

# Guided by a cloud 20 (Exodus 13:21-22)

This week I have been fortunate enough to be on the Isle of Wight visiting my mum and dad. One of the treats of being there is seeing what they have done in their beautiful garden and enjoy the home grown produce that is always in abundance at this time of year. Lots of people have been spending time in their gardens this year and programmes like Gardeners World have received their biggest audiences. Planting a few seeds and watching them germinate and then grow into something beautiful or something that can be eaten proves very exciting. It got me thinking about the seeds we

sow in our lives and the lives of others and made me think about mustard seed references in the Bible.

## Worship time

[Over all the Earth](#)

[My Jesus my Saviour](#)

[All my days \(Beautiful saviour\)](#)

## The Parable of the Mustard Seed - Matthew 13:31-32

Jesus told them another parable: "The Kingdom of heaven is like this. A man takes a mustard seed and sows it in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it grows up, it is the biggest of all plants. It becomes a tree, so that birds come and make their nests in its branches."

In the parable Jesus Himself is the sower and the seed represents the gospel which started very small but grew to reach millions. Mustard seeds though tiny can apparently grow to 10 feet tall. The field in which it grows represents all the people who will receive Him and the tree offers a refuge for His faithful to rest in Him. A tree, whose large branches offer a sanctuary for birds, was a familiar Old Testament symbol for a mighty kingdom which gave shelter to the nations.

We are God's gardeners. Conversations we have with people or things we do for others can all plant seeds of faith in people's lives. **'Faith is like a mustard seed'** Matthew 17:20. The big question is how can we develop our own faith from a small seed into a healthy plant?

Just as in the parable of the sower - Matthew 13, the seed of faith also needs deep, healthy soil to prosper. It needs to be embedded in an environment which encourages growth. This environment includes the people, places, things and habits with which we surround ourselves. All plants need some kind of stress to mature and produce good fruit. Some plants need a touch of frost or a hard freeze. Some plants need a strong wind to scatter seeds and some need to be eaten. Almost all plants need pruning in order to reach their greatest heights and productivity.

Sometimes our faith grows when we are tested. How do you learn to trust someone if you never need to trust them? Sometimes you start by acting as if you have faith, whether or not you do. You make yourself vulnerable and take a chance.

Faith is a living, growing thing. It requires attention, care, and feeding. It needs a healthy environment in which to take root. Most of all, faith depends on an ever-growing relationship with Jesus in whom we have faith and with other people with whom we share our faith.

So this week as you see plants growing abundantly around you, think about how you can develop a faith growing plan for yourself and others.

