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FOREWORD

This booklet contains reports written by Examiners on the work of candidates in certain papers. **Its contents are primarily for the information of the subject teachers concerned.**

DIVINITY

GCE Advanced Level

Please note that this syllabus is examined for the last time in 2005.

Paper 9011/01
Prophets of the Old Testament

General comments

Many candidates produced thoughtful and detailed essays demonstrating detailed teaching and extensive revision. As has sometimes been the case in previous years, those candidates who did not perform so well generally did so through insufficient knowledge of the material being examined, which also tended to obscure their skills of analysis. Again, this was often evident in the 'gobbet' questions, where extracts were sometimes wrongly identified.

Comments on specific questions

Very few candidates answered **Question 3**, on the part played by ecstasy in Israelite prophecy, or **Question 6**, on the differences between the pre-exilic writing prophets and those who came before them. Therefore, comment on these questions would be inappropriate.

Question 1

Discuss the origins of prophecy in ancient Israel.

Most responses were detailed and comprehensive. There were generally two approaches to the question: those which discussed the origins of prophecy in the context of the Ancient Near East, and those which confined the analysis to prophecy in the territory of Israel itself, both responses being valid.

Question 2

'Moses' role in Israelite prophecy was an ideal one, not a real one'. Discuss.

The best answers concentrated on the contrast between *ideal* and *real*. Responses that received the higher marks tended to be those that said Moses' role was both ideal and real, in the sense that a good case could be made for the view that Moses was a historical figure important in the origins of prophecy, and that his achievement was also ideal in the way that he fulfilled that role. A few candidates were able to analyse the Moses traditions in editorial and reductive terms, and scored very highly in so doing.

Question 4

'Samuel was more of a judge than a prophet.' Discuss.

This question was well done. Most candidates were able to give a comprehensive survey of the biblical portrait of Samuel, and to analyse the various functions which he carried out. The majority opinion was that his role as a judge was incidental to his role as a prophet, since his role as a prophet was so all embracing that being a judge was required by his status. A few gave a first class analysis of Samuel as a figure whose general stature transcended any one role.

Question 5

Examine the view that Israel's kings saw prophets as a necessary evil.

Weaker responses tended simply to list the activities of Israelite prophets, reporting on whether these were good or bad in the eyes of the kings. More thoughtful essays concentrated on the virtues of prophecy as far as kings were concerned, such as honesty in the episode of Micaiah ben Imlah. The main conclusion was that prophets primarily spoke doom oracles, so kings were likely to view them with a jaundiced eye.

Question 7

In your view, which was more powerful – Hosea’s message of destruction or his message of love?

Nearly all candidates opted for the superior power of Hosea’s message of love, although quite a few suggested that the message of love was all the more powerful because of the accompanying message of destruction. Most gave a good account of the relevant passages from Hosea, and some responses were quite poetic in what they said. One or two opted for the destruction angle, comparing it with that of Amos, and saying that in the final analysis, the annexation of the northern kingdom meant that the message of destruction became the reality.

Question 8

Examine critically Amos’ idea of the Day of the Lord.

This was a very popular question, and was done well by nearly all candidates who attempted it. Knowledge of the text was particularly detailed and accurate. Most of the analysis offered of this material concentrated on the question of whether or not the concluding passages of Amos are a rejection of the destruction promised on the Day of the Lord in the body of the prophecies.

Question 9

‘His call shaped his entire message.’ Discuss with reference to either Isaiah of Jerusalem or Jeremiah.

For Isaiah, most candidates did this question well, arguing that Isaiah’s call narrative explains the prophet’s main themes, and also explains his intervention during specific periods of crisis. As the holy and transcendent God, Yahweh controls history, and demands an appropriate moral response. For Jeremiah, most gave a coherent picture of Jeremiah’s life and work in terms of the twin themes of ‘pluck up and throw down....build up and plant’, for example illustrating his attitude towards Judah’s kings contrasted with his messages of hope to those in exile.

Question 10

The majority of candidates answered extracts **(a)**, **(c)**, **(d)**, **(e)**, **(f)**, **(g)**, **(h)** and **(j)**.

