

DIVINITY

Paper 9011/01

Prophets of the Old Testament

General Comments

The standard of responses was generally high. Most candidates answered the right number of questions from the required sections. Time management was generally good.

In order to gain higher marks on **Question 10**, it would be necessary for some candidates to write longer answers by comparison with what was written for most of the essay questions. It would also be useful to avoid writing in too much detail about whether a source is from J, E, D or P, for example. It is very difficult to be precise with this kind of detail, since the JEDP hypothesis *is* a hypothesis and not an established fact. Moreover attributing the works of prophets like Amos and Hosea to Pentateuchal/Hexateuchal sources is not appropriate.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Prophecy in general and Pre-canonical Prophets

Question 1

Discuss the importance of miracles in the message of the pre-canonical prophets.

Most candidates gave a good overview of the miracle stories associated with the pre-canonical prophets. This was done best for Moses and Elijah. Some candidates asserted that Samuel did not perform miracles; others referred to the miraculous nature of his call, the way in which he brought about the defeat of the Philistines (1 Samuel 7), and Samuel's choice of Saul (1 Samuel 9-10).

The best answers discussed the importance of the miracle stories within the message of the prophets, for example they argued that Moses used miracles as a means of persuasion to bring about the liberation of the Hebrew slaves. In order to gain more marks, candidates need to avoid simply listing miracles.

Question 2

'Samuel was the founder of Old Testament prophecy.' Discuss this claim.

The best answers generally focused on F.M. Cross's argument that prophecy in Israel arose with the monarchy because prophecy was a political institution tied to the court. Most referred to the transitional idea in connection with Samuel, that under his leadership the office of seer developed into that of the *nabi*. This material was used as a springboard to discuss other theories of the origins of Old Testament prophecy, for example that prophecy originated with Moses, in connection with the role of covenant mediator. Some candidates discussed the influence of editorial comment in connection with Moses, seeing the prophetic aspect of his role as an editorial overlay.

Some responses referred to the role of Elijah in keeping prophecy alive in Israel; others to the possibility that Abraham's intercessory role qualified him to be called a prophet. Some essays could have been improved by making comparative judgements on these points as opposed to simply stating them without further analysis and comment.



Question 3

Assess the importance of Elijah in the development of Old Testament prophecy.

Elijah's main importance was judged to be that of saving Yahweh worship from extinction in face of the threat to it from Ahab and Jezebel's preference for Baal worship. Elijah was prominent in reviving contact with God and vision; in promoting social justice as required by Yahweh in connection with the affair of Naboth's vineyard; in his display of Yahweh's power through miracles such as the drought and the contest with the Baal prophets on Mount Carmel; and in his archetypal personal appearance as a human figure who experiences a sense of failure and isolation that became typical in later prophets, particularly Jeremiah.

Candidates could have gained more marks by concentrating on the developmental aspects of Elijah's work, as required by the question, as opposed simply to listing what Elijah did.

Question 4

'The prophets spoke only the word of God, and not their own opinions.' How far do you agree?

This question was answered well in the particular sense that most candidates made a positive case for the view that true prophets inevitably spoke Yahweh's word whereas false prophets did not. A variety of criteria were used to illustrate this, for example: the criterion of fulfilment; the suggestion that true prophets experienced a call which authenticated their messages; the use of the oracular formulae (*Thus says Yahweh/Oracle of Yahweh*); narratives where true prophets confronted false prophets, and so on. The best responses realised that this question was not simply about the difference between true and false prophets but was about whether or not prophets exercised their own judgement concerning the issues they addressed. Some referred to Nathan's personal comments to David as examples of this; others (for example) to the very complicated character of Jeremiah, which suggests that Jeremiah did offer his own opinions.

Question 5

Consider the view that for kings during the pre-canonical period, prophets were a necessary evil.

