

Least of All the Seeds

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Jesus Christ used a "mustard seed", in a parable, to summarize the most basic principles involved with entering "the kingdom of heaven." Although this parable is very short, it is important because it confirms that upon death no one goes immediately to heaven or hell.

Another parable he put forth to them, saying, "*The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man **took** (SGD 2983; to take what is one's own; to associate with one's self as a companion) and sowed in his field, ³²which indeed is **the least of all seeds**; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches"* (Mt. 13:31-32; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

As we will see, the "man" in this parable represents Almighty God, and the "mustard seed" represents Jesus Christ, who is the most humble of Almighty God's creation. Prior to his birth, even the city of Christ's birth was regarded as the least among the cities of Judah.

*But you, **Bethlehem**, in the land of Judah, **are not the least among the rulers of Judah**; for out of you shall come a Ruler who will shepherd My people Israel* (Mt. 2:6; emphasis added).

*But you, **Bethlehem Ephrathah**, **though you are little among the thousands of Judah**, yet out of you shall come forth to Me (Almighty God) the One (Christ) to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been of old, from the days of eternity* (Mic. 5:2; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Jesus Christ identified himself with those who are considered "the least" by the leaders of this present evil age (Gal. 1:4).

*I (Christ) was a stranger and you did not take me in, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me. ⁴⁴Then they also will answer saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' ⁴⁵Then he will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as **you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me**'* (Mt. 25:43-45; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

In a prophecy that was not fulfilled until the first century CE, Christ is again associated with humility.

*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you. He is just and having salvation, **lowly and riding on a donkey**, a colt, the foal of a donkey* (Zech. 9:9; cf. Mt. 21:5; Emphasis added).

In another prophecy, Christ's humility is compared figuratively to a "low tree", that will eventually have victory over everyone who exalts themselves above Almighty God (see study: *The Tree of Life and River of Living Water*).

*And all the trees of the field shall know that I, the Lord, have brought down the high tree and **exalted the low tree**, dried up the green tree and made the dry tree flourish, I, the Lord, have spoken and have done it* (Eze. 17:24; Emphasis added).

Because Christ was so humble, he gave up his position in the heavenly realm in order to shed his blood so that repentant sinners could be forgiven, and inherit everlasting life (Heb. 9:22).

*(Christ) emptied himself of his privileges, taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, **he humbled himself** and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the wooden stake (*Gr. stauros*) (Phil. 2:7-8; cf. Jn. 15:13; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).*

If further proof is required to establish Christ's humility, the reader can review Isaiah 52:13-15; 53:1-12).

The "man" who "took the least of all seeds" as His companion, is Almighty God who created the spirit being who later became known as Jesus Christ (Heb. 13:8).

The Lord (Almighty) created me (Christ) at the beginning of His way, before His works of old. ²³I have been established from everlasting, from the beginning before there was ever an earth (Prov. 8:22-23; cf. Ps. 2:6-12; Ed. notes in parentheses).

*But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, **Christ the power of God** (Almighty) **and the wisdom of God** (Almighty) (1Cor. 1:24; cf. Col. 2:3; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).*

Those who have complete trust in God's word are compared to the "mustard seed" representing Jesus Christ, because Christ trusted his heavenly Father without reservation.

*So the Lord said, "**If you have faith as a mustard seed** (Christ), you can say to this mulberry tree, "Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea," and it would obey you (Lk. 17:6; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).*

Therefore, those who completely trust God's word also have the mind of Christ.

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus (Phil. 2:5).

Those who have the mind of Christ will seek to obey every word of God, including His law and commandments.

But he (Christ) answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God'" (Mt. 4:4; Ed. note in parenthesis).

*So he (Christ) said to him, "Why do you ask me about what is good? There is One who is good, that is God (Almighty), but **if you want to enter into life** (everlasting), **keep the commandments** (Mt. 19:17; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).*

At the end of Christ's parable, the mustard seed grew into a large tree that offered sustenance and shelter to all "the birds of the air". As the entire parable uses figurative language to represent spiritual realities, these birds are not meant to be understood literally either. Instead, they represent spirit-beings who are able to come into close contact with the mustard tree that represents Christ. As flesh and blood human beings cannot come into close contact with Christ, because he is in the heavenly realm (1Cor. 15:50), these birds represent people who are resurrected following Christ's return to this earth. In this future scenario, they will function in a manner similar to God's angels. Obviously, faithful and obedient angels are already in close contact with Christ (Mt. 25:31).

*For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, **but are like angels in heaven** (Mt. 22:30; cf. Mk. 12:25; emphasis added).*

To summarize, the "man" who "took and sowed the mustard seed" is Almighty God. The mustard

seed, which is “the least of all seeds”, represents the most humble spirit-being ever created, who is now known as Jesus Christ. The birds of the air represent those who have the mind of Christ working in their lives. As such, they will continually seek to obey every word of God until they are resurrected, and then function like angels.

Those who do not believe they need to obey every word of God will have to wait until the second resurrection of the dead, which will occur at the end of Christ’s millennial rule on this earth (Rev. 20:5-6).

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. ³³And he will set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left (awaiting the 2nd resurrection). ³⁴Then the King will say to those on his right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world’ (Mt. 25:31-34; Ed. note in parenthesis).

By amplifying, and expanding upon Christ’s parable of the mustard seed, it is clear that no one goes to heaven or hell immediately after death. Instead, everyone who dies will wait for Christ to return and establish his Father’s kingdom on earth. When he returns those who have repented of sin, and lived a new life of obedience to God’s word, will be resurrected to everlasting life (Rom. 6:1-4). Those who had other priorities in their lives, and ignored or minimized the importance of obeying God’s word, will have to wait until the end of Christ’s millennial rule on earth. Once this one-thousand-year period comes to an end, the disobedient dead will arise to judgment (Rev. 20:5-6). During this period of time, they will have an opportunity

to repent of the sins they committed during their previous lives.

However, this will not be a pleasant experience because it will involve admitting one’s sins and negligence; not to mention the harm caused by these actions (Lk. 13:22-28; Rev. 3:17-19). Upon repentance, each person will join those who are compared to birds that nest in the branches of “the mustard tree”, that represents Jesus Christ (2Pet. 3:9b; cf. 2Sam. 14:14; Eze. 33:11).

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