

## SECTION C

Write your answer in the space provided.

- 4 Evaluate the claim that a futuristic view of the Kingdom of God in Luke's Gospel is persuasive.

In your response to this question, you must include how developments in New Testament Studies have been influenced by **one** of the following:

- Philosophy of Religion
- Religion and Ethics
- Study of a Religion (excluding Christianity).

(30)

In my view, I prefer an immediate view of the kingdom, as I believe that Marshall's view that it is a spiritual state in the present, rather than a physical state in the future, allows Christians to live as if "the kingdom of God is in your midst", highlighting that it is a state of mind rather than a physical realm. To continue, Luke's gospel contains complex eschatological beliefs that reveal key ideas about the kingdom of God. In the parable of the sower, I believe that the use of "some women" highlights that as in first century Palestine women were viewed as subordinate citizens, so much so they were not included in the public debate. When a testimony, the kingdom of God is present as equality is being showcased. Luke's gospel is a social gospel, meaning he adapts ~~contemporary~~ social issues such as equality, the poor or the disabled, and redacts them into his gospel providing moral codes on how to live with these issues. By Luke acknowledging the role of women, highlights that the spiritual presence of a kingdom of God is being enforced as they are now recognisable in the ministry of Jesus.

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Despite this, the parable of the sower contains teachings that explain why a future kingdom and parousia is one expected therefore a more persuasive argument. This parable showcases the idea that one should preserve the christian faith whilst waiting for the long haul of the parousia. This concurs with scholar conzelmann's belief that the kingdom of God is contingent, therefore existed in the past, but can be completed in the future. Culppepper agrees, adding that the kingdom of God was revealed through Jesus' ministry, but ultimately will be completed at the end of time. The "seed" in the parable is a symbol for the kingdom of God, and to let the "seed" fall on "rocky ground", could be to ignore it and not understand it properly. This is seen in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus later in Luke's gospel, where the <sup>rich</sup> man ends up in "hades" for disregarding the poor. In this way, we are encouraged to pursue the "seed" into everyday life, in order to reach the kingdom of God when the time finally comes.

Still, could argue that the idea of a futuristic kingdom is not significant in Luke's gospel as the first century Palestinian audience were encouraged to not become complacent therefore advocated to act as if the kingdom of God is imminent. In what scholars label the "little ~~apoc~~ apocryphe", it refers



to "the days of Noah". In this way, Jesus is referring to the fact that as before the flood life was normal, he is hinting that before the parousia life may be normal therefore it appears imminently. In the same way in the story of Jesus and beelzebu, it states "Stronger attack whomever powers him". Readers are hinted towards signs of the kingdom in order to remain the "good Seed", preaching Jesus' kerygma and getting a place in the kingdom of God. Despite my argument, Scholar Augustine refers to the philosophical idea of the "fall" suggesting that our indebted sin that originated from Adam and Eve automatically makes us slaves of original sin. In relation to the kingdom of God, Augustine could argue first we must fight a war of sin with the Devil before we can return to be "seated at the right hand of the father". The story of Jesus and beelzebu in Luke reveals that we as humanity need to fight a war ourselves with temptation before the imminent kingdom comes upon us. This corresponds with John's idea of son making, and in order to become in the "image and likeness" of God we must face evil and temptation and God can "rejoice in the day" we overcome it.

Still, I would maintain that the idea of a present kingdom is more significant as C.H. Dodd proposes



a realized eschatology which scholar Brawn agree with arguing Jesus' teachings reveal timeless truth about God and Jesus' ministry now rather than the future. In the story of the narrow door, Luke uses personification of a "have" to describe our sins and how we ought to be "owners of our hearts" resisting any sin, ~~that~~ echoing Jesus and Beelzebub. In this way, I could ~~not~~ accept (t) Dodd's realized eschatology to express how at this moment Jesus is telling us to open up our doors to our house to him, let him inside and make him at home. We ought to do this now, not in the future as then it is too late and we will have to repent. For me, this story echoes John's gospel "I am the gate". In the same way, both writers are expressing that the only way through to the kingdom of God is through Jesus' ministry and as believers we should be constantly putting his teachings into practice. Perhaps this is why Luke chooses to redirect the sermon on the plain in his gospel while Mark chooses not to. This idea is backed up by the notion that Luke is striving for apocalyptic urgency highlighting that he is advocating all readers act as if the kingdom of God is present on earth.

Conversely, scholar Konrad von Seltmann could choose to adopt a constant eschatology,



meaning he believed it is something that man can access in the present and future. This may be argued in support of the ~~little apocalypse~~ which states when Jesus teaches, "my kingdom is not of this world", in this way Jesus is explaining that his kingdom is a continual process rather than an absolute entity that will be accessed on the "last day". I see is providing a more spiritual meaning behind the concept of the kingdom corresponding with Schweitzer's believe that it can be accessed to man now and also when we get "raved up on the last day".

Continuing my original point, ultimately I still hold the view that the futuristic belief of a kingdom is not as significant than an immediate belief, as I think to view the kingdom as acting upon us as we live through Jesus' ministry provides more opportunity for believers to act mercifully in the word of God, but to also repent their sins. This is highlighted in the parable of the lost sheep where we "rejoice in heaven for one sinner who repents". For me, this is a more purposeful way to live or live through Jesus' kingdom and logic, rather than waiting for a physical state after death. As well as this, in the sign of Jonah, there is a sense of apocalyptic





Using in accordance with Jew' ministry.

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(Total for Question 4 = 30 marks)

**TOTAL FOR SECTION C = 30 MARKS**  
**TOTAL FOR PAPER = 80 MARKS**

