

# DIVINITY

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Paper 9011/11

Prophets of the Old Testament

## Key Messages

As in previous years, key messages are particularly appropriate to the gobbets in **Question 10**, the most popular being **(a)**, **(b)**, **(c)**, **(e)**, **(f)** and **(j)**. Many candidates did very well indeed in providing both explanation and analysis of the context, background and meaning of each text, and comparatively few candidates resorted to simple paraphrasing of the text. Some could have gained more marks by not writing out the gobbets themselves, not least because some of them were quite long. Knowledge of the gobbet areas was often outstanding; however this sometimes led to answers that were so detailed and analytic that insufficient time was left to answer the three essay questions.

## General Comments

The general standard was very high. The most popular questions in **Section A** were 1, 2 and 3. The level of knowledge shown in answers to these questions was commendable. Some responses would have been improved by focusing more on critical analysis than on straightforward knowledge. For **Section B**, **Questions 6** and **7** were the most popular. As with **Section A**, some candidates could have gained more marks by focusing on critical analysis of the question set as opposed to going into great detail about the lives of Amos and Hosea.

## Comments on Specific Questions

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

There were very few weak responses to this question, primarily because most candidates took a strong evaluative stance and, using good evidence, insisted that Samuel was a prophet. Moreover, many suggested that although Samuel obviously did act as a war leader, particularly in the struggle against the Philistines, he did so as part of his prophetic calling: as a prophet he was, inevitably, a war leader. Some could have gained more marks by not spending too much time considering how many different roles Samuel undertook, which was not the focus of this question.

#### **Question 2**

The range of material considered here was impressive, and many candidates demonstrated an encyclopedic knowledge of the various theories concerning the origins of prophecy in Israel. On the other hand, not so much attention was paid to the precise wording of the question, about *what* (if anything) *can be known for certain* about the issue. The best essays analysed that precise question. Some argued in favour of Samuel as the first prophet in Israel while others preferred Moses, although they usually noted that Moses himself did not set foot *in* Israel. Others concluded that it was certain that there must have been some degree of influence from earlier cultures in the Ancient Near East. Some decided, rather neatly, that the only thing that can be known for certain about the origins of prophecy in Israel is that *nothing* can be known for certain.

#### **Question 3**

Excellent answers to this question came from three main approaches. The most common approach was to point to Elijah's demonstrations of power with the different miracles he performed, his ability to outrun Ahab's chariot, the nature of his call, and his fearless concern for social justice; these being contrasted in particular with the equal or superior claims to exercise power by Moses, Samuel and Elisha (who had the double portion of Elijah's spirit). Some argued that the view expressed in the question was inappropriate, since

whatever power Elijah used was derived from God and not from the prophet himself. Others suggested that any comparison of prophetic power was inappropriate because prophets were called for a specific task, so whatever power they demonstrated was given to them in order to carry out that task. Less successful answers tended simply to describe what Elijah did on different occasions.

#### **Question 4**

Less successful answers simply listed what various prophets said and what they did, without commenting on their comparative importance. Some looked at symbolic acts in particular, and concluded that their demonstrative power meant that what the prophets did was more important because of the impact of such events on those who saw them. Some very good essays suggested that it is very difficult to separate what the prophets said from what they did, since speech was generally needed in order to explain the significance of the act.

#### **Question 5**

Answers to this question were generally sound, particularly with regard to the difficulty people had in telling the difference between true and false prophets. Some of the best answers focused on a small number of key issues concerning the false prophets, particularly 1 Kings 22 and the problem of the lying spirit of prophecy, which appears to claim that false prophecy comes from Yahweh. Some candidates could have gained more marks by paying attention to the specific request in the question, to 'critically assess the problem of false prophecy', as opposed to simply listing the alleged differences between true and false prophets.

### **Section B**

#### **Question 6**

Most candidates answered this question well, demonstrating a good general knowledge of the prophecies of Amos, together with a commendable ability to show how the different themes raised by Amos relate to the idea of the Day of the Lord. Some candidates could have gained more marks by not going into too much detail concerning what Amos had to say about social justice in Israel, since much of what was said was not made relevant to the question.