The suggestion that the prophets were "a necessary evil" was generally taken to mean that they were *necessarily* evil. This was accepted by the Examiners as an interpretation of the wording. The alternative understanding was that kings saw prophets as being evil in the sense that the prophets constantly criticised what they did, but also saw that the prophets were necessary as Yahweh's way of communicating the divine will. For the first interpretation, candidates referred to Moses' dealings with the Pharaoh, to Samuel's dealings with Saul, and to Elijah's confrontations with Ahab and Jezebel, suggesting that what the prophets did would have appeared evil to those monarchs. For the second interpretation, candidates pointed out that prophets were needed in order to anoint kings in the first place; they also had specific court functions such as advice on war and politics; and they were involved in selecting and de-selecting kings. Both interpretations worked well.

Section B

Pre-exilic Prophets, with special reference to Amos, Hosea, Isaiah of Jerusalem and Jeremiah

Question 6

In your view, what is the best way of interpreting the prophet's personal experience in Hosea 1-3?

The majority of candidates suggested that Hosea 1-3 can best be interpreted as an allegorical story representing Israel's relationship with God. Opinion was divided as to whether the story represents a factual account of Hosea's experiences or was a literary fiction (or approximation) for the purposes of illustration. Most pointed out that for a prophet to marry a prostitute would have been unlikely in the extreme; whereas others suggested that the poignancy of Hosea's prophecy is a reflection of the fact that his experience was real, and not imaginary. Candidates also raised the question of the identity of the woman in chapter 3; most concluding that this was still Gomer, since otherwise the force of the (re)marriage would be lost. The details of the Israel-Gomer / Yahweh-Hosea relationship were generally well done, particularly in the references to Yahweh's *hesed*/love for Israel.

To gain higher marks, knowledge of the details of chapters 1-3 needed to be known more accurately.



Question 7

'Amos was nothing more than a prophet of social justice.' Do you agree?

This question was done well by most, with candidates displaying a very in-depth knowledge of the text of Amos. Nearly all candidates referred to a number of texts illustrating Amos' concern for social justice, such as: selling the righteous for silver; the fat cows of Bashan oppressing the poor and demanding drink; and turning aside the needy at the gate of justice. Most candidates suggested that Amos was not just a prophet of social justice, but had other sides to his message, such as the strong emphasis on doom. Others referred to his emphasis on universalism, illustrated through the oracles about the foreign nations; others to his occasional use of salvation oracles, although most suggested that these were editorial additions. The best answers often made the comment that Amos' role as a prophet of social justice was simply an *inevitable* part of his role as a prophet of Yahweh. Amos' role was to deliver the message given to him by Yahweh, whatever that included.

Question 8

Examine the importance of symbolic acts in the prophecies of Isaiah of Jerusalem and Jeremiah.

In order to access the higher marks for this question, candidates needed to discuss the importance of symbolic acts in the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, and not just to list the symbolic acts performed by these prophets. The symbolic acts in Jeremiah were known better than those in Isaiah, with the names of Isaiah's sons being a potential source of confusion.

The best answers used a range of material from both prophets to illustrate the idea that symbolic acts were a dramatic enforcement of the message – a visual presentation of the spoken word which had the power to bring about the message itself. For Isaiah, most referred to Shear-jashub, Immanuel and Maher-shalal-hash-baz, mainly in connection with the Syro-Ephraimite War; also to Isaiah walking naked and barefoot as a warning to Egypt. For Jeremiah, most referred to Jeremiah's withdrawal from society, and to other acts symbolizing the coming downfall and isolation of Judah, such as the symbol of the linen belt, the potter's house, the smashing of the clay pot, and wearing the yoke.

Question 9

In your view, which were greater, the pre-canonical or the pre-exilic prophets?

The majority of candidates argued that the pre-canonical prophets were greater in the sense that they came first and set the ground-rules for prophets who followed, particularly in terms of the covenantal relationship, the establishment of the monarchy, the use of mighty miracles, and so on. A few argued that the pre-exilic prophets were greater in that their views made it into print, and that unlike the pre-canonical prophets, they actually prophesied total doom on the nation. A common conclusion was that all prophets were called for a specific task, so it is difficult and perhaps impossible to make comparisons between them. Most views were argued persuasively and with appropriate evidence.