- (a)** *Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and he took some of the spirit that was upon him and put it upon the seventy elders; and when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they did so no more. (Numbers 11:25)*

This was a well-known extract, correctly identified by all candidates as the transfer of power from Moses to the seventy elders. Comments centred on the tent of meeting, charismatic leadership, the transferability of ecstatic power, and the theophany. A few candidates suggested that the comment ‘they did so no more’ was an editorial note to explain the situation during the time of the editor.

- (c)** *When they came to Gibeah, behold, a band of prophets met him; and the spirit of God came mightily upon him, and he prophesied among them. (1 Samuel 10:10)*

This was also a well-known extract, again identified correctly by nearly all as the contagious ecstasy which overcame Saul outside the Philistine garrison. Most candidates also commented on the connection of the story with the onset of Saul’s kingship, on the nature of the sons of the prophets, and on the proverbial statement about Saul’s association with the prophets. This was well done by nearly all candidates.

- (d)** *‘He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.’ (2 Samuel 7:13)*

The bulk of the comment here was on the reasons why David was not chosen to build the Temple, for example attributing it to David’s misdemeanours concerning his treatment of Uriah. Others commented extensively on the eventual fate of David’s kingdom and the appearance elsewhere of royal Davidic theology. Some commented on Nathan’s status as a court prophet, and on the various meanings of ‘house’.

- (e) *Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said to them, 'Shall I go to battle against Ramoth-gilead, or shall I forbear?' (1 Kings 22:6a)*

The context here is the resumption of the narrative of the Syrian/Aramean war, from chapter 20, although candidates displayed very little knowledge of this historical background to the episode beyond the king's desire for battle. Only a handful of candidates mentioned Ahab's alliance with Jehoshaphat and the quarrel with the king of Syria over possession of the town of Ramoth-gilead, east of the Jordan. There was some useful discussion of the relationship between the king and Micaiah, but very few of those who mentioned it were able to offer a critical analysis of the 'spirit of lying prophecy'.

- (f) *And Amaziah said to Amos, 'O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, and eat bread there, and prophesy there; but never again prophesy at Bethel.'* (Amos 7:12-13a)

The background to the conversation between Amos and Amaziah was known by all candidates who attempted this question. Most identified Amaziah as the official priest of the royal sanctuary at Bethel, although some were completely unsure as to his identity. Further comments included the implication from Amaziah that Amos was a professional prophet or a member of a prophetic guild, although nobody considered the alternative possibility, that Amos was speaking in the past tense – I was no nabi, etc., but was a shepherd, etc. – which implies that now he considers himself to be a professional prophet.

- (g) *Assyria shall not save us,
we will not ride upon horses;
and we will say no more, 'Our God,'
to the work of our hands.
In thee the orphan finds mercy.* (Hosea 14:3)

The weakest responses here simply wrote vague generalisations about Hosea's prophecy, saying nothing at all about the context of this verse. One or two indicated that the words intended to point out the uselessness of horses in the Israelite terrain, and to reject the reliance on Assyrian power. Most identified the rejection of 'the work of...hands' as the rejection of manufactured idols, and the contrast with Yahweh's merciful treatment.

- (h) *And I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. Then the LORD said to me, 'Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz...'* (Isaiah 8:3)

This was not a popular question, but was usually done well by those who chose it, since most identified it correctly as part of the sign in 8:1-4: the name meaning 'the spoil speeds, the prey hastes', which forms Isaiah's third word of assurance to Ahaz. Most also knew the prophecy of the removal of the wealth of Damascus and Samaria to Assyria before the child became old enough to call its parents by name.

- (j) *Therefore thus says the .LORD:
'If you return, I will restore you,
and you shall stand before me.
If you utter what is precious,
and not what is worthless,
you shall be as my mouth.
They shall turn to you,
but you shall not turn to them.'*
(Jeremiah 15:19)

Quite a few opted for this question, but very few had much idea of the context or the meaning. Only a handful of candidates knew that this is part of Jeremiah's second 'Confession in 15:10-21'. Moreover, the majority identified the speaker as Jeremiah, and suggested that Jeremiah was using these words to scold his hearers for their worthlessness; whereas verse 19 appears to be God's reply to Jeremiah, perhaps mediated by a cultic official, in which God offers no consolation to Jeremiah's lament beyond moral support, since the people's rejection of the prophet will not stop. 'What is worthless' refers presumably to Jeremiah's complaint about his treatment, which Yhwh rejects as an inevitable part of his prophetic calling.