#### **Question 7**

The most common approach was to consider whether the material in Hosea 1 – 3 is literally true, or is in the form of a parable, a metaphor, a legend or a vision. This approach worked very well so long as the distinctions between these different literary types were described accurately. Another approach was to consider the material in the light of what it says about God's character, for example God's holiness, righteousness and anger. Candidates also discussed what it says about themes such as the election of Israel and the subsequent ingratitude of the nation in following other gods, and forgetting who it was that brought them out of slavery in Egypt. Some could have gained more marks by focusing only on the first three chapters of Hosea, and not to the book as a whole.

#### **Question 8**

Dealing with this question hinged mainly on two things: first, knowledge of Isaiah's call, which convinced him of God's nature as the Sovereign Ruler; and second, knowledge of the historical background to Isaiah's prophecy about the Syro-Ephraimite War and about the best response to the threat from Assyrian power. Those who knew the detail produced solid answers to the question. Some started well but confined their answers to a description of the call narrative in chapter 6, without showing how this might have influenced Isaiah's message.

#### **Question 9**

A few candidates made the interesting claim that Jeremiah did not lead an unhappy life, because on the whole he was happy in prophesying an eventual return from exile and a 'rebuilding and replanting' of the nation. Some vehemently denied the idea that his experiences could have made Jeremiah a stronger prophet, not least because of the despairing tone of his 'confessions', for example in chapter 15. Most argued that Yahweh's command that he should refrain from marriage, family, social gatherings and the like would have left him free to concentrate on prophesying God's word without any distractions, and that would have strengthened him. All such answers were strong where they argued a case. Conversely, less

successful answers generally went no further than listing what Jeremiah did and said, without relating that to the question.

### Section C

#### Question 10

- (a) This was a popular gobbet. On the whole, this gobbet was done well, not least because most candidates knew the extended context and made good use of it. Some could have gained more marks by referring more specifically to the text and its context, rather than writing general comments about Israel's tendency to forget Yahweh. Quite a few referred astutely to the fact that 'burning sons or daughters' probably refers to the test of dedication to Molech, referred to in Jeremiah. Most referred to Saul, who banned the practices referred to in the passage, and then consulted the spirit of Samuel through the Witch of Endor.
- (b) This was probably the most popular choice. Candidates focused on issues such as the relative insignificance of the tribe of Benjamin, the reason for anointing Saul as 'prince', the nature of the Philistine threat, and the implications of the word 'seer' in connection with Samuel. Less successful responses simply rephrased the text without noting the instructions at the start of **Question 10**, which asked candidates to "comment on points of interest or difficulty".
- (c) This was also a very popular gobbet, and answers were generally comprehensive, dealing with: the irony of Saul consulting the Witch of Endor (despite having banished all such operatives from the land); the problem of how the witch still operated under Saul's ban; her appearance of sympathy for Saul; the imminence of the Philistine threat at Shunem; Saul's disobedience concerning Amalek; the preference for David over Saul. There was interesting comment about the nature of death, based on what is said about Samuel.
- (d) Some candidates were unclear as to who delivered this oracle to David; others were equally unclear about who eventually built the Jerusalem Temple. The main comment was on the problem of the unconditional nature of the covenant with David in view of the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, although a few candidates wrote knowledgeably about the subsequent development of messianic thought in the post-exilic period.
- (e) The best responses tended to be those which focused on the personality and function of Micaiah and on the role of the lying spirit used by Yahweh to mislead Ahab's prophets, the point of difficulty being that Yahweh is both the explanation and the cause of false prophecy. Comment on the historical background of the gobbet in the Syrian wars was well done, not least in the perception of the irony of Ahab's death. A few candidates made advanced comment on the later development of the lying spirit of prophecy into the figure of the *satan*, the character in God's heavenly court who appears in Job and Zechariah to accuse people of their secret/hidden crimes. Some candidates could have obtained higher marks by including more comment on points of interest rather than summarising the history of the Syrian wars.
- (f) Responses to this gobbet produced some of the best writing on the paper, with some very perceptive analysis of the nature of the confrontation between Amaziah and Amos; the difficulty in explaining what Amos was doing in a northern shrine; the nature of Amaziah's dismissal of Amos; and the significance of Amaziah's description of Amos as a 'seer'.
- (g) Most candidates were aware of the claim made by many scholars that this passage is an addition made by the redactors of the 'Book of the Twelve', and some produced a good analysis of what might have prompted such editorial activity. Some defended the view that Amos was the author of these verses, on the reasonable grounds that some form of hope is more likely to bring about social change than unrelieved threats of death and destruction. Most commented well on the use of oracular formulae.
- (h) Comment on the theology of this passage was generally well written, with most candidates referring to the tone of Yahweh's past compassion and help contrasted with the punishment of renewed subjection to Egypt and Assyria. In particular, some made the clear-sighted observation that this passage is often seen as a summary of the main themes of the Book of Hosea from election through to exile and restoration.

