakness or insignificance disqualifies you from being effective in the work of Yahweh's Kingdom. The lack of size, power, wealth, good appearance and talent are no handicap in spiritual matters. If anything being small may be a positive advantage. Remember Gideon! Even the weakest believer can pray: and prayer is a mighty weapon. Prayer can do anything that God can do. Learn to pray; because more can be accomplished by prayer than by money, talent or even by hard work.
- Never underestimate the power and potential of the seed of Truth. Its power is measureless. It is well able - if sown with prayer - to outgrow any plant in the garden. Remember the black mustard seed.
- Never imagine that the Truth is unable to penetrate certain places. Like the ant, the spider and the lizard, truth can penetrate the palaces of kings. It can enter and flourish in any mind - if allowed to.
- Never suppose that by giving to the cause of the kingdom, you will somehow beggar yourself. Like that little boy you will not only feed others, but the Most High will bless your gift, no matter how small it may be: and you will get it all back with more besides. Remember the little boy and his little fish.

- Never think that the truth you possess is only for your own salvation. Pass it on. Remember the young man who saved Paul's life. Truth saves lives.
- Never withhold the message of salvation from your enemies; no matter how much you may hate them. Pass on the truth and remember the little maid.

Be a mustard seed in the Garden of God!

AMEN!

In the Son's Name — For the Father's glory.
Elder: Max W. Mader

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