Section C

Question 10

(a) Numbers 11:27-30

Candidates generally knew this context very well, and commented in detail on a number of issues. Most of the comment focused on the transfer of Moses' spirit; the 70:1 ratio; the issue of prophetic 'contagion' affecting the two outside the camp; the origins of ecstatic prophecy; the question of the authenticity of the passage as a whole; the peculiarity that the 70 elders prophesied no more; the association with the E tradition, and the discussion between Joshua and Moses about Moses' status.



(b) 1 Samuel 28:6-7

Nearly all candidates commented well on the ironic nature of Saul's consultation with the medium at Endor – ironic in that mediums and the like had been banished from the land by Saul's own command. Most therefore commented well also on Saul's desperate state of mind in feeling that he had no recourse other than to consult the spirit of Samuel. Candidates also referred to the nature of the traditional 'lots' of dreams and Urim. One way of gaining higher marks here would have been to have a greater knowledge of the background to the gobbet in Saul's pursuance of the war with the Philistines, since Saul's consultation with Samuel was on the eve of the crucial battle with the numerically superior Philistine army.

(c) 1 Kings 19:4

Just about all candidates correctly identified this extract as being within the revelation to Elijah on Horeb, following Elijah's destruction of the Baal prophets on Carmel. Most raised the question of why, having disposed of several hundred enemy prophets without turning a hair, Elijah was now so fearful of Jezebel. Some made the interesting comment that this was because his destruction of the prophets had been done in an ecstatic state, and this had now worn off; although some suggested further that this was unlikely in view of the speed of his translation to a location 130 miles south of Jezreel. Further comment was made on the significance of Horeb in northern tradition (as opposed to the Judahite Sinai tradition), particularly as a place of theophany. Candidates also commented well on the unusual nature of the theophany (perhaps symbolizing a de-emphasis on ecstatic utterance in the future), and on why Elijah insisted that he was no better than his fathers (perhaps because of a sense of self-loathing at killing so many people).

(d) 1 Kings 22:21-23

The background to this extract in the Aramean/Syrian wars was generally well known. Most of the extended comment focused on the confrontation with the court prophets of Ahab. Some candidates saw the real issue here, which is the desire of Yahweh for one of the heavenly court to 'entice' Ahab into a venture that will lead to his death in battle. In this sense, the court prophets are producing 'true' prophecy, since the 'lying spirit of prophecy' is sent by Yahweh. Although this gives an assurance that Yahweh is in charge even of false prophecy, candidates pointed out that it does little to explain the confrontations between 'true' and 'false' prophets elsewhere, particularly in the case of Jeremiah and Hananiah, where the latter's 'false' status is indicated by Jeremiah's prediction of his fate. In order to access the higher marks in the 'gobbet' questions generally, it would be useful for candidates to be able to discuss problematic issues such as these as opposed to re-telling the story.

(e) Amos 3:1-2

The best answers located this in Amos' use of 'election' theology: the result of the election of Israel as God's chosen people is that it entails greater responsibility towards the covenant demands. Ignoring those commands will lead to inevitable punishment, and the Book of Amos gives a detailed analysis of the ways in which the covenant has been ignored. Most of the comment on these issues was detailed, illustrating clearly the general point that to achieve high marks in extract questions, candidates should be able to comment on specific issues raised by the extract given, as opposed to making very general comments about sin and punishment.

(f) Amos 9:11-12

With regard to the comment (for **(e)**) about generalised responses to 'gobbet' questions, the same applies here to gobbet **(f)**, where in order to access the higher marks, candidates should be able to discuss the implications of the extract quoted beyond simply repeating the words of the prophet. Most identified the focus of interest in the nature of 9:11-15, which many scholars see as part of a general editing of the Book of the Twelve in order to inject a note of future hope into the prophecy. Candidates commented usefully on the history and fate of the Davidic dynasty, the relationship between Israel and Edom, and the universal power of Yahweh.



(g) Hosea 4:1-3

As a further emphasis, with texts such as this, to access the higher marks it is necessary to comment specifically on the text as it appears, as opposed to simply re-writing the text or paraphrasing it. The focus of the oracle is on the *'rib'* 'controversy' that God brings against Israel. This is a technical term with a legal focus – the *'rib'* is a covenant lawsuit – a legal case brought against Israel specifically for breaking the terms of the covenant agreement. In particular, "swearing, lying, killing, stealing, and committing adultery" are a reminder of the Ten Commandments, which are the central text of the covenant agreement: breaking these commandments is in effect breaking the covenant. The fact that the land loses beasts, birds and fish is a sign that the covenant has ended, and that the covenant benefits of 'the land' are being withdrawn by God.

