

# Mark 4:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

## Analysis

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Jesus introduces final parable: 'Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?' The rhetorical questions emphasize kingdom's uniqueness—difficult to capture in human analogies. The plural 'we' includes hearers in reflection. This introduces the mustard seed parable, illustrating kingdom's small beginnings and great culmination. The humble question-approach demonstrates pedagogical wisdom—engaging hearers' minds rather than imposing answers. Jesus consistently uses familiar images (seeds, soil, harvest) to illuminate heavenly realities, making divine mysteries accessible while maintaining their profundity.

## Historical Context

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Rabbinic teachers regularly used comparative formulas: 'The kingdom is like...' or 'What is it like? It is like...' Jesus adopts and perfects this method. The question acknowledges kingdom's transcendence—earthly comparisons illuminate but never fully capture heavenly realities. Jewish expectations anticipated visible, political messianic kingdom; Jesus redefines it through parables emphasizing hidden growth, small beginnings, and future consummation. Early church struggled to explain this to Jewish audiences expecting different kingdom manifestation. Church history wrestles with tensions between kingdom's 'already' (inaugurated) and 'not yet' (consummated) aspects.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

## Study Questions

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1. How do parables help you grasp spiritual realities that transcend direct explanation?
2. What does Jesus' question-approach teach about humble, engaging communication of truth?
3. How does understanding kingdom's mystery guard against overly simplistic or triumphalistic expectations?

## Interlinear Text

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Καὶ ἔλεγεν τίνι ὁμοιώσωμεν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ  
And he said Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom G3588 G3588  
G2532 G3004 G5101 G3666 G932

θεοῦ ἢ ἐν ποὶα παραβολῇ παραβάλωμεν αὐτὴν  
of God or with what comparison shall we compare it  
G2316 G2228 G1722 G4169 G3850 G3846 G846

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