<p>Paper 9011/02 The Four Gospels</p>

General comments

The overall performance of the candidates was good. The standard of answers suggested good overall exam preparation, and candidates generally displayed a good use of language and of key words and terms.

The answers were on the whole well structured and informed. Some Centres showed much evidence of wide reading. Attempts were made to address past weaknesses and/or comments made in the Examiner's Report.

Candidates seemed to use their time well as there was some evidence of planning. There were only two or three rubric misunderstandings; a few candidates merely answered the gobbets and no other question or only two questions. The standard of work under exam conditions was impressive.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Once again, these gobbet questions were very popular and were answered well, indicating good preparation and understanding.

- (a) This was very popular and well answered, with appropriate comments and context.
- (b) This was not as popular, but again, those who attempted this recognised the context and made reasonable comments.
- (c) Again, this was not so popular. There was some muddling of context but most recognised the disciples as the ones being addressed.
- (d) This was a very popular question, with the majority of candidates realising this was the Transfiguration; a few, however, thought it came from Jesus' baptism. There was good comment on Moses and Elijah, although no one commented on the possibility of it being a misplaced appearance story.
- (e) Fewer candidates chose this and found it quite challenging.
- (f) This was very popular, with good answers and correct context and comment.
- (g) This was popular, with sound answers on the Prologue of John.
- (h) This was also very popular and was correctly identified and with very good comment.

Question 2

Explain how and why Matthew used the Old Testament when writing his gospel.

This was a popular question, but some candidates fell into the trap of restricting their answers to the Birth Narratives and not the whole of Matthew. There was little comment on Matthew's use of Mark and no comment on the idea that Matthew possibly defended Christianity against the claim that it had abandoned the Jewish Scriptures.

Question 3

Discuss the view that Matthew's gospel is dominated by the concept of judgment.

This was not a popular choice, and those who did attempt this question did not do well. There was little mention of specific passages, except the Five Wise and Five Foolish Virgins. Hardly any responses mentioned the passages 22:13; 24:51 and 25:30.

Question 4

Discuss the authorship of Mark's gospel.

This was a popular choice, but a few candidates misunderstood this to be about Mark's interest rather than authorship. Peter's influence and the Papias tradition were mentioned by some.

Question 5

Assess the view than Mark shows Jesus as both human and divine.

This was not a popular choice, but for those who attempted it their answers were sound and gave a balanced reference to narrative appropriate to both sides of Jesus' character.

Question 6

To what extent can it be said that Luke's gospel shows a special concern for women?

This was very popular. There were very good answers with most candidates remarking that women were only one concern of Luke's gospel and that there are other concerns as well. Most mentioned the attitude to women in the first century and made reference to specific incidents.

Question 7

Examine and discuss the way Luke uses miracle stories.

The danger here was many candidates recounted mere narrative without looking at how and why Luke uses miracle stories. There was little mention of the 'salvation message', or the 'arrival of the kingdom', though there was some mention of showing Jesus' power.

Question 8

'Jesus' conversations with Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman make an important contribution to the theology of John's gospel.' Discuss.

For candidates who were fully prepared, this question on John's gospel was very well answered. Some chose this question unwisely, as they did not seem to have detailed knowledge John's gospel.

Question 9

Examine the view that John's main aim was to interpret the synoptic gospels.

This was not a popular question, with very few knowledgeable answers.

Question 10

Discuss whether there are any acceptable solutions to the synoptic problem.

This was a popular choice, and candidates had clearly been prepared for 'the synoptic problem', providing good discussion.

Question 11

Assess critically Jesus' relationship with the Scribes and the Pharisees.

There were some acceptable answers, with an attempt to show a clear understanding of who the scribes and Pharisees were. There was a lot of narrative based on the various conflict stories. Only a few candidates recognised Jesus' own Jewishness and made appropriate comments.

Question 12

Discuss the part played by Simon Peter in the gospel writings.

This was not a popular choice, but again, those who attempted this commented on the appropriate stories involving Peter – for example, background and calling, leading voice in disciples, his confession, his denial, and the inner circle.