(h) Isaiah 8:1-3

Most candidates gave a correct translation of 'Maher-shalal-has-baz'. Some applied its warning to Judah, some to Egypt, and some to Assyria. The assurance here is that before the child is able to speak the words, 'my father', or 'my mother', the wealth of Damascus and Syria will be carried away by the Assyrians, so the oracle is a word of assurance to Ahab (a third sign after those of Shear-jashub and Immanuel). There was some useful comment on the background to the Syro-Ephraimite War. There was also comment on the prophetess, generally that this refers to a cultic prophetess, and/or to Isaiah's wife.

(i) Isaiah 11:1-3

Most correctly identified this as part of the prophecy of the ideal Davidic king who will bring about a new messianic age. Some were able to suggest that the background to the oracle might have been the accession to the throne of Hezekiah. Most of the comment was about the nature of the king, for example that he would not rely on what his senses tell him but rather on the spiritual gifts that he received from God. There was some useful comparison with the oracle in 9:6-7.

(j) Jeremiah 2:1-3

Despite the fact that there is much to discuss in this extract, very few candidates answered it. The context follows on from Jeremiah's call narrative, and refers to the period of the election, when the relationship between Yahweh and Israel was like that of a husband and bride, and was based on devotion. Most of the comment was on this metaphor, for example in comparing it with the relationship between Yahweh and Israel as illustrated in the Hosea/Gomer story. The significance of the 'land not sown' was correctly identified as showing the trust that subsisted between the Hebrew slaves and God in the desert, where there were no crops to provide food, so life was sustained purely by trust in Yahweh. The quality of comment was generally good. The first-fruits metaphor was not expounded in great detail.

(k) Jeremiah 29:4-6

Most recognised this as a part of Jeremiah's letters to the exiles in Babylon from 598 B.C. After 598, and before the destruction of 587, there was a tension between those who had gone into exile and those who had been left in Jerusalem. Candidates offered a fair overview of Jeremiah's advice to the exiles, showing his emphasis that the exile would not be brief, a position which landed him in trouble with Zedekiah and the court.



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

General Comments

The standard of questions was good and consistent in degrees of difficulty/ease. The questions on the Synoptics were, as always, more popular than the questions on St. John's Gospel and the general Questions 10 – 14.

There was a noticeable improvement on the standard of performance this year. The range of marks increased at the higher end and decreased at the lower end. A few candidates achieved 90%+. There was evidence of wider reading and some candidates made appropriate use of this within their answers to the questions. The standard of writing was good and candidates made a clear attempt to understand key theological terms.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

(a) Matthew 1:17

A popular question which was generally answered very well. Placed into the correct context with relevant comment surrounding the mention of Abraham and David, the fourteen generations and significance of *'the Christ'*.

(b) Matthew 23:5-7

Candidates who attempt this question need to set the context as well as making comments on the Pharisees as a religious group. The difference between the Pharisees, the Scribes and the Sadducees needs to be known so that the answer given is relevant to the question.

(c) Mark 1:7-8

Another popular question with a lot of relevant comment. All candidates placed this in the correct context and wrote about the significance of John preparing the way for Jesus: that Jesus was mightier than John and that He would baptise with the Holy Spirit.

(d) Mark 14:41-42

A very popular question which was well answered. All candidates placed it in the correct context and made relevant comment on key points: the disciples sleeping, their lack of understanding, the significance of the term *Son of Man* and the identity of the betrayer.

(e) Luke 8 :1-3

Most candidates who attempted this question commented on the role of women and Luke's inclusion of women in his gospel. Mention was made of *mission* and the significance of the 12 and the healing of evil spirits. This question usually brought a lot of good answers.

(f) Luke 24:17-18

Those candidates who answered this gobbet, correctly identified the context and made good relevant comments surrounding Jesus' appearance on the Emmaus Road and the 'things' that had happened in Jerusalem.

