

# The Mustard Seed

## Matthew 4:26-34

Again Jesus said:

God’s kingdom is like what happens when a farmer scatters seed in a field. The farmer sleeps at night and is up and around during the day. Yet the seeds keep sprouting and growing, and he doesn’t understand how. It is the ground that makes the seeds sprout and grow into plants that produce grain. Then when harvest season comes and the grain is ripe, the farmer cuts it with a sickle.

Finally, Jesus said:

What is God’s kingdom like? What story can I use to explain it? It is like what happens when a mustard seed is planted in the ground. It is the smallest seed in all the world. But once it is planted, it grows larger than any garden plant. It even puts out branches that are big enough for birds to nest in its shade.

Jesus used many other stories when he spoke to the people, and he taught them as much as they could understand. He did not tell them anything without using stories. But when he was alone with his disciples, he explained everything to them.

**Storyteller:** (*picks up the Parable Box*): I wonder what this is?

It is the colour gold. Something inside must be precious like gold. Perhaps there is a parable inside. Parables are even more precious than gold.

It is closed. *Knock on the lid*. It has a lid. Perhaps there is a parable inside. Parables are closed; they need to be opened up so we can see what is in them.

The box looks like a present. Parables were given to us long ago as presents. Even if you don't know what a parable is, the parable is already yours. Shall we open it? Let's look inside.

...Jesus said:

What is God’s kingdom like? What story can I use to explain it?

*Spread out the “ground” along the bottom of the flannelboard.*

It is like what happens when a mustard seed is planted in the ground.

*Hold out the tiny “mustard seed”*. It is the smallest seed in all the world. *Put the tiny seed into the hole in the “ground”*.

### Story Materials

- Felt-board
- Parable box
  - soil
  - seeds
  - mustard plant, rolled up
  - nests
  - birds

*But once it is planted, place the rolled-up mustard tree over the seed, it grows larger than any garden plant. Slowly unroll the mustard tree, so that it grows upward. It even puts out branches that are big enough for birds to nest in its shade. Place some birds and nests around the bottom of the mustard tree.*