Question 13

Consider the problems presented by the relationship between Jesus and John the Baptist as portrayed in the gospels.

Again, this was not a popular choice, and those who attempted it merely recounted the narrative involving each character.

Question 14

What is a gospel?

Good ideas were produced by candidates, but they needed to develop their discussion further. Many did not give answers beyond the stories of Jesus' life. There was little mention of statements of faith by the gospels' authors, although there was some mention of the purpose and situation of the authors.

<p>Paper 9011/03 The Apostolic Age</p>
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General comments

The comparatively small entry of candidates for this paper makes it difficult to write a report that gives an overall picture of candidates' work and highlights points which need the attention of Teachers. This report, therefore, concentrates on giving more detail about the content expected in the answers. In spite of the small entry, some candidates produced work of a very high quality, which reflected credit on themselves and the excellence of the teaching they had received. While these candidates showed a sound knowledge of the text of the New Testament books studied in this syllabus, and an understanding of the critical issues requiring discussion, at the other end of the scale, there were candidates who showed little knowledge of the text, and no awareness of the points requiring discussion in the questions they were endeavouring to answer.

The most popular questions in **Section A** were **Questions 1** and **2**, while in **Section B** the most popular was **Question 5**. **Questions 1, 2, 4, 7 (a) and (b) and 9** produced the best answers.

As has been stated regularly in recent reports, it cannot be emphasised too strongly that candidates should study the whole of the syllabus using reliable text books, commentaries and study guides which cover the critical issues that arise in this field of study. Furthermore, candidates need to be aware that, if they do not cover the whole syllabus, they may well find themselves in difficulty answering questions in both sections of the paper. A good answer to questions set on the books prescribed for special study in **Section A** may also require some knowledge of the material studied in **Section B**.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

This was one of the most popular questions in the paper, which was generally quite well answered. In most cases correct identification of the context in Acts or Galatians secured a pass mark. Points requiring comment are noted below.

Although Revised Standard Version and New International Version are provided in the paper, only New International Version is given here.

Comment on points of interest or difficulty in four of the following, with brief reference to the general context:

- (a) *They produced false witnesses, who testified, 'This fellow never stops speaking against this holy place and against the law. For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down to us.'* (Acts 6:13-14)

Trial of Stephen before Sanhedrin. They = members of the Synagogue of Freedmen, etc.; the charges they made following a dispute with Stephen, i.e. against Moses – Law now superseded, and 'this holy place' = temple, now redundant. Stephen's line of argument may be inferred from his speech before the Sanhedrin. Possible link with teaching of Jesus on the temple, compare John 2:19.

- (b) *News of this reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.* (Acts 11:22-23)

Context: important part of section in Acts in which Luke recounts the admission of Gentiles into the church; 'news of this' = Jewish Christians from Cyprus and Cyrene preaching the gospel to Greeks with a considerable response – v. 21 'a great number'; problems created by admission of Gentiles to membership of church. N.B. Already welcomed by leadership in Jerusalem (11:18). Importance of Antioch both as a Roman city and centre for Gentile mission; credit given for further information about Barnabas – a man of sympathy and understanding, well equipped to undertake this task.

- (c) *On hearing this, they were baptised into the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.* (Acts 19:5-6)

Context: Paul at Ephesus; 12 disciples who knew, and had received, only John's baptism – explanation required, (vv. 3 and 4). Possible evidence for a sect of John's disciples at Ephesus; compare link with treatment of John the Baptist in 4th Gospel, and its possible Ephesian origin. Their baptism and laying on of hands in the name of Jesus – a further Pentecost, with the manifestation of the Spirit – 'they spoke in tongues and prophesied'. Compare the others in Acts, including Samaritan and Gentile Pentecosts, Acts 8:14-17 and 10:44-47.

- (d) *Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group.* (Galatians 2:12)

Paul's dispute with Peter at Antioch. N.B. part of Paul's argument that he is on a par with the Jerusalem apostles. They = certain men from James; the cause of the dispute, i.e. withdrew from table fellowship with Gentiles – explain reasons. Surprising for Peter to withdraw from table fellowship with Gentiles in view of his experience at the house of Cornelius; views of James and circumcision party. Some difficulties in reconciling Luke's narrative in Acts with the content of Galatians, but detailed discussion not expected. If Luke is accurate in Acts, then this must have happened before the Council of Jerusalem. Barnabas, originally sent to Antioch by Jerusalem church, also caught up in this. Reasons why Paul covers this topic in his letter and the action he took. There was a lot of relevant material in this gobbet; but candidates were not expected to cover everything in detail.