- (i) This was the least-favoured gobbet, although those who answered it gave good answers on its central theme in the Zion theology: the new age in which Jerusalem will be elevated so that all nations flow to it in pilgrimage.
- (j) As with gobbet (f), this extract produced some of the most eloquent and well-written comment seen in the paper. There was extended comment on the nature of the prophetic call narrative, together with a comparison with that of both Moses and Isaiah of Jerusalem. There was also extended comment on the nature of the prophetic word, particularly on the symbolism of God touching Jeremiah's mouth to signify the impossibility of resisting the power of the word. Some developed this very well by quoting from Jeremiah 20:8-9, where the prophet laments that even when he determines not to speak any more in Yahweh's name, there is in his heart 'as it were a burning fire shut up in his bones'. Some candidates wrote movingly and quoted the last two lines of verse 9 verbatim: 'I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot'.
- (k) As with gobbet (i), very few candidates chose this extract. Although there were some strong answers, many tended to write very generalised comment about lamentation, although some were aware that this is Rachel's lament for the exile of the northern tribes, since they are her descendants, exiled to Assyria after the invasion and defeat of 721.

# DIVINITY

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Paper 9011/12

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#### **Question 2**

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Paper 9011/13

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- (h) Comment on the theology of this passage was generally well written, with most candidates referring to the tone of Yahweh's past compassion and help contrasted with the punishment of renewed subjection to Egypt and Assyria. In particular, some made the clear-sighted observation that this passage is often seen as a summary of the main themes of the Book of Hosea from election through to exile and restoration.

- (i) This was the least-favoured gobbet, although those who answered it gave good answers on its central theme in the Zion theology: the new age in which Jerusalem will be elevated so that all nations flow to it in pilgrimage.
- (j) As with gobbet (f), this extract produced some of the most eloquent and well-written comment seen in the paper. There was extended comment on the nature of the prophetic call narrative, together with a comparison with that of both Moses and Isaiah of Jerusalem. There was also extended comment on the nature of the prophetic word, particularly on the symbolism of God touching Jeremiah's mouth to signify the impossibility of resisting the power of the word. Some developed this very well by quoting from Jeremiah 20:8-9, where the prophet laments that even when he determines not to speak any more in Yahweh's name, there is in his heart 'as it were a burning fire shut up in his bones'. Some candidates wrote movingly and quoted the last two lines of verse 9 verbatim: 'I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot'.
- (k) As with gobbet (i), very few candidates chose this extract. Although there were some strong answers, many tended to write very generalised comment about lamentation, although some were aware that this is Rachel's lament for the exile of the northern tribes, since they are her descendants, exiled to Assyria after the invasion and defeat of 721.

# DIVINITY

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<p><b>Paper 9011/21</b> <b>The Four Gospels</b></p>
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## Key Messages

Candidates who achieved highest were able to identify what the main thrust of each question was and then adhere closely to these requirements. A question will never be about merely retelling information but there will always be a need to either make an assessment, an analysis, an evaluation, a comparison etc. Candidates who were able to show that they had a good grasp of any relevant scholarly trends and developments, achieved very well.

