Mat 150

The Mustard Seed that grew into a world wide sensation

(Todd Johnson family)

There are changes for all of us I know God is at work for the good… to turn a curse into a blessing for those who love Him and keep moving forward in His plan.

I have some personal changes and financial changes like everyone else and you know what… I actually will have extra time on my hands…less income… but extra time!

 So, starting next week I think I will attempt to put up 3 messages a week.

Not sure times or days but I will start looking into next week…be patience and keep this ministry in prayer perhaps with all the chaos and loss of income God is going to boost small ministries like this up.

The Mustard Seed parable

/[Mat 13:31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/mat/13/31/s_942031) He presented another parable to them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven **is like a mustard seed**, which a man took and **sowed in his field**;\

[Mat 13:32](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/mat/13/32/s_942032) and this is smaller than all *other* seeds, but when it is full grown, it is larger than the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that THE BIRDS OF THE AIR come and NEST IN ITS BRANCHES.”

There are several different kinds of mustard seeds and almost all of them are tiny… some barely measure 1 millimeter across….they look like a speck of dirt.

The black mustard seed was probably the one referenced by TLJC in this parable. It is popular in and around this region of the Middle East and it can grow to over 8 or even 10 feet tall and birds did flock to eat off it as well as find a resting spot.

The point Jesus is using resonated with the locals who all knew about mustard trees and mustard shrubs.

/The mustard tree was and still is a plant that can add to the dietary supplement of mankind, it has medicinal purposes and many common uses for health and diet. It can grow on its own once it has gained roots and needs very little attention, nature itself sustains a wild mustard shrub.\

TLJC is saying His gospel message and those who now are considered part of that royal kingdom are the mustard seeds. Once they are planted properly they will grow.

They appear to be nothing in seed form…tiny… almost like a speck of dirt yet it will produce great benefits once it fully grows up.

Turn to Acts chapter two with me.

Think about this;

/Eleven men met in the upper room with Christ on the eve of His crucifixion. One hundred and twenty gathered to pray between His ascension and the descent of the Spirit on Pentecost.In a matter of months, the Apostles would grow a following of well over a thousand.\

From such a small beginning the new form of the kingdom began to spread.

In Acts 2 it increased to three thousand, and in Acts 4:4 the number was about five thousand.

At the close of the Book of Acts it could be recorded that the whole world had heard the gospel…look what Paul says after about 30 years of preaching the gospel in Col. 1:6;

/Col 1:5 because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in **the word of truth, the gospel** 6 which has come to you**, just as in all the world** also it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as *it has been doing* in you also since the day you heard *of it* and understood the grace of God in truth;\

The world meaning all the lands for hundreds of miles all around the 12 Apostles had been saturated with the gospel of TLJC. And as far as the Apostles knew that radius had stretched out thousands of miles because of traveling evangelists and teachers that the Apostles had ordained.

And they themselves had journeyed out toward Africa and Egypt….Spain…India.

When the Apostle Paul wrote this prison epistle he was probably fairly accurate. You see the years after the Apostles spread the gospel it touched across the world.

Almost every culture has a basic understanding of who Jesus Christ is.

This parable of the mustard seed, then, was given to encourage the hearers to believe that the new form of the theocracy would grow to great proportions despite its insignificant beginning and despite Satan’s opposition.

As we will study and see the birds in the tree are a satanic attack or distraction for the kingdom right now in time.

Let us see the rapid growth of the little mustard seed of the gospel of Christ and His followers that represent His kingdom;

Act 2:38 Peter *said* to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

[Act 2:39](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/act/2/39/s_1020039)“For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.”

[Act 2:40](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/act/2/40/s_1020040)And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation!”

/[Act 2:41](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/act/2/41/s_1020041)So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and **that day there were added about three thousand souls**.\

[Act 2:42](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/act/2/42/s_1020042)They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

[Act 2:43](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/act/2/43/s_1020043) Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.

Now if you jump ahead to chapter 4 which would indicate several months went by you see….