- (e) *For all of you who were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.* (Galatians 3:27-28)

Context: Paul's exposition of justification by faith to counter arguments of Judaizers, which had swayed the Galatians. The Law of Moses, having served its purpose as a 'custodian', is redundant with the coming of Christ. In Christ all sons of God through faith; barriers between Jew and Gentile, slave and free, male and female, cease to exist – the radical nature of Paul's views expressed here, especially as far as traditional Judaism is concerned; 'baptised into Christ'. For a high mark the theological significance of this verse and its centrality in Paul's theology required explanation, especially his concept of unity and 'in Christ'.

- (f) *His son by the slave woman was born in the ordinary way; but his son by the free woman was born as a result of the promise. These things may be taken figuratively. (Galatians 4:23-24a)*

Context: v.21 – ‘you who desire to be under law’ – explain; activities and arguments of the Judaizers and the Galatians’ response to them; what was at stake in their ‘desire to be under law’. Paul’s use of the example of Abraham and his two sons, and the argument he develops about the two covenants they represent – Ishmael, son of Hagar, the slave, and Isaac, his son by his wife Sarah (the free woman), through promise etc. Hagar bears children into slavery

Question 2

Discuss the date and purpose of Acts.

As well as being one of the most popular questions in the paper, this produced the highest number of good answers. On the other hand, weaker candidates tended either to make a dogmatic statement about the date of Acts without any supporting evidence or argument, or neglected this part of the question completely, and then went on to summarize the contents of the book.

- (i) **Date:** The date of Luke is inextricably bound up with the question of authorship. Candidates who argued for an early date were expected to provide evidence, both internal and external, supporting Lucan authorship, including reference to Luke’s Gospel (as in all the standard commentaries), noting similarity of style, distinctive interests, etc. N.B. Luke’s gospel usually dated after the Fall of Jerusalem because of his additions and alterations to the material in Mark 13, etc., therefore Acts written after 70, and after gospel, compare Acts 1:1. Material in epistles confirms that Luke was a companion of Paul. The abrupt ending of Acts has also been taken as evidence for an earlier date, but there are arguments for seeing Acts as a complete work, since the gospel arrives in Rome through Paul who has freedom to preach, etc.

Arguments for later date: Luke and Acts anonymous; historical inaccuracies, points of conflict with Paul’s epistles, possible use of Josephus, the flavour and style of some of the narratives, e.g. Council of Jerusalem, have led some scholars to the conclusion that Acts was written long after the events it describes. Majority of scholars date Acts between 70 and 85 C.E., but Goodspeed produced reasons for a date as late as 90 C.E. The Tübingen School, and more recently J.C. O’Neill (on the grounds that Justin Martyr shows no knowledge of Luke/Acts), have argued for a second century date.

- (ii) **Purpose:** This part of the question required analysis of the contents of Acts, and was tackled in a variety of ways. Full credit was given for any well argued case, which covered the required ground. Credit was also given for the use of material from Luke’s gospel, if used to support a particular point/argument based on material in Acts.

Following some of the standard commentaries most of the more able candidates discussed whether Luke’s primary purpose in writing Acts was evangelistic, apologetic, or to provide a history of the early church. Arguments for Luke as:

- (i) **An evangelist:** Acts gives content of kerygma of early Church in sermons of Peter and Paul, and shows how they approached their ministry as apostles; shows impact of gospel on different individuals and communities – for example, Lydia, Philippian Jailer, Ephesus, Athens, Corinth, etc.; compare emphasis on mission(s) in the Gospel.
- (ii) **A historian:** Luke obviously interested in certain aspects of history, compare dating in Luke 2; in spite of difficulties in reconciling details in Acts with Pauline epistles, especially Galatians, archaeological evidence has vindicated Luke – examples. But was his primary purpose to write a history of the early church? Surely too much omitted.
- (iii) **An apologist:** Luke shows favourable attitude of Roman authorities to Christians, examples; also shows Christians behaving responsibly; but insufficient evidence that Acts was written as a ‘defence brief’ for Paul. Much to support the view that Acts is an *apologia* (reasoned defence), commendation of Christianity to Theophilus, whether Theophilus is an individual or a name for any ‘lover of God’.