## General Comments

Overall the standard of responses for this paper was very good with many candidates scoring the higher end of the marks. Some candidates did not answer sufficient questions. Four passages need to be commented on and these four passages form one question. If a candidate chooses to answer the gobbets then they must also select three other essay questions as well.

## Comments on Specific Questions

### Question 1

This question remains a popular choice amongst the candidates and those who attempted it generally did well. There were a small minority of candidates who did not follow the instructions and so did not fully answer the question as they did not select four gobbets to write about. A small number of candidates mistook **Question 1**, with its four parts, as being an alternative to answering 4 essays from the entire paper which seriously affected their final grade.

- (a) This was a very popular gobbet to comment on. Candidates wrote clear answers which identified this passage and the key points contained within it. There was good comment on the ancestry of Jesus and the significance given to the fourteen generations.
- (b) This was a popular choice of gobbet and was well answered by the majority of candidates. There were relevant comments made about the significance of the twelve being sent on mission but to go nowhere near the Gentile territory. Answers demonstrated good understanding of who 'the Gentiles' and 'the Samaritans' were.
- (c) There were some good answers given regarding the family of Jesus. Few candidates commented on who 'they' refers to in the last phrase.
- (d) This gobbet was generally correctly identified and the comments that followed were relevant to the gobbet. Candidates wrote about the identity of 'the betrayer' and about the fickle nature of the disciples in falling asleep. The human nature of Jesus was also well considered. Some, however, did not get the location of this event correct and mixed it up with the transfiguration story.
- (e) This was a less popular choice and while there were some strong answers it was generally not well done. Some candidates produced a lot of information about John and who he was which was not the focus of the gobbet.
- (f) This was a popular gobbet about the resurrection appearance of Jesus on the road to Emmaus. Stronger candidates were able to make wider reference in their answers and consider the context in which the event was happening.

- (g) This was another popular gobbet and was correctly identified by most candidates. There was good comment about the context being Jesus' first miracle in John: turning water into wine. The majority of answers confined themselves to writing about the passage here and not the miracle in general.
- (h) This was the least popular of the gobbet passages and was not selected by many candidates. Those who did had some difficulty in correctly identifying the passage and were not able to bring in wider knowledge.

### Question 2

This was a popular choice of questions with many candidates giving full and detailed answers. It gave candidates the opportunity to present their knowledge of the teaching (didache) material in the Gospel within the context of Jesus as Messiah. A lot of information taken from the Sermon on the Mount was referred to with mention made of the Mosaic link with Jesus.

The strongest candidates offered an alternative view of the Messiah. He was not only presented as a teaching Messiah but other alternatives were argued for. Generally, this question produced very good answers and gave candidates the opportunity to display the wider reading they had done.

### Question 3

This question was a popular choice with the majority of candidates showing a strong understanding of the Sermon on the Mount. Better answers placed the Sermon in the context of Matthew's technique and with regard to the Gospel as a whole. The question was generally well answered by all who attempted it.

### Question 4

Fewer candidates selected this question but there were some strong answers where candidates were able to give a comprehensive essay answer with relevant detail considering a range of the problems associated with the final chapter in Mark.

### Question 5

This question provided candidates with the opportunity to demonstrate their wider reading on the miracles in Mark and some candidates performed well here. For some, answers were more generally about miracles and not Markan specific. Some candidates retold any miracle story regardless of its origin which inevitably limited the level at which they could achieve.

### Question 6

This was a popular question but was not always answered well. Candidates needed a good knowledge of the key texts in Luke which endorsed the view of Luke being the most historically accurate. Some candidates were able to compare the information found in Luke with that found in the other Gospels and therefore produced good answers. Some stronger answers also made reference to Luke's 'second part' i.e. the Acts of the Apostles, in the quest to show Luke's interest in writing an accurate account. Candidates who had wider reading to draw on were able to answer this question well.

### Question 7

This question produced some interesting answers although it was not as popular as other questions. There were instances of non-Lucan material being used to try to evidence the question. Again the type of answers produced reflected a strong level of understanding of the candidate and evidence of their access to scholarly material and wider resources.

