



## World Christian Fellowship

[www.wcflondon.com](http://www.wcflondon.com)  
[wcflondon@gmail.com](mailto:wcflondon@gmail.com)

### Visible King and invisible Kingdom Part 01

#### Luke 13:18-21

**Luke 13:18-21**, *Then He said, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? <sup>19</sup> It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and put in his garden; and it grew and became a large tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches." <sup>20</sup> And again He said, "To what shall I liken the kingdom of God? <sup>21</sup> It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."*

An angel announced to Zacharias and Elizabeth that they are going to have a son in their old age and that son is going to be John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah.

An angelic announcement to Mary and to Joseph that there is going to be a virgin-born Son of God, Immanuel, God with us, named Jesus who will save His people from their sins. He will be the holy offspring who will rule on the throne.

There was a miraculous, angelic announcement to the shepherds in the field of good news of great joy to all people about the arrival of the Redeemer, the Saviour, the King, the Messiah. It all looked so good.

When John the Baptist began his ministry in Judea and all of Jerusalem flooded out to the Jordan River where he was baptizing. They were baptized in order that they might be ready for the arrival of the Messiah and the glorious kingdom that He would bring.

One day John pointed to Jesus and said

**John 1:29**, *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*

Jesus began His ministry and the crowds were huge, tens of thousands of people. But as the months went on the leaders of Israel made it very clear that they rejected Jesus totally.

Not only did they reject Him, but they saw that He was a serious problem.

He was a threat to their religious structure. It wasn't enough to ignore Him. They wanted to get rid of Him by devising plan to putting Him to death.

They began to spread all throughout the land that He did what He did by the power of Satan. The people began to believe it to an extent.

They ignored his miracles as if they didn't happen, and continued to plot His death, until they finally brought it about.

The inner circle that followed Jesus was very small, just twelve, one of them was a traitor. There were the seventy, who went out to proclaim the message of the kingdom.

Not even 100 when you add those two together.

When the Spirit of God fell in the Upper Room in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, there were only 120 believers even though He met over 500 believers after His resurrection.

Things aren't happening the way they expected them to happen. Jesus is always talking about a kingdom. Jesus preached about Kingdom every day. Everywhere He went, every day He preached, He preached the kingdom of God.

Jesus spoke of things pertaining to the kingdom. That was all He ever talked about. The realm of those who are under the rule of God because they have believed, repented, and been saved.

Sometimes it seems as if the other side is winning.

The world certainly is not getting better and better. There isn't a single Christian nation (or anything close) on the face of the earth. Evil people abound and seem to prosper.

Godly people are a minority and even some of them fall into serious sins. If we look at what we ourselves have accomplished

for the Lord, it seems so insignificant in the face of the huge task of establishing God's kingdom on this earth.

It is easy for me as a pastor to think about how few have been transformed through my years of ministry and to grow discouraged.

The two parables in our text are here to encourage all who serve the Lord Jesus Christ with the simple truth that His side is going to win.

The Apostles were so eager about this kingdom. The best of them was that mother of John and James came to Jesus and said, "*Can I sit on your right and your left hand when you take your throne?*"

Jesus answered by saying, "*Can you drink the cup that I drink?*" speaking of His suffering.

They had invested everything in this. They had dropped their nets and dropped their professions, dropped their jobs, walked away from their families to follow Jesus for this three-year adventure.

When it got closer and closer to the end, their hope that there was really a kingdom was beginning to diminish.

They had never seen a kingdom like this, nor had they ever seen a king like Jesus.

When Jesus met with Pilate during a phase of His trial, Pilate said, "*Are you a king?*"  
It really wasn't clear to anybody.

### **Are you a king?**

Certainly, a statement of doubt!

Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world."

Not of this world?

### **What kind of a king is He?**

There was nothing about Him that looked kingly.

There was nothing sovereign, visibly sovereign about what He did in terms of exercising any kind of authority over the nation Israel or over the world.

If He was a king, He was not a visible king.

If they were a kingdom, they were not a visible kingdom.

That form of the kingdom and the current form of the kingdom is invisible.

