

Parables

(4) The Mustard Seed and the Leaven

Matt 13:31-34

31 He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. 32 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."

33 He told them still another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough."

34 Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. NIV

Two parables showing a small beginning with a great finishing

The Parable of the Mustard Seed ...Mt.13:31-34

What was it about the mustard seed that the Jewish community recognized? Mt.7:20, 13:32a

It was considered the 'measure' of small. To the unaided eye, a mere spec.

What is the clear point Jesus makes about mustard seeds in 13:32?

Though a very small beginning, the mustard seed grows to become a large plant, a 'tree'.

How would you describe the kingdom of heaven *before* the day of Pentecost? Acts 1:15

A very small beginning indeed! From 12 to 120, but the growth is about to start.

What happens on Pentecost? Acts 2:41 After that? Acts 17:6 And finally? Ps.72:8; Rev.11:15

His kingdom will ultimately be the only kingdom, over the whole earth. A tree indeed!

Many argue that we don't see this *today*. How would you answer this? Dan.2:31-45; Rev.5:11

It's not over yet! When the 'stone cut out without hands', Christ, returns, He rules it all.

What about the birds? Are they demons 'in the kingdom'?? 13:4, 19 see Dan.4:10-12, 19-22

Not necessarily. This is a picture of a stable tree providing habitation for birds. Period.

The Parable of the leaven ...Mt. 13:33

What does Jesus say here that the kingdom of God is like...? 13:33

The Kingdom of God is like leaven (yeast). It's not like the 'large amount of flour' (dough).

What's the point regarding the amount of leaven relative to the dough? 13:33

Again, a very small amount of leaven relative to the large amount of dough. But, it leavens!

In the real world example what does the leaven do to the flour?

It spreads and grows until it 'leavens' the dough. The dough doesn't become leaven!

What does leaven symbolize in Scripture? Mt.16:5-12; Gal.5:9; Lev.23:15-17

It symbolizes the spreading influence of something very small. May be bad or good.

So what is the leaven in this parable? Mt.5:13-16, 16:18, 28:19-20; Mk.16:15

It symbolizes the 'few', genuine believers, who spread the Gospel and influence the world.

What's the contrast between the first 2 parables and these 2 parables? Mt.7:13-14; Rev.11:15

Only a few are genuinely saved, but in the end the Redeemed will triumph! HE wins!

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