(g) John 2:9-10

The context was correctly identified and the comments were relevant surrounding the first miracle in John's Gospel. *Signs* were mentioned and a lot of discussion about the symbolic significance of the *new wine*.

(h) John 3:2-3

A few candidates chose to answer this question. To write a good answer, candidates need to set the context, naming the man who came to Jesus and commenting on why he came *by night*. Comment was made on the use of the title *Rabbi* and on the significance of being *born anew*.

Question 2

Examine the importance of the Sermon on the Mount for Matthew's gospel.

This was a very popular choice of question to answer. Candidates had learnt the content of the Sermon on the Mount and were able to make a lot of relevant comment to the substance of the sermon. Some made reference to the *Beattitudes* in detail and quoted them accurately. The comparison between Jesus and Moses came out and the role of the Torah was referred to. The better candidates commented on the ecclesiological and liturgical significance of some of the material and placed the Sermon in the context of Matthew's technique and with regard to the Gospel as a whole. All candidates included relevant material.

Question 3

Assess Matthew's treatment of Simon Peter in the discussions at Caesarea Philippi and at the Transfiguration.

Those who attempted this question did so very well. Comments were made about the role of Peter as a key figure in Jesus' ministry and in the Church. Mention was made of the *inner circle* and of Peter's seeming understanding of the significance of the event but, at the same time, his lack of understanding. Comments also included Matthew's ecclesiological interests in the use of *church* here and Peter's moral and doctrinal authority.

Question 4

"Mark emphasises the humanity of Jesus." Discuss.

This was probably the most popular question to answer and there were many answers of a very high standard. Most candidates did refer to Mark's picture of Jesus as divine but the bulk of the comment was about how Mark handles his material to reflect Jesus' human side. Mention of Jesus *sleeping, showing pity, showing anger, showing compassion, unable to perform miracles* all feature in the answers given.

Question 5

Explain why Mark shows Jesus trying to keep his messiahship a secret.

This was also a very popular question to answer and many candidates opted to do both this and **Question 4**. Understanding of Mark's Gospel was of a good standard with a lot of reference to scholars made. Those who did attempt this question usually made reference to the work of Wrede's theory and candidates were familiar with the traditional texts and arguments – e.g. the rebuking of demons, the silencing of the reporting of miracles and Jesus retiring from the public view. A discussion of why there is a command to be silent was included in the best answers (because of His messiahship? false impressions? the inclusion of Peter's confession). There is a lot of material available and many candidates made use of it.



Question 6

Why did Luke write his gospel and for whom?

The best answers to this question showed a genuine attempt to put the gospel of Luke in context and dealt with why Luke wrote his gospel. The dedication to Theophilus was commented on and Luke's desire to provide the truth and give an orderly account of what took place formed candidates' answers to the purpose of Luke therefore this question was answered well. It was a very popular choice.

Question 7

Explain the significance of the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the lost or prodigal son in Luke.

This was a popular question with some good answers. To get high marks candidates needed to comment on the parables. Some answers included the key themes of *forgiveness, love and patience, repentance, joy and sacrifice* and attempted to place their knowledge of the text in a wider context of the gospel message as a whole.

Question 8

Discuss John's theology of the Spirit.

There was a lot of material which could have been included in an answer for this question. Those who attempted it concentrated mainly on the idea that the spirit was to be a counsellor and the comforter. Mention could have been made of the other functions of the spirit e.g. a provider of support, a provider of truth, dwelling in and among the disciples, re-enforcing the message Jesus taught, bearing witness to the disciples of Jesus, having authority from the Father and glorifying Jesus.

Question 9

Discuss the importance of the 'I am' sayings in John's gospel.

This was the more popular of the questions on St John's Gospel. Those who attempted it answered it well. Most answers covered the main '*I am*' sayings with plenty of discussion around them.

Question 10

To what extent can the miracles be seen as parables in action?

To answer this question candidates needed to understand what the main thrust of the question was, how miracles relate to the concept of 'parables in action'. The comment rested largely on the fact that candidates felt parables and miracles were not linked but seen as separate.

Question 11

Examine the relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus in the gospels.