- The world doesn't see Jesus as the king now any more than they did then.
- They don't see us as a kingdom now any more than they did then.

It looked as if the mission of Jesus was going to be a colossal disaster. When they killed Jesus, all the disciples fled and ran away.

One can only imagine what their thoughts were.  
What kind of a king are you, hanging on a cross?  
What kind of a kingdom is this?

Powerless, small, weak, obscure, despised; those are the kind of questions that prompted Jesus to say what He said in our passage.

**V 18-19**, *Then He said, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? <sup>19</sup>It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and put in his garden; and it grew and became a large tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches."*

## **1. Jesus will triumph through sowing of the seed of the Gospel.**

As in the parable of the sower, the seed represents the Word of God, especially the central message of the Word, the gospel.

**Matthew 13:31-32**, *Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, <sup>32</sup>which indeed is the least of all the 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.”*

The man had a garden and that he desired to reap a crop.

Sadly, many professing Christians go through life without any concept that the Lord has given them a corner of His field to sow and produce a crop for Him.

God is the landowner to whom we all must give an account. Your garden consists of the people with whom you have contact, to influence them for the sake of the kingdom of God. You should desire to see God use you to produce a harvest for Him in your garden.

The way to produce a crop is to sow the seed of the gospel. The man threw the seed into his garden. Until he did that, the seed did not sprout and start growing.

You can go to the nursery, buy a package of seeds, take them home and set them on your shelf.

Nothing happens.

Word has the power, but we must act on it.

**Romans 1:16**, *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

## 2. The seed sown will accomplish its purpose

So, of those seeds planted in the garden, it was the smallest. And of those seeds in a garden as a crop, it grew to be the largest.

**Matthew 17:20**, *So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.*

The seed grew to be a tree it says. It's not a timber tree, but a large shrub is in view here. In fact, this thing is so large it says that the birds of the air nested in its branches.

They set up their home, they put their nests there.

From the external viewpoint looking at it and it's virtually invisible.

No one would have been able to say I can see the King and the kingdom.

**Luke 17:20-21**, *Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation;<sup>21</sup> nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."*

We will look at this in detail from next week.

In Jesus' day, the popular notion was that the kingdom would come in with great fanfare. It would have a dramatic beginning, so that all would marvel.

But Jesus is teaching that the kingdom would begin almost invisibly, without much notice, just like this man planting this small seed. But, having been planted, it would powerfully grow until it accomplishes God's purpose in sowing it.

**Have you ever considered the amazing power in a seed?**

Throw a small seed near the foundation of your house and it may eventually crack that foundation.

We have all seen concrete sidewalks buckled because a tree seed had been sown nearby.

The power in a seed is the power of life.

Sequoia trees that stand 300 feet tall and are almost 30 feet in diameter are contained in a small seed that you can easily hold in the palm of your hand. Put that seed into the ground and the life in it will produce that mighty tree.

The seed of the gospel is powerful because God uses it to impart His very life to sinners, transforming them from the inside out.

While we may benefit from learning how to present the gospel in a clear manner, we have nothing to do with the power of it.

The power comes from God imparting His life to dead sinners. When God acts through the gospel, all we can do is marvel at His great power to transform lives.

Those who sow the seed can't take any glory for themselves. God gets all the glory.

The best of human wisdom falls far short of the life-giving power of God in the gospel.

**1 Corinthians 1:21**, *For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.*

The Jews mocked at this kingdom Jesus spoke about this.

**Psalms 2:1-6**, *Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? <sup>2</sup>The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, <sup>3</sup>“Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us.” <sup>4</sup>He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. <sup>5</sup>Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: <sup>6</sup>“Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion.”*

In spite of what all the kings of the world say, the Lord is going to install His king on Mount Zion.

**Psalms 2:8-9**, *Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. <sup>9</sup> You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.'*

God says that He is going to give power over all the kings of the earth, and they are going to rule and shatter them.

That's what the Old Testament said.

That's the king they were looking for.

