

Luke 13:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?

Analysis

And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? This brief rhetorical question introduces the second kingdom parable in this section. The phrase "and again" (πάλιν, palin) indicates Jesus immediately offers another comparison, suggesting that no single parable exhausts the kingdom's richness—multiple perspectives illuminate different facets of the same reality.

The question "Whereunto shall I liken...?" (Τίνι ὁμοιώσω...; Tini homoiōsō...?) engages hearers, inviting active participation rather than passive listening. Jesus' pedagogical method involves questions, parables, and illustrations drawn from everyday life—making profound theological truths accessible through concrete imagery. This approach reveals divine wisdom: eternal realities communicated through temporal analogies, heavenly truths illustrated by earthly stories.

The emphasis on likenesses reveals both the necessity and limitation of human language about divine realities. The kingdom of God transcends human categories, yet God graciously accommodates our understanding by using familiar images—seeds, yeast, vineyards, banquets. Each parable captures one aspect; collectively they reveal the kingdom's multifaceted nature.

Historical Context

Rabbinic teaching frequently employed parables (mashalim) to illustrate Torah principles. Jesus followed this tradition but with unique authority—His parables

didn't merely illustrate existing truth but revealed new kingdom realities. The dual parables here (mustard seed and leaven) form a pair, a common rabbinic technique using parallel illustrations to reinforce a principle. Both depict something small transforming into something large, emphasizing the kingdom's irresistible growth despite humble origins.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. Why does Jesus use multiple parables to describe the kingdom rather than a single exhaustive explanation?
2. What does Jesus' use of common, everyday images teach about God's desire to make Himself known?
3. How does the rhetorical question invite hearers into active engagement with the truth rather than passive reception?

Interlinear Text

Καὶ	πάλιν	εἴπεν	Τίνι	όμοιώσω	τὴν	βασιλείαν	τοῦ
And	again	he said	Whereto	shall I liken	<small>G3588</small>	the kingdom	<small>G3588</small>
G2532	G3825	G2036	G5101	G3666		G932	

θεοῦ

of God

G2316