

Activities for Juniors.

- **You can learn more about the parables Jesus tells to preach to the people about God's Kingdom.**

Jesus is preaching to crowds of people. He is using parables, special stories, to explain what the God's Kingdom is like, and how they can become a part of it. The stories aim to encourage the people to want to know God more and experience God's love for them. However, Jesus is also warning the people that being part of God's Kingdom is not always easy, it requires commitment and faith.

Today we learn about other parable stories that Jesus tells to the crowds. As before, the parables are about things the people listening would be very familiar with. You can read the stories for yourself.

- **You can read the story as it is told in Matthew.**

Then Jesus told some more parables: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a tiny mustard seed planted in a field. It is the smallest of all seeds but becomes the largest of plants, and grows into a tree where birds can come and find shelter."

Then He gave this example:

"The Kingdom of Heaven can be compared to a woman making bread. She takes some flour and mixes in the yeast until it spreads through every part of the dough."

"The Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure a man discovered in a field. In his excitement, he sold everything he owned to get enough money to buy the field — and get the treasure, too!

"Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a pearl merchant on the lookout for choice pearls. He discovered a real bargain — a pearl of great value — and sold everything he owned to buy it!

"Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a fisherman — he casts a net into the water and gathers in fish of every kind, valuable and worthless. When the net is full, he drags it up onto the beach and sits down and sorts out the edible fish into crates and throws the others away. That is the way it will be at the end of the world — the angels will come and separate the wicked people from the godly, casting the wicked into the fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Do you understand?"

"Yes," they said, "we do."

Then Jesus added, “The Jewish people who have been trained about the kingdom of heaven who are now my disciples have double treasures to preach about — from the Old Testament as well as from the New!”

- **You can think about the reading**

Jesus gives his listeners’ several ideas about God’s Kingdom with these parables.

Firstly his stories give the idea that God’s Kingdom spreads from one person to another, and eventually throughout the world. It is a place for everyone: everyone is welcome there.

Then Jesus says that to be part of God’s Kingdom is so good (a treasure) that people will give up their old lives and follow Jesus’ teachings so they too will experience God’s love.

Jesus gives his listeners a warning that to carry on with their old lives where they do not love God and they do not care for one another will bring them unhappiness. He even says that they will be thrown away like fish you cannot eat. They need to experience God’s love to be truly happy.

Finally Jesus makes a special announcement. It is possible the crowds listening will not understand this, but it is a message to the disciples. Jesus is telling them that as Jewish people they have had the Jewish scriptures (the Torah) to use for teaching and preaching, but now there is a new story to tell, about Jesus’ life and teaching. It is as if Jesus is saying that together they are writing a new chapter of the scriptures and the disciples are to use this in their work of preaching too.

Is there something you have really wanted that you had to work for, like a special project? Maybe you had to save up to buy it, or do jobs around the house to earn it? At school there are projects to work on that take an effort; there are exams that require hard study to achieve the best result. When we succeed, get a good grade in our work, we are very pleased and want to tell our family. When we have enough to buy the new item, we are thrilled with it and want to show it to all our friends.

Jesus says that this is what being part of God’s Kingdom is like. When we have faith and experience God’s love, we want to share it with the people we know. We can be like the mustard seeds that grow up into large trees that shelter the birds. As we tell other people about God’s love, we offer them a welcome to God’s Kingdom.

- **You can watch a video based on the parable of the mustard seed on YouTube**

You can click on the link below to watch a video about the mustard seed. Please make sure you have permission to watch YouTube and you have an adult with you. The clip lasts about 5 minutes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnnxF-dg6SM>

- **You can do a wordsearch based on the story.**

Today we have been reading about the story of the mustard seed as it is told in Matthew's gospel. The story is also told in other gospel books in the New Testament of the Bible. These are listed on the wordsearch. You could look these up and compare the stories if you like.

The wordsearch is on the next page.

The Mustard-Seed

Matthew 13: 31, Mark 4: 30-32, Luke 13: 18-19

Look carefully at the words below. Each of these has been hidden in the word search.
Words can be on the horizontal, diagonal, backwards, forwards, up and down.

PRODUCING	GREATEST	BRANCHES	SMALLEST	MUSTARD	SPRINGS
SHELTER	PLANTED	SHADOW	GARDEN	FIELD	BIRDS
FOWLS	LODGE	LARGE	GRAIN	GROWN	SHADE
EARTH	ROOST	LEAST	SHRUB	HERBS	SOWED
TREE	TINY	NEST	SEED	AIR	MAN

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          N L   Q E Q R   D P A
        Q P F O A O I R E W Y S N
      D O G R D G S T S H J X O A
    W L T E I G N G M E R T Z W J G
  L X H E E G A E R N X H Q S W E W D
S V R T E I L N R B N I G C O E T D N H
Z R D R S P F E I A H R R D N S N W D S
  E T R B A T J M C E E A P O A O M D
    D P A L E X Z A U H R O S R R R Y
  I Y A E T K L T O S D R B G L I B S T
G V N H H X S E V A T D O B S B I D I S
U R S M P S S U M O C N O R M U E N E P
  O A B N T Z   M O E Q       P E Y R P
  H A I U E M               U S C J I
    M Y N R D Y               K S   T X
          H R X S G E M
            S A A N A
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                P L J
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                        C A V S I Z V F
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- You can colour a picture about the mustard seed parable.

The Parable of the Mustard Seed



Can you draw your own picture of how the plant will grow big enough to shelter the birds?