**Where's the king on the holy hill?**

**Where's the rod of iron?**

**Where's the devastation of the enemies?**

**Psalms 72:1-4**, *Give the king Your judgments, O God, And Your righteousness to the king's Son. <sup>2</sup> He will judge Your people with righteousness, And Your poor with justice. <sup>3</sup> The mountains will bring peace to the people, And the little hills, by righteousness. <sup>4</sup> He will bring justice to the poor of the people; He will save the children of the needy, And will break in pieces the oppressor.*

**Psalms 72:8-11**, *He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth. <sup>9</sup> Those who dwell in the wilderness will bow before Him, And His enemies will lick the dust. <sup>10</sup> The kings of Tarshish and of the isles Will bring*

*presents; The kings of Sheba and Seba Will offer gifts. <sup>11</sup> Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; All nations shall serve Him.*

**Micah 2:12-13**, *“I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together like sheep of the fold, Like a flock in the midst of their pasture; They shall make a loud noise because of so many people. <sup>13</sup> The one who breaks open will come up before them; They will break out, Pass through the gate, And go out by it; Their king will pass before them, With the Lord at their head.”*

**Micah 4:1-3**, *Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the Lord’s house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And peoples shall flow to it. <sup>2</sup> Many nations shall come and say, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.” For out of Zion the law shall go forth, And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> He shall judge between many peoples, And rebuke strong nations afar off; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.*

**Micah 5:2-6**, *Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the Lord’s house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And peoples shall flow to it. <sup>2</sup> Many nations shall come and say,*

*“Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.” For out of Zion the law shall go forth, And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> He shall judge between many peoples, And rebuke strong nations afar off; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.*

He's going to conquer our enemies.

He's going to gather the remnant of Jacob like dew.

He's going to destroy enemies.

They looked at the kingdom in that perspective.

***Jesus says that's not how it starts but that's how it ends!***

### **3. Size of the task and the available resource may disproportionate**

**V 20-21,** <sup>20</sup> *And again He said, “To what shall I liken the kingdom of God? <sup>21</sup> It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.”*

The woman's three measures of flour were equal to about 39 liters or 50 pounds of flour, a large amount.

Just a small amount of leaven was all that was needed to permeate this large mass of dough.

Leaven or yeast is a single-celled fungus that promotes fermentation. When put into bread dough, it produces carbon dioxide bubbles that cause the dough to rise. Since leaven is often used in the Bible as a symbol for sin, some commentators understand this parable to be referring to the spread of false doctrine in the church. But this is to overturn the obvious contextual flow of thought.

The power of the kingdom is extensive. The influence of the kingdom is extensive. The kingdom is like leaven.

In the scripture it used as an influence

**Luke 12:1**, *In the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first of all, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.*

### **What is the leaven there?**

False religion,  
False doctrine, a  
False righteousness.

**Matthew 16:6**, *Then Jesus said to them, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees."*

The leaven must come in contact with the dough for the power to be unleashed.

The power works from the inside out. That is how the gospel works as God transforms the hearts of sinners.

You can't reverse the process. Once you introduce leaven into the dough, it does its thing. Once the gospel penetrates the hearts of those whom God has chosen to save, it is effectual to bring them to salvation and then to progressive sanctification.

## **Conclusion:**

Can you imagine what a stretch it was for those guys around the time of Jesus who were following Him?

They had given Him their lives to try to conceive this, especially when they were standing around at the time of His arrest and wondering just where this thing was going down?

2,000 years later and we know!

The advancement of the kingdom is hidden, and it works its powerful transforming work through your lives, person to person.

95 percent of the world's population presently have part of the Bible or all the Bible in their language. It's working.

About 1,500 new churches start every week.

We don't need the political power.

We don't need the military power.

Jesus put it this way, *"I will build My church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it."*

Some day He will come as King of kings and Lord of lords. At that time, every eye will see Him as King of kings and Lord of lords, and we will be revealed as the glorious manifestation of the children of God becomes evident to the whole world.

We will reign with Him in glory for 1,000 years and then on into eternity forever.

Think of the mustard seed.

Think of how little it is.

Think of leaven.

Think of it being hidden so nobody can see it.

Think of what eventually happens.

It will all culminate in the end.

**Revelation 11:15**, *Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"*