

Sermon - Parables, Sun, June 13 Parables – that is what we have this morning in our short Gospel from Mark – two little parables, each with a big meaning. Parables form approximately one third of Jesus’ recorded teachings. Did you know that? So he used them often. Some scholars say that although the parables seem simple, the messages they convey are deep, and central to the teachings of Jesus. Some say parables are meant to challenge us to new understandings. In some, as in the one’s we look at this morning, nature becomes a witness for the spiritual world. Today, even among those who know little of the Bible, the parables of Jesus remain some of the best-known stories in the world.[5 Isn’t that interesting? Seems parables communicate!

In the first parable Jesus compares the Kingdom of God to someone who scatters seed on the ground and then leaves it and gets on with daily life, sleeping and rising. Meanwhile the seed sprouts and grows. Here’s the key – The sower does not know how the seeds sprout and grow. Once again, mystery. We truly do not know how a seed germinates, how the stem, the head, the leaves appear! As the gospel says, the earth produces of itself. It is a miracle, really.



DAILY MANNA

YESHUA'S PARABLES

GROWING SEED

**“All by itself the soil
produces grain.”**

Mark 4:28



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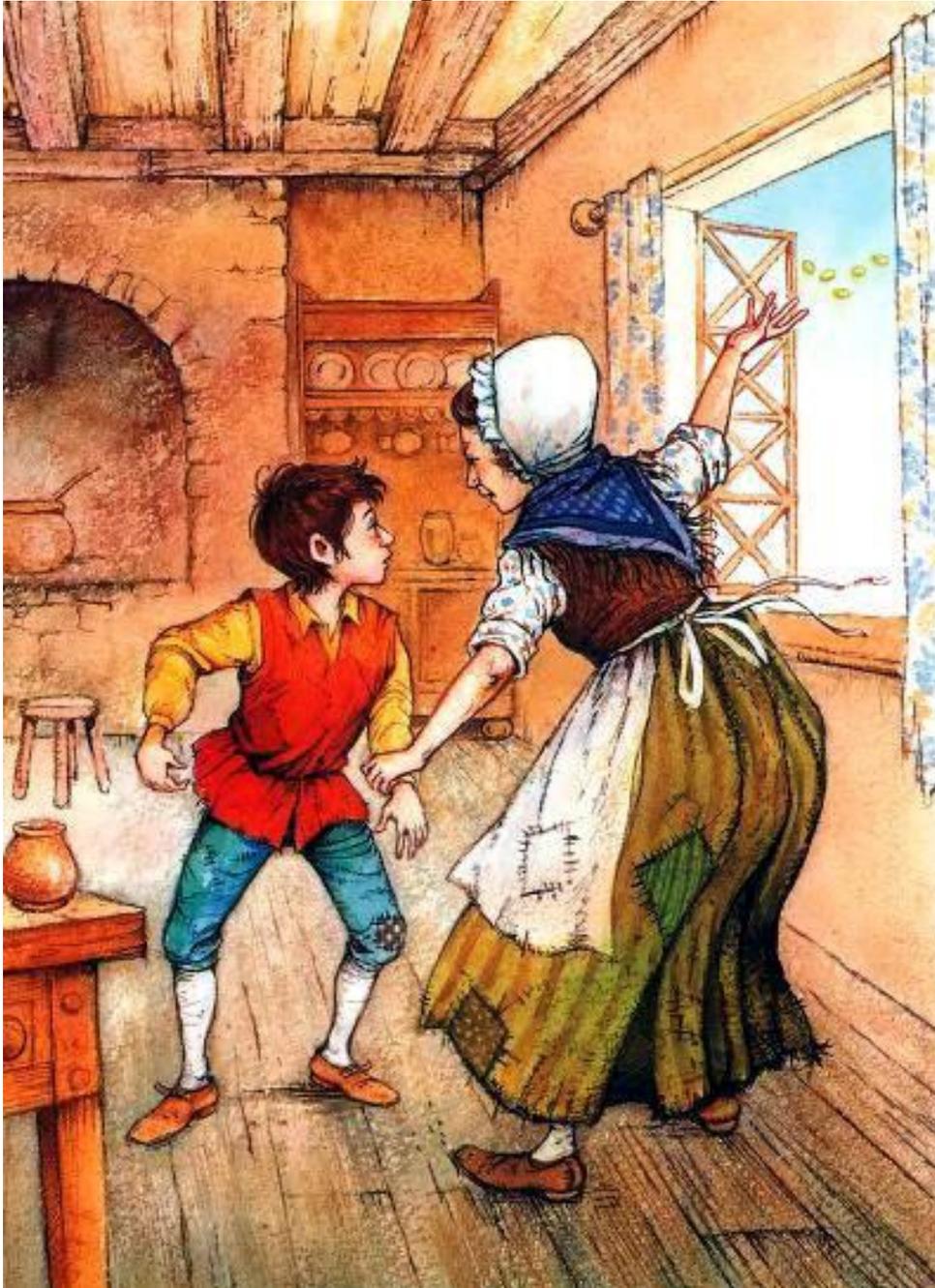
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Yah's Manna

The earth produces of itself, sometimes with surprising results. How long has it been since you heard the story of Jack and the Beanstalk? Here we see Jack's disgusted mother throwing the bean seeds out of the window. She thought her son had made a foolish trade - magic beans in exchange for their cow. But the beans had their own agenda. (They WERE magic beans you may remember!) Thrown away by Jack's mother, their

transformation happened right there in the soil where they'd been thrown. A giant beanstalk grew up overnight, resulting in adventure and reward for Jack and his mother. One never knows...the earth brings forth itself.



As it is with the growth of the seeds, so it is with the kingdom of God. We do not know how it bears its own fruit. If all our life doings and sayings are the seeds, then we do not control which

will grow nor how. It happens in a somewhat mysterious way which we can neither predict nor control. Sometimes we are surprised as I was on Friday when I got a lovely envelope of notes written by our dear niece in England. She is a young woman now, with a family of her own. But she wrote this: "I don't know if you remember but the time you visited when I was about ..., you got me a poster of the Lord's Prayer. We stuck it on the back of my bedroom door so I read it from bed before I went to sleep. If I close my eyes and say the prayer even now, I remember the poster. It is one of my favourite prayers." Twenty-five years later...this prayer and the memory mean something to her. I am sure something similar has happened to each one of you.

The second parable is very short but with a strong message, as is the first. God can use even very small things to accomplish great things. The mustard seed, the smallest of all the seeds on earth; grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs. Again...how it grows from miniscule is a mystery. In the same way, Jesus assures us God uses for his purposes, the small, the unlikely, what seem the most 'unsuitable' candidates. We think of Mary, very young, no one special really, but chosen to be a God bearer. We think of our Lord's birth...not in a palace, nor even a modest house, but in an animal shelter with straw and a manger for a bed. But now a most famous and celebrated birth! We think of those our Lord called to follow Him...simple fishermen. There may be deeper levels of understanding in this small parable about the growth of a mustard seed. Why not read it over a few times at home to see what emerges. But at face value, it has a message of great hope for us. Every word and act however small makes a difference..

“Never worry about numbers. Help one person at a time, and always start with the person nearest you. We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean.

But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop.”

—MOTHER TERESA



We end with Mother Teresa

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