

# The Growth of the Kingdom Mark 4:26-29; Matthew 13:31-33

by R.A. Torrey

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*The sermon teaches that the kingdom of heaven has insignificant beginnings but wondrous growth, and that it is corrupted by the leaven of false doctrine, but was foreknown and provided for by the founder of the kingdom.*

**Scripture:** Mark 4:26

**Topics:** "Spiritual Vigilance", "Growth of the Kingdom"

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## Description

R.A. Torrey explores the growth of the Kingdom of Heaven through the parables of the seed and the mustard seed, emphasizing the natural and divine processes involved in spiritual growth. He highlights that the seed represents the Word of God, which grows independently and powerfully, while the mustard seed illustrates the Kingdom's humble beginnings and expansive growth. Torrey also discusses the leaven as a symbol of the Gospel's pervasive influence, warning against the corrupting effects of false doctrine within the church. The sermon encourages believers to recognize the significance of their faith and the importance of safeguarding the truth against insidious errors. Ultimately, Torrey reassures that the growth of the Kingdom is both a divine promise and a call to vigilance.

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## Transcript

### DISCOVERY OF THE FACTS

1. The Seed Growing of Itself, Mark 4:26-29 What is the relation of this parable to the parables in Matt. 13:1-30? What is represented by the seed in this parable? (Luke 8:11; 1 Peter 1:23.) Where is it to be sown? Why does it spring up and grow? Who is it sows it? What comforting thought is there for the sower in v. 27? What is the teaching of v. 28 as to the manner of the growth of the kingdom? Is there any teaching here as to the growth of the spiritual life of the believer?

Who is it puts in the sickle? When does He put it in? 2. Outward Growth, Matt. 13:31, 32 What is the relation of the parable of the mustard seed to the two parables that precede it? In what respects principally is the kingdom of heaven like the mustard seed? (Acts 1:15, compare 21:20; Ps. 72:16, 17; Dan. 2:34, 35.) In what single seed was the kingdom of heaven first planted in the earth? (John 12:24; Gal. 3:15.) What was the character of this seed in the eyes of the world? (Is. 53:2, 3.)

Is this parable intended to teach "the outward growth of the kingdom in the world," "the internal growth of the church as a system of truth and ethics" or "the growth of the spiritual life of the individual"? Are there other respects in which the kingdom of heaven is like the mustard seed? Who is it sows the seed? Where does he sow it? What is his field (vv. 37, 38)? What is meant by the birds of heaven coming and lodging on the branches thereof? (vv. 4, 19; Ezek. 17:22, 23, 24; 31:6, 12; Dan. 4:12-14.)

In what respects are almost all movements which are from God like the mustard seed? 3. Inward Decay, Matt. 13:33 To what is the kingdom of heaven likened in the second parable of this lesson? Of what is leaven the type in every other passage in which it is found in the Bible? (1 Cor. 5:6, 7; Gal. 5:8, 9; Matt. 16:6, etc.) Was it usually allowed in the sacrifices? Why not? Was there any sacrifice in which it was allowed? (Lev. 23:17.) In this sacrifice in which it was allowed what did it symbolize?

Why is it so frequently used as a symbol of corruption? Does it necessarily follow because a thing is often used in the Bible as a symbol of something evil that it cannot be used elsewhere as a symbol of something good? (Compare 1 Peter 5:8 with Rev. 5:5; Hos. 7:11 with Matt. 10:16; Rev. 12:9 with Num. 21:8 and John 3:14.) Are these instances really parallel to the usage of leaven in the Bible? Have we any inspired reference to this parable of our Lord by which we can decide whether leaven is here used as a symbol of good or of evil? (1 Cor. 5:6-8.)

How then can "the kingdom of heaven" be said to be "like unto leaven"? (Compare vv. 24, 25.) Of what is woman a type in the Bible? (Zech. 5:7-11; Rev. 17:3-6; 1 Tim. 2:14, etc.) What is represented by the three measures of meal? If we take the leaven to represent the Gospel in its pervasive influence, what must the measures of meal represent? Of which does the meal seem the more natural symbol, the world or the children's bread? Why are three measures mentioned? (Gen. 18:6; Judges 6:19; 1 Sam. 1:24.)

What three forms of leaven are mentioned in the teaching of Christ? (Matt. 16:6, 12; Mark 8:15.) What did the woman do with the leaven? Why (v. 25)? What did the leaven do in the meal? What does that teach? If we take the leaven as the Gospel itself what would it teach? Is it the doctrine of the Bible elsewhere that the whole world is gradually to be converted by the silent, pervasive influence of the Gospel? (vv. 30, 49; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-5, 13; Matt. 24:24-31; 2 Thess. 2:3-8; 1:7, 8; Rev. 1:7; Luke 18:8, etc.)

What is the relation between the parable of the mustard seed and the parable of the leaven? Where did our Lord get His illustrations for these two parables? Is there any lesson in that for Christian workers today? What is the practical lesson from this parable for us? Where shall we find a safeguard against this corrupting of the children's bread by the leaven of false doctrine? (Acts 20:29, 30, 32; 2 Tim. 3:13, 14.)

#### CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHINGS

##### 1. Our Lord

His insignificance in the eyes of men, 32; His knowledge of the whole future outward and inward history of the kingdom of heaven, 31-33; the founder of the kingdom, the world His field, 31; His use of common things to illustrate great truths, 31-33; forewarns and forearms His attentive disciples against the insidious perils of the last days, 33.

##### 2. The Kingdom of Heaven

Its insignificant beginnings, 31; its wondrous growth, protecting shadow over individuals and nations, 32; its inward corruption by an apostate church, the manner in which it is corrupted--the woman secretes the

leaven of error in the children's bread (the truth), the insidiousness of the process, the all-pervasiveness of the corrupting influence, it was all foreknown and provided for by the founder of the kingdom, 33.

"Take heed and beware of the leaven!"

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