Some candidates were aware of the Tübingen theory, that Acts is a second century document whose purpose is to ‘paper over cracks inside Christianity, heal old wounds’, etc., in an attempt to demonstrate the catholicity and harmony of the church, while others discussed Acts as a record of the work of the Holy Spirit in and through the church.

Question 3

How far does Galatians reveal the beliefs and teachings of Paul's opponents in Galatia?

A good answer to this question required discussion of who Paul's opponents were. 5:10 would seem to imply that a particular individual was responsible for the trouble in Galatia, but contrast 5:12 and 6:12. While the majority view is that they were Jewish Christians, possibly members of the circumcision party mentioned in the epistle, some scholars argue that the main opposition came from Gentile proselytes to the Jewish faith, who became Christians; 4:8ff might be taken to support this view.

In 1:10ff and 2:1ff Paul is clearly answering attacks on his authority as an apostle, and the substance of these attacks can be deduced from his replies to them. Paul's counter arguments also show that they believed in the following: full observance of the Law of Moses, including circumcision, a requirement for Gentiles to be admitted to the church, e.g. 1:6ff, 3:1ff, 4:21, 5:1ff, 6:12ff. Opposition to Paul's 'heretical' doctrine of justification by faith, undermining of the law, antinomian behaviour, etc., implied in 5:13ff. 4:8-12 is also relevant.

Question 4

Assess the political, economic and religious factors that aided or hindered the mission of the early church. (Evidence should be drawn from the epistles studied for this paper as well as Acts 1-21:15.)

This was a popular question, but generally not well done. Several candidates referred to potentially relevant examples in the early chapters of Acts, but failed to relate them to the question as part of a coherent answer. In view of the considerable amount of relevant material candidates were not expected to cover all the points listed below. For a high mark they were expected to cover some of the most important points in each section, with appropriate comment/classification, i.e. whether they aided or hindered the progress and mission of the early church:

- (a) Political/economic factors: good roads and communications facilitated missionary work of the church; 'Pax Romana'; Paul's use of his Roman citizenship and privileges; Judaism 'religio licita', but note particularly, expulsion of Jews from Rome by Claudius, and general suspicion of Jews with whom Christians would inevitably be associated, compare attitude of Jewish groups to Rome and political situation in Palestine, increasing nationalism, influence of Zealots, increasing need of Church to dissociate from Judaism. Jewish Sanhedrin and its authority; Felix, Festus and Agrippa, the efforts of Paul (Rom. 13) and Luke to show Christianity not subversive. The trouble caused by Paul's Jewish opponents, the inevitable clash of the proclamation of the gospel with vested interests, e.g. Philippi and Ephesus.
- (b) Religious factors: some distinction required between Jews and Gentiles.

Jews: synagogues in many Gentile cities in Mediterranean area. The attractiveness of the Christian faith to Jews has to be seen against the background of the Judaism of that era, e.g., the political time serving of the Sadducees, who controlled the Temple, also to a large extent the economy; their subservience to Rome; also the legalism of the Pharisees, and the dangerous and violent nationalism of the Zealots. Christianity fulfilment of Judaism and O.T. hopes – Jesus not only Messiah, but also the Deuteronomic prophet and the new and greater Moses. The teaching of Jesus, the evidence of his (Messianic) miracles and resurrection – the 'power of God was with him', so also with the Apostles after Pentecost, compare Acts 3:1ff; the Samaritan and Gentile Pentecosts. The warmth of fellowship within the early church and the attraction of its worship; the concern for the poor and needy, compare Acts 6; also ministry of healing. The apostolic kerygma with its hope and promise of eternal life, also the note of warning of the impending judgement of God/return of Jesus. Christianity a faith that 'worked' and met human need.