A very popular choice of question and answered well. There is a lot of material to use and the majority of candidates attempted to include it and made intelligent and relevant comment upon it. The best answers developed the deeper issues in the relationship between Jesus and John and considered whether the gospels are hiding a tension that existed in the early church between the followers of Jesus and the followers of John.

Question 12

How far do the gospels present the kingdom of God as a future event?

This question was handled well by the candidates who chose it. Answers tended to get the balance right between discussing the kingdom as a future event as well as looking at the material that may suggest that the kingdom is a present reality. Comment was intelligent and reflecting scholarly views.



Question 13

Assess Jesus' debates with the Pharisees.

For those who attempted this question there was a lot of reference to the relevant material surrounding the conflict and discussions between Jesus and the Pharisees. The best answers made an attempt to 'assess' rather than retell the conflict instances. Some included the fact that Jesus was not entirely condemning of the Pharisees' attitudes and actions and the fact that he did have positive instances with some. This provided a balance to their answers.

Question 14

Examine the gospel accounts of the trial of Jesus before Pilate.

To produce a good answer candidates needed to keep the different trial accounts separate and to show the differences between the accounts. A discussion of the relationship between Pilate and the Jewish authorities and the distinct material found in the Johannine account is necessary for the best answers.

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Paper 9011/03
The Apostolic Age

General comments

There was a further increase this year in the entries for this paper, and there were answers of the very highest quality to all the questions, including each of the gobbets. A good answer will require the candidate to show knowledge of the relevant material and also the ability to present it in the form of a well-reasoned and coherent argument, which is focused on the main point of the question.

Candidates need to be familiar with some of the technical terms scholars use in the study of the New Testament, such as eschatology, historicity, and parousia. One distinction, of which all candidates for this paper should be aware, is the fundamental distinction New Testament scholars have drawn between *didache* (teaching) and *kerygma* (preaching), a distinction, which was made by the early church. Questions in this paper often reflect this distinction. Candidates should be made aware of the fact that in English translations of the New Testament the word 'preach' invariably has this narrower meaning than it generally has today, where, if a minister or clergyman 'preaches' a sermon, it may include either *didache* or *kerygma*, or both.

'Judaizer' is a term which is used to describe those Christians, who believed that Gentiles should become Jews. The term (Jewish) Church should only be used of the Christian Church in its earliest days, before any Gentiles were accepted into its membership. The right understanding of both these terms is essential for the understanding of the development of the early Church as described in Acts and the Pauline epistles.

It is very important that candidates should be familiar with the chronology of the New Testament and the more significant events in the Apostolic Age. Two especially important dates in the history of the Church in the Apostolic Age are that of the Council of Jerusalem, usually dated at 48 or 49C.E., and the Fall of Jerusalem in 70C.E.

Also 'candidates should study the authorship, date, circumstances of composition, purposes of Acts and the epistles included in the syllabus. While very detailed questions concerning critical problems will not be set, candidates should nevertheless be familiar with the more important problems relating to particular books including the question of the historical value of Acts in the light of the evidence of Paul's letters, the date and destination of Galatians, the authorship and destination of Hebrews, and the notably Jewish character of James.' (Although the Authorised Version of the Bible attributes Hebrews to Paul, the opinion of the great majority of scholars on the basis of internal evidence is that this epistle was not written by him.)

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

(a) 1 Corinthians 1:21

The context of this gobbet was especially important. Better answers were expected to explain why, according to Paul, to preach '*Christ crucified*' is 'a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are being saved it is the power of God'. Credit was also given for comment on '*wisdom*' (the significance of wisdom in Jewish wisdom literature and in Greek philosophy).

(b) 1 Corinthians 6:19

As well as being the most popular of the gobbet questions, this was the best answered of all the gobbets. The context was Paul's condemnation of sexual immorality and candidates commented on various things such as: the '*Temple of the Holy Spirit*', '*You are not your own*', Paul's understanding of the '*indwelling spirit*', and the Christian life as a call to holiness.



