

## Faith as a mustard seed

In Luke 18:8, we discover that Jesus is and will be looking for faith in our life... when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

The Bible declares that the just shall live by faith (Rom. 1:17) and that we are to walk by faith and not by sight (2 Cor 5:7). In fact, faith is really important because faith is the mode of operation in the Kingdom of God. Yes by grace we are saved (sozo = healed, protected, delivered, prospered, made whole), but it is through faith (Eph. 2:8).

Jesus would often say "let it be done according to your faith!" or "your faith has made you well!" It is true that often, Jesus would evaluate people's faith and say things like "you of little faith". It does give us the impression that it is the amount of faith that is important, nevertheless, it wouldn't make any sense because Jesus also told us in *Matt 17:20: 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 mustard seed is the smallest seed according to Jesus (Mark 4:32) yet it has the potential to do the impossible. I believe that Jesus was not referring here only to the size of the seed, but rather its quality.

### **So what is it about the mustard seed that makes it so special?**

Even though it is the smallest seed, it is also the strongest and it will be able to withstand drought, pests and attacks.

A few years ago, I was finishing a series on faith at a TV studio in Quebec, and one of the camera persons came to me all excited. She explained that she has a garden in her backyard and always plants all kinds of vegetables and herbs. One year she had to leave her house because of a family emergency and was not able to attend and water her garden for an extended amount of time. When she returned, she wasn't sure what she would find. Unfortunately the plants had not survived the lack of water and the pests, they had all died... except the mustard plant! Wow! It confirmed to me what I already knew... that it isn't how much faith we have that is important, but how strong it is.

You see our faith must be like a mustard seed, strong and tenacious, and despite all the attacks, and the obstacles it will stand. This is the same faith the little woman with the issue of blood in Mark 5 had when she came against all odds to receive her healing. This little lady did not have a huge amount of faith but she had a tenacious faith. She refused to give up even though all the cards were stacked against her.

This is exactly what Jesus was teaching in the parable in Luke 18:1-8. He started by saying that men ought to pray and not lose heart and give up. To illustrate this truth, he spoke of a little widow who went to an unjust judge to demand her rights. Jesus said "listen to what that unjust judge said "I will avenge her lest by **her continual coming** she wearies me."

Jesus added that it was not his fear of God, not his regard for people that compelled him to do it, but her attitude and determination... her continual coming.

The words "continual coming" are the Greek words "*eis thelos erchomai*" and it means "to come and be set until the end", to set out until the end for a definitive goal.

In other words it means that this little lady refused to give up until she obtained what was hers. She was like a bulldog who refused to let go of the bone. She had a strong faith, a tenacious faith, a faith that knew her rights and refused to take no for an answer, a mustard seed kind of faith.

Too many times, we have faith but it lacks that element of tenacity and determination. We start but we have a time limit, and we give up too soon. I heard someone say once "if you are willing to stand forever, it will not take very long."

We have a great example in Abraham who by his tenacious faith received the promise after many years. Rom. 4:19-21 And being not **weak in faith**, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was **strong in faith**, giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that what he had promised, he was able also to perform.