Gentiles: much of the above also relevant. The decadence of contemporary Greek and Roman religion of that era, with its 'incredible' system of a multiplicity of gods and goddesses, some of them local; the barrenness of current philosophies and their inability to meet human need, also true of gnosticism and the mystery religions of Asia Minor with their often bizarre beliefs and practices. The attractiveness of the monotheism, and high moral and ethical teaching of both Judaism and Christianity. N.B. examples such as the Centurion in Lk. 7 and Cornelius in Acts. The universality of the Gospel with its message of God's love for the individual as well as for the human race; the willingness of the church to welcome 'sinners and outcasts'.

On the negative side the Gospel was a 'stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles', 1 Cor. 1:20 – compare the response to Paul's preaching at Athens. The inevitable clash of ideologies when the gospel was proclaimed, the cost to converts of forsaking their old way of life, allegiances, etc. Also relevant, examples of persecution, and reasons for them. The continuing opposition of Jews and final banishment of Jewish Christians from the synagogue.

Section B

Question 5

'Through his background, education and gifts, Paul was uniquely qualified to fulfil his vocation as the apostle to the Gentiles.' Discuss.

This was a popular question, which gave considerable scope to candidates who knew the relevant material, and used it imaginatively, but it proved to be a snare for weaker ones, who gave potted biographies of Paul, or summarised the accounts of his conversion, without relating their material to the question. Acts 9 is of particular importance, though there is also a considerable amount of relevant material elsewhere, e.g., 2 Cor. 11:22ff, of which some candidates were aware, although it is outside set texts. In answering questions on Acts candidates often refer to material in the later chapters, i.e., 21:16 to the end, so credit was given to candidates who drew upon material in Acts 22 and 26, but no candidate was penalised for not referring to this material, since it is outside the syllabus.

Paul 'a Hebrew of the Hebrews', 'brought up at the feet of Gamaliel', a Pharisee 'zealous for the law', which led to his acquiring a profound knowledge of the Jewish scriptures (apparently from the LXX). 'Religious background' includes his conversion experience, which convinced him of the reality of the resurrection of Jesus, and his vocation as the 'apostle to the Gentiles', and was also of profound importance in the formation of his theology. His background as a Greek speaking Jew of the Diaspora in Tarsus also helped him in his understanding of the issues involved in the admission of Gentiles to the fellowship of the Church. Clearly Paul was physically very strong, and able to bear the rigours of constant journeying, opposition, physical attacks, etc. His natural gifts, if they did not include eloquence – compare 1 Cor. 1:17 – most certainly included considerable gifts of intellect, which uniquely equipped him as the 'theologian of the early church', while his charismatic gifts also empowered his ministry as an apostle, evangelist, teacher and pastor. He was also by birth a Roman citizen. This may have misled a number of weaker candidates, who claimed that Paul was a Gentile.

Full credit was given to candidates who commented on possible negative aspects of his character and temperament, which may be seen in his dispute with Barnabas and his attitude to John Mark, etc.

Question 6

What did Paul mean by salvation? How far did he see it as a future hope, as well as a present experience?

Salvation not by works of the Law, but through faith in response to the gospel, e.g., Rom. 1:16, 1 Cor. 15:2, etc. A present state: Rom. 5:1ff. A continuing process: 1 Cor. 1:18 (N.B. present participle). A future hope: Rom. 5:9 and 8:24 – saved in hope and from the wrath to come.

Saved from: the consequences of sin, judgment, tyranny of Law, death (the last enemy), principalities and powers. Saved for: eternal life as sons of God (Rom. 8), also saved 'in Christ'. Saved through suffering, fire etc., 1 Cor. 3:15. Salvation by grace through faith, but depends on our holding fast to the gospel, 1 Cor. 15:2.

In gospels 'sozo' and cognates have overtones of wholeness, health, etc., so also in Paul, but less obviously. Paul expounds salvation primarily in corporate terms, while the Western tradition of Christianity tends to approach the subject from the salvation of the individual, which may lead to the misunderstanding of Paul.

There was a wealth of material for candidates to draw upon.

