

WORD

¹⁸He said therefore, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? ¹⁹It is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his garden, and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches."
²⁰And again he said, "To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? ²¹It is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, until it was all leavened." **LUKE 13:18-21**

In this parable, Jesus taught about the characteristics and the nature of the kingdom of God using two images—the mustard seed and yeast. Just like these two, the kingdom of God may seem small and insignificant at first, but it will become larger and more powerful as it grows. In this lesson, we will look at three characteristics about the kingdom of God: its humble beginning, its growing present influence, and its future glory.

1 Humble Beginning

¹⁹"It is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his garden . . . ²¹It is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour . . ." **LUKE 13:19,21**

Jesus compared the kingdom of God to a *grain of mustard seed* and to yeast that was added to a lump of dough—both had small beginnings but became large trees and big servings of bread. In the kingdom of God, we may sometimes be discouraged when we feel like nothing's happening or our hard work seems to go unnoticed. But just as Jesus reminded the people, we can trust that even the tiniest seeds we sow today will grow into great crops in season. How does the Bible encourage us in our walk? (2 Corinthians 5:7)

2 Present Influence

¹⁹"It is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his garden, and it grew and became a tree . . . ²¹It is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, until it was all leavened." **LUKE 13:19,21**

God can use even the simplest things to do the incredible and to expand His kingdom. At times, we rely on the things we see now and worry when we don't see impressive results. Too often we give up and simply stop at small beginnings. Just as the mustard seed grows and the yeast causes the dough to grow, the kingdom of God is growing in influence. What would happen if we have faith *like a grain of mustard seed*? (Luke 17:6)

3 Future Glory

¹⁹"It is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his garden, and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches. . . . ²¹It is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, until it was all leavened." **LUKE 13:19,21**

The mustard seed and yeast don't seem intimidating or great, but what started small had surprisingly great results. The *grain of mustard seed* became such a big tree that *the birds of the air made nests in its branches*. The yeast caused the bread to grow and it eventually satisfied the appetites of many. This kind of growth represents the power of God's kingdom and His glorious plan for the church. What does the Bible say about the *gospel of the kingdom*? (Matthew 24:14)
