



THE MUSTARD SEED

Learn more about the little seed with a big reputation.



THE MUSTARD PLANT

Plant name: black mustard
(*Sinapis nigra* or *Brassica nigra*)

Plant type: annual, dicotyledon

Average size of seed: 1–2 millimeters (about .05 inch)

Average size of plant: 1–2 meters (about 3–6 feet) high, though under certain conditions it can sometimes grow to be 3–5 meters (about 10–15 feet) high or more, and just as wide

THE RESTORED CHURCH IS BRANCHING FORTH

"This figure [the mustard seed] is given to represent the Church as it shall come forth in the last days. . . .

"Let us take the Book of Mormon . . . ; let us behold it coming forth out of the ground, which is indeed accounted the least of all seeds, but behold it branching forth, yea, even towering with lofty branches and God-like majesty, until it, like the mustard seed, becomes the greatest of all herbs. And it is truth, . . . and God is sending down His powers, gifts, and angels to lodge in the branches thereof."

The Prophet Joseph Smith, *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 301.



WHAT WE CAN LEARN

"The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:

"Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."

Matthew 13:31–32

MUSTARD SEEDS:

- **Are small.** The kingdom of heaven (Christ's Church) arose from humble beginnings, both in Jesus's day and in the latter days.
- **Can spread widely and quickly.** As we share the gospel with others and the Holy Ghost testifies to them that it is true, the Church of Jesus Christ can spread until it accomplishes its destiny of filling the earth.
- **Can grow to be unusually large.** When Christ says that the mustard seed will become a tree, He is describing something unique that can happen with a mustard plant under certain conditions—it can grow into a large, tree-like bush. So it is with the Church. From obscure beginnings and with the unique blessings, authority, and power of God, the Church has been restored and will fulfill its purpose of preparing the world for the Second Coming of the Savior.



FACTS ABOUT MUSTARD SEEDS

- In Jesus's day, it was common for people to say something was like a mustard seed in order to suggest that it was very, very small.
- The mustard plant is quite common in the Near East and is often considered to be a weed because it can spread so widely and quickly with its tiny seeds.
- Mustard plants don't grow into what we normally think of as trees, with woody trunks, bark, and big branches, though when conditions are right, they can become quite large.
- Seeds were often ground up to make powder, paste, or oil for use in medicines (poultices and plasters) or foods (pickling spice, cooking oil, and condiments).
- The name *mustard*, as well as the use of mustard as a condiment, came from the Romans, who added must (freshly pressed grape juice) to the spicy-hot powder from the ground-up seeds.