Question 7

- (a) *Discuss Paul's teaching on the unity of the church. Include some discussion of the circumstances that led him to give this teaching.*

Not many candidates attempted this question, but it produced some good answers. Candidates were expected to discuss the following passages, commenting on the reasons which led him to give this teaching: 1 Cor. 1:10ff, 3:1ff., (N.B. importance of image of temple of the Holy Spirit), chs. 12-14. Also, unity of church threatened by immorality (1 Cor. 5:1), lawsuits (6:1ff.), food offered to idols (8:1ff.), disorder at Eucharist (11:17ff.) and false teaching about resurrection, (15:12ff.). More able candidates referred to relevant material in other epistles, e.g., danger from antinomianism and Judaizers in Gal. and Rom., Col. 3:11ff., etc.

- (b) *Discuss Paul's teaching on the freedom and responsibility of a Christian. Include some discussion of the circumstances that led him to give this teaching.*

Topics which candidates were expected to cover included freedom from slavery to sin, law, death, judgment, (c.f. 1 Cor. 2:10ff.), condemnation, power of flesh, weakness, (c.f. Rom.8:26), frustration, fear, evil powers, rules, rituals, etc.; also the things which a Christian is free to do, such as eat meat offered to idols in certain circumstances. But liberty is not licence (flesh); the Christian will continue to seek and obey the will of God, and will in fact do what the commandments enjoin; love fulfils the law, etc.; respect for 'weaker' brother, 1 Cor. 9 and 10:23ff. To some degree love and the Holy Spirit limit our freedom.

Rom. 8 one of the key passages; other relevant passages include Rom. 6:18-22, Rom. 12, and especially Gal. 5:16ff. Christian responsibility also includes bearing one another's burdens, Gal. 6:2.

Circumstances, etc.: (i) Judaistic controversy – positive stress on freedom, but also necessary to rule out misunderstandings, ('continue in sin', do evil/good, etc.); (ii) Gentile enthusiasm in danger of leading to antinomianism (iii) specific practical problems which arose, as in the case of meat offered to idols.

Question 8

Compare the significance of 'the new covenant' for Paul and for the author of Hebrews.

Paul: based on Last Supper, especially 1 Cor. 11. Death of Christ = sacrifice sealing new covenant between God and his (new) people; links acts of God/Christ with life of people. Note also Galatians 3:15ff and 4:21ff, where he discusses 'the new covenant' in relation to the two sons of Abraham, as well as Sinai.

Hebrews: 8:6-13 especially important. Note also 10:16-29, 12:24, 13:20-21. In contrast to Paul, Hebrews discuss the new covenant against the background of the Old Testament priesthood and sacrificial system, although these ideas are also in Paul.

Both Paul and Hebrews contrast faith with the Law, but spell it out differently; the ethical/practical is perhaps stronger in Paul, also the forensic; emphasis on efficacious sacrifice and forgiveness stronger in Hebrews, though Paul has it also, compare supra.

Question 9

'More Jewish than Christian.' How justified is this description of the epistle of James?

This was a fairly popular question, and generally quite well answered.

- (i) Jewish/non-Christian features

Name of Jesus only mentioned in 1:1, 2:1; no mention of resurrection, atonement or Holy Spirit. Writer does not refer to earthly life of Jesus, but turns to Old Testament for examples, e.g., Abraham, Rahab, Job, Elijah. His mind steeped in Old Testament, and the assumption follows that his readers must have shared his outlook. References to Mosaic Law, e.g., chapter. 2; Gentiles completely ignored, no discussion of their admission into the church (or the problems it caused). James a common Jewish name. '12 tribes of the dispersion' 1:1, but may refer to church as the New Israel - not many candidates were aware of this. Good Greek style, affinities with LXX, also rabbinical style of argument. Though it was not necessary for a good answer, credit was given for discussion of the authorship of this epistle, provided the material was handled in a manner relevant to the question.

(ii) Christian features

Some references to Jesus, but are they Christian interpolations into an originally Jewish document? Parallels with the sayings and teaching of Jesus, e.g. Sermon on the Mount. Significant parallels with 1 Peter and epistles of Paul; compare the work of Carrington and Selwyn on the primitive Christian catechism. Faith works, possible evidence that James is a (Jewish) Christian document. Primitive theology, if Christian, may be explained by the fact that it is a very primitive Christian homily or epistle addressed to Jewish Christians, but not easy to accept this in the light of the work of Selwyn and Carrington.