/ Act 4:4 But **many** of those who had **heard the message believed**; and the number of the men came to be **about five thousand.**

Take into account, often times at this historic point only adult men were counted, which means this does not account for family (wives & children).\

The reality is the gospel of TLJC went across the globe thousands of years ago and it continued to grow…to reach every corner and village.

The answer to the question of why hasn’t a remote person not heard of Jesus Christ, why some areas claim to know nothing of TLJC is really because their forefathers neglected the truth when it was spoken to them.

REPEAT

The great patriot and Virginia founding father and political powerhouse may have said it best;

/It is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope.  **We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth**, and listen to the song of that siren till she transforms us into beasts.  Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty?  Are we disposed to be of the numbers of those who, **having eyes, see not**, and, **having ears, hear not,** the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation?  For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, **I am willing to know the whole truth**, to know the worst, and to provide for it.

 *Patrick Henry, 1775*\

REPEAT

That becomes the issue in the gospel of Christ as much as it becomes the issue for the born-again Bel who refuses to seek truth and apply it to their lives.

Its much easier to fade into the background and become part of the herd.

One of the easiest things a person can become in life is a loser or a coward or even worse…both. It takes no real effort to achieve that status. No skin in the game as it were.

The fact is whether it is an Unbel concerning salvation or a Bel who needs to grow up it takes humility and a free will decision to make a change…starting with accepting the fact that you are a flawed creature in need of help…in need of the truth!

This is why the first call for salvation and even a Bel to begin to grow up is what?

**/**Act 2:38 Peter *said* to them, “**Repent** (*metanoeō*)**, and each of you** be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.\

Remember the water baptism was only symbolic in the early church it holds no great value beyond that historic point.

The Greek verb MET-TO-NOE-AH is used well over 30x in NT. It is the key element for salvation and learning after salvation.

It speaks to a turning away…moving in a new direction…this is a change of mind and direction. Fresh outlook and new mind…new direction. REPEAT

You do not change your direction and change your mind for that matter… unless you realize you were thinking and heading in the wrong direction!

You get no new sense of truth or fresh outlook until you recognize the old one was flawed.

/The recognition of failure, past mistakes (sins) or improper motives is the beginning of success not a wallowing pit of misery and self-pity. Humility and honest self-evaluation, is the stairway to spiritual growth and the path of true enlightenment. Not a permanent residence in that state just an authentic recognition which is then handed over to the Lord as you move forward.\

REPEAT ELABORATE

This holds true in salvation for the Unbel and then in spiritual growth for the Bel. You lay it on the alter at the supreme courtroom of heaven and God will remove it as far is the east from the west but you have to have the humility for growth which means you need to realize you need direction or a change of heart.

/This is a part of the OSN and cosmic viewpoint that causes many to stumble…pride, arrogance or feelings of guilt and shame. These feelings and cosmic attacks can be part of the flock of birds who rest in the mustard tree and gobble up all its healthy resources.\

There are several views on the birds within the tree and a few will say it represents the tares and wheat again…Bels and Unbels nesting together.

 Another teaching is that the birds represent prosperity…. yet the clear picture for most teachers and the one I agree with is the birds come into pick the tree clean…they nest or rest in it while they disrupt the natural order of the crop….no farmer wants birds eating and nesting in their crop.

/[Mat 13:32](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/mat/13/32/s_942032) and this is smaller than all *other* seeds, but when it is full grown, it is larger than the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that **THE BIRDS OF THE AIR come** and NEST IN ITS BRANCHES.”\

The book of Daniel, Psalms and the prophet Ezekiel have a few passages that speak of a tree for the animals and the birds to rest in but not all are pretty pictures.

In fact, in two cases God says the tree represents the enemy of Israel and though it grew large and birds found rest in it… God eventually cut it down because it was opposed to His word.

This tree though is from BD…it is the gospel of Christ…it is the body of Christ.

Bels left behind during the time when TLJC isn’t physically present on the earth so we can assume that any crop the Lord plants was not designed to be a feeding ground or resting place for cosmic creatures but a place where fruit needs to come forth to breed more seeds…more crops.

