

STORY ABOUT A MUSTARD SEED

Matt 13:31-32

Prepare to hear the Word:

- This story is a parable about the kingdom of heaven.
- A mustard seed is extremely small
- A mustard bush is not large, certainly not a tree.

You will need:

- Bone coloured felt underlay
- Very small seed – mustard seed
- Class Bible
- 2D materials: 5 birds, 5 nests stored in a box; tree.

When children are seated in a semi-circle ready to listen to the story, place the gold box/bag, containing the materials you will need, carefully beside you.

Place class Bible in front of you with your hand on it.

This story comes from our special book, the Bible. In the Bible we read that Jesus told stories to the crowds of people who followed him. Jesus told stories, parables, to help the people understand what the kingdom of heaven is like. One of Jesus' stories was about a mustard seed – the smallest seed of all.

Place Bible beside you. Smooth out the underlay in the middle of the circle. Take seed from box and plant it on far edge of the underlay.

One day a man took a mustard seed and planted it.

Use your hands to show the mustard seed growing slowly

The mustard seed grew slowly.

Use your hands to show the rain and sun, then the seed continuing to grow

The rain came, the sun shone, the seed grew bigger...and bigger...and bigger.

Place picture of tree over the seed.

After many years the seed had grown into the biggest shrub of all. It was large, like a tree.

Place some birds flying towards the tree, the remaining birds on nests in the tree as you say:

The birds of the air came and built their nests in the tree.

The mustard seed had become what it was meant to be.

This is what God's Kingdom is like. It starts very small and grows!

I Wonder:

- I wonder how long it takes for a mustard seed to grow into a tree?
- I wonder how the kingdom of God could be like this mustard seed?
- I wonder who belongs to God's kingdom?
- I wonder how the kingdom of God grows in us?

Parable of the Mustard Seed

Matt 13:31-32

Jesus told them another story:

The kingdom of heaven is like what happens when a farmer plants a mustard seed in a field.

Although it is the smallest of all seeds, it grows larger than any garden plant and becomes a tree. Birds even come and nest on its branches.

Prepare to Hear the Word: Teacher

As in the parable of the Sower with the hundredfold yield, this parable too, reflected Jesus' irrepressible hope in future outcomes, despite an unpromising present. Though the present state of the community might be unimpressive, its future would be wonderful. Matthew's reshaping of Mark's original text makes the point even clearer by stating that the small seed grew into a tree (not correct botanically, but true for the Kingdom.)

The reference of the birds of the air nesting in the tree's branches echoed familiar imagery from the Hebrew Scriptures. Trees often referred to kingdoms, the birds nesting in the branches to their citizens.

Together on the Mountain John McKinnon 2007