(c) 1 Corinthians 11:25-26

This was a popular gobbet and generally well answered. The context was the (general) divisions/disorder at the Eucharist; the earliest tradition in the New Testament concerning the institution of the Eucharist, a tradition which Paul claims he 'received from the Lord'. Candidates commented on '*In the same way*' and how Paul's account of the 'words of institution' differs markedly from those in the Synoptic Gospels. Candidates could also comment on '*new covenant in my blood*'; '*remembrance*'; '*proclaim the Lord's death until he comes*', i.e. the eschatological reference in the celebration of the Eucharist.

(d) 1 Corinthians 16:18-19

There were some excellent answers setting the context as personal greetings towards the end of the letter. Candidates commented on things such as '*they*' (Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus); evidence that 1 Corinthians was written from Asia Minor; the '*church/congregation in their house*' and Aquila and Prisca and their relationship with Paul.

(e) 1 Thessalonians 3:1-3a

This was one of the most popular gobbets and answered well. Candidates set the context as Paul's visit to Thessalonica and founding of a church there. They commented on: the circumstances alluded to in chapters 1 and 2, and in this text, e.g. '*these trials*'; '*we*'; Paul's concern for the newly founded church at Thessalonica and the opposition they had encountered; Paul and Silvanus are prominent in the account in Acts, whereas there is no mention of Timothy actually having been at Thessalonica, although he is with them at Berea; Paul was also concerned about attacks on his authority. A few candidates were able to comment on the difficulty of reconciling the contents of 1 Thessalonians with Acts 18. Credit was also given for information about Timothy.

(f) 1 Thessalonians 4:13

This was a popular gobbet, and well answered. The context was the Thessalonians' concern for the fate of those who have died. Comment was expected on the *parousia* and Paul's apparent expectation at this time of the early return of Christ in his own life time, and subsequent modification of his views; and Paul's understanding of the Christian hope, i.e. resurrection to eternal life in heaven. Did Paul's hasty departure from Thessalonica because of opposition result in his not completing his teaching on the promised return of Christ?

Question 2

When and why was 1 Corinthians written?

This was a popular question and it was generally well answered, especially the second part of the question. Candidates were aware that it is impossible to be certain as to when the letter was written due to the complicated historical background and this was commented on. There is a wealth of material to provide evidence of the manifold problems which threatened the life and fellowship of the church at Corinth and stirred Paul into writing this letter together with Sosthenes. In view of the considerable amount of relevant material, candidates were not expected to cover it all for high marks.

Question 3

Examine Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians and 1 Thessalonians on marriage and relations between the sexes.

This was a popular question and it was generally well answered.

Candidates were expected to discuss material from key passages in both letters. Credit was given to candidates who compared Paul's views with views in Judaism and in Greek and Roman society at the time, and also to those who compared it with current attitudes to marriage, the relations between the sexes and the role of women in society, although this was not expected.

In several answers it was stated that Paul was in favour of mixed marriages between Christians and pagans. It may be that this was due to a misunderstanding of what Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 7:10 ff. That Paul was against marriages between a Christian and an unbeliever is clear in 1 Corinthians 7:39.

Question 4

How serious were the misunderstandings in the churches at Corinth and Thessalonica concerning the resurrection of Christians and the second coming of Christ, and how did Paul deal with them?

Candidates were expected to expound Paul's teaching in key passages and the reasons why he gave this teaching, and then to assess the seriousness of these problems, e.g. the '2nd Advent hysteria' at Thessalonica and its consequences, and Paul's insistence that belief in the resurrection of Christ and of Christians is fundamental to the Christian faith. Differences of belief in these matters, as well as having practical consequences, also threatened the fragile unity of the church. Some candidates commented on the different eschatological perspective and more developed teaching of Paul later in the epistle (1 Corinthians) and the difficulty Greeks found with the concept of the resurrection of the body as opposed to the immortality of the soul.

Section B

Question 5

How trustworthy is Acts as a history of the early church?

This was the most popular question in this section.

The following are examples of where it is difficult to reconcile the content of Acts with the evidence of Paul's letters and could have been included in answers:

- If the meeting Paul refers to in Galatians 2 is the Council of Jerusalem, then it was clearly a very different type of meeting than that recorded by Luke in Acts 15
- The apostolic decree in Acts 15 is not mentioned by Paul
- The portrait of Paul in Acts and his attitude to the Law with the evidence of Paul's letters
- Gamaliel's speech in Acts 5:33-39 with the historical evidence provided by Josephus
- Some scholars claim that there is no evidence that Roman troops were ever stationed at Caesarea.