Each parable so far also has mentioned the attack of the devil…the cosmic tares or birds that come in to devour the good seed.

There is a vain of teaching principles TLJC is trying to warn His followers about.

/Mat 13:4 and as he sowed, some *seeds* fell beside the road, and **the birds came and ate them up**.

The Lord has already established a pattern in the parables of the birds being part of the problem (cosmic viewpoint).\

You see those who want rest and follow false teaching and cosmic viewpoint find some relief under a false tree.

Turn to Ezekiel chapter 3 with me.

It is temporary resting and we can see it noted in OT scripture; ELABORATE

/Ezk 31:3 Behold, **Assyria *was* a cedar** in Lebanon with beautiful branches and forest shade, and very high, and its top was among the clouds.\

The description is of a powerful tree, one that stood above any of the trees even within the original garden.

It is the Assyrian empire that is in view.

Ezk 3:4 The waters made it grow, the deep made it high. With its rivers it continually extended all around its planting place, and sent out its channels to all the trees of the field. 5 ‘Therefore its height was loftier than all the trees of the field and its boughs became many and its branches long because of many waters as it spread them out.

All of this is pointing to a certain amount of prosperity and power the Assyrians were allowed to have at this time in history.

/Ezk 3:6 ‘All **the birds** of the heavens **nested in its boughs**, and under its branches all the beasts of the field gave birth, and **all great nations lived under its shade.**

Finding rest in the cosmic system. Putting faith in other gods, idols or self.\

Now look at all the blessings God allowed the Assyrian empire at this time;

Ezk 3:7 ‘So it was beautiful in its greatness, in the length of its branches;
For its roots extended to many waters. 8 ‘The cedars in God’s garden could not match it; The cypresses could not compare with its boughs, and the plane trees could not match its branches. No tree in God’s garden could compare with it in its beauty.

/Ezk 3:9 **‘I made it beautiful with the multitude of its branches**, and all the trees of Eden, which were in the garden of God, were jealous of it.

God allowed its growth and prosperity for an allotted time.\

Remember;

God’s timing and mankind’s timing are on two different scales. (God doesn’t get jealous) HE uses anthromorphism and anthropathisms to ascribe human emotions and human parts to His word to help us envision the principle.

Ezk 3:10 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, “Because it is high in stature and has set its top among the clouds, and its heart is haughty in its loftiness,

/[Eze 3:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/eze/31/11/s_833011) therefore **I will give it into the hand of a despot of the nations**; he will thoroughly deal with it. According to its wickedness I have driven it away.\

Dictators and wicked leaders will consume it.

We may want to think about America in this study as well folks!

Ezk 3:12“Alien tyrants of the nations have cut it down and left it; on the mountains and in all the valleys its branches have fallen and its boughs have been broken in all the ravines of the land. And all the peoples of the earth have gone down from its shade and left it.

Ezk 3:13 “On its ruin all the birds of the heavens will dwell, and all the beasts of the field will be on its *fallen* branches

[Eze 31:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/eze/31/14/s_833014) so that all the trees by the waters may not be exalted in their stature, nor set their top among the clouds, nor their well-watered mighty ones stand *erect* in their height. For they have all been given over to death, to the earth beneath, among the sons of men, with those who go down to the pit.”

That tree was large and appeared powerful for a moment in time and everyone flocked to it for shelter yet it turned out to be a lie….arrogant and prideful against the word of God and it was destroyed.

/The mustard tree speaks to the seeds of the gospel of Christ and then what springs from that seed is a flourishing tree which gives life and fruit to the world. The mustard seeds will spring up everywhere the ground is good and grow from a tiny seed into flourishing trees.\

Meaning even a seed that looks so small and insignificant can bring forth a great crop.

So is the kingdom of God on earth…nothing on the surface and discounted because it looks like a speck of dirt yet it will grow to great size and powerful use for anyone who partakes in it.

/The birds that flock to this tree to eat from it and rest in it may well be the cosmic viewpoint that infiltrates the body of Christ and churches right now that will lead into greater deception and lies in the 7 year Tribulation.\