There were some excellent answers to this question in which candidates were not only able to discuss the points noted above but also the possible motives Luke may have had in painting an idealised picture of the early church. Full credit was given for any well-argued case for or against the historical accuracy of Acts.

Question 6

In what ways did Paul's religious and theological beliefs change after his conversion?

This was one of the more popular questions in this section, with some excellent answers. In view of the abundance of relevant material candidates were not expected to cover everything mentioned in the mark scheme for a high mark. Candidates covered various points such as the conversion itself and Paul's doctrine of 'justification by faith'.

There were also some beliefs which did not change such as Paul remained a devout Jew and that he continued to accept and practise the high ethical standards of Judaism. Credit was given to candidates who wrote about these.

Question 7

Compare the teaching on faith and works in James and Galatians. What light, if any, does this throw on the reasons why James was written?

The standard of answers for this question was good. Better answers required some discussion of the different meaning of 'faith' and 'works' in James and Paul. For Paul 'works' would appear to mean works which lead to justification, whereas James is referring to works which prove the sincerity of one's faith. Examples from James 1 and 2 and Galatians were needed.

The second part of the question involved discussion of whether James was writing to correct Paul's teaching on justification by faith, or the misunderstanding of it by those with antinomian tendencies. This in turn required some discussion of the likely date of both letters.



There was some confusion over the different use of the example of Abraham by Paul and James. Paul never refers to Abraham's willingness to offer Isaac as a sacrifice.

Question 8

Discuss the teaching in Colossians on Christian conduct and relationships, and the principles on which this teaching is based.

N.B. The wording of this question takes into account the fact that there are some grounds for doubting the Pauline authorship of this letter.

Whilst this was the least popular question on the paper, it produced some good answers. 3:1-4:6 is the key section, which required discussion, but there is other relevant material, e.g. 1:3-4, emphasis on faith, hope and love; and 2:16-23, against false ethical teaching. (As has been noted by several scholars, e.g. Selwyn in his commentary on 1 Peter and Caird in *The Apostolic Age*, the existence of similar ethical teaching in Ephesians and 1 Peter has led to the belief that there was a body of catechetical material, which was in fairly wide use in the early church.)

'Principles on which this teaching is based' - candidates were expected to cover some of the following: 1:5-6; 1:8-9; 1:23 and 2:7; 'risen with Christ' – this verse introduces the key **section 3:1 – 4:6**; 'put to death', 'put on', and 'be subject, obey, forbear'.

Question 9

'While a number of interesting suggestions have been made about the authorship of Hebrews, the only thing which can be said with any degree of confidence is that it was not written by Paul.' Discuss.

This was not a popular question, but the standard of answer was quite high. Most candidates were aware of the suggestions which have been made concerning possible authors, and the reasons for them. More development was needed for the arguments against Pauline authorship (internal and external evidence).

Candidates were not expected to cover all the material available in great detail, but it was encouraging to find that almost every point was mentioned by at least one candidate.

Suggested authors:

- Barnabas (Tertullian and others). A Levite and would be familiar with Temple ritual.
- Luke. Literary affinities with Luke/Acts.
- Apollos. Use of Septuagint, 'eloquent', Alexandrian background.
- Other suggestions include Clement, Silvanus, Philip, Priscilla and Aquila, but, while none of these is impossible, little positive evidence to support any of them.
- Evidence supporting Pauline authorship is almost wholly external.

Question 10

Assess the religious, political and economic factors which aided or hindered the spread of Christianity in the apostolic age.

This was a popular question. The overall standard of answers was quite high, with some outstanding.

The best answers covered almost all of the following points with appropriate comment or classification, i.e. whether they aided or hindered the progress and mission of the early church:

- Political/economic factors
- Religious factors
- Jews
- Gentiles
- The inevitable clash of ideologies when the gospel was proclaimed and the cost to converts of forsaking their old way of life, allegiances
- Examples of persecution, and why.