### Question 8

Overall answers to this question were very general and more detail was required. Few candidates displayed a lot of knowledge and understanding surrounding the 'anti-Jewish' flavour of John. Greater preparation regarding John's Gospel in general and the specific themes and ideas which can be brought out, would have improved some responses.

### Question 9

This was a popular choice of question and there were a lot of strong answers. The question specifically asks about arguments for the apostolic authorship of John and this was largely adhered to. Most answers displayed a good knowledge of the different lines of thought around this.

#### **Question 10**

This was another popular question which was generally answered well. Candidates were able to show their wide knowledge and understanding around the account of the transfiguration of Jesus. The significance of the Transfiguration was explored and assessed by the candidates.

#### **Question 11**

This question brought a variety of detailed answers and candidates were able to discuss the various texts which relate to this topic. It was important to remember that material could be used from across all Gospels and a lot of candidates made a good use of this fact. The answer needed to reflect both aspects: repentance and forgiveness in order to give a balanced answer. This question was generally well answered by all who undertook it.

#### **Question 12**

Although this was not a popular choice there were some strong responses. Some candidates made a very good assessment of miracles being regarded as parables in action with answers which were clearly thought out and presented. Weaker candidates failed to make a convincing link between the two because they did not fully understand the question and wrote out accounts of various miracles.

#### **Question 13**

This question on John the Baptist was very popular. A lot of candidates showed how the relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus developed and grew within the Gospel story. Much was made about the two different birth stories relating to John and Jesus and how their relationship changed to reflect their individual roles. The Baptism account of Jesus was included as a pivotal point. Some candidates displayed wider reading and made reference to scholarly opinion. Some very good answers were produced for this question.

#### **Question 14**

Strong responses were able to assess why the Pharisees challenged Jesus' teaching and did not merely recount the instances where the two bodies met. Jesus' involvement with the Pharisees was not entirely hostile and some candidates picked up on this point and wrote about the genuine attempts of some of the Pharisees to get a closer understanding of Jesus, i.e. Nicodemus, Simon the Pharisee. These responses were very thorough and showed a good understanding of the area.

# DIVINITY

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<p><b>Paper 9011/22</b> <b>The Four Gospels</b></p>
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## Key Messages

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## General Comments

Overall the standard of responses for this paper was very good with many candidates scoring the higher end of the marks. Some candidates did not answer sufficient questions. Four passages need to be commented on and these four passages form one question. If a candidate chooses to answer the gobbets then they must also select three other essay questions as well.

## Comments on Specific Questions

### **Question 1**

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# DIVINITY

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<p><b>Paper 9011/23</b> <b>The Four Gospels</b></p>
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## Key Messages

Candidates who achieved highest were able to identify what the main thrust of each question was and then adhere closely to these requirements. A question will never be about merely retelling information but there will always be a need to either make an assessment, an analysis, an evaluation, a comparison etc. Candidates who were able to show that they had a good grasp of any relevant scholarly trends and developments, achieved very well.

## General Comments

Overall the standard of responses for this paper was very good with many candidates scoring the higher end of the marks. Some candidates did not answer sufficient questions. Four passages need to be commented on and these four passages form one question. If a candidate chooses to answer the gobbets then they must also select three other essay questions as well.

## Comments on Specific Questions

### Question 1

This question remains a popular choice amongst the candidates and those who attempted it generally did well. There were a small minority of candidates who did not follow the instructions and so did not fully answer the question as they did not select four gobbets to write about. A small number of candidates mistook **Question 1**, with its four parts, as being an alternative to answering 4 essays from the entire paper which seriously affected their final grade.

- (a) Candidates wrote clear answers which identified this passage and the key points contained within it. Candidates showed a strong knowledge of this aspect of the birth narrative of Jesus and the significance of divorce within the Jewish culture.
- (b) This was a popular choice of gobbet and was well answered by the majority of candidates who made relevant comments made about the Pharisees in Jewish society.
- (c) There were some good answers given regarding this miracle. Relevant comments were made on Sabbath laws imposed by the religious leaders of the time and the significance of the Synagogue and the purpose of the Pharisees being to 'accuse him'.
- (d) Stronger answers to this question made reference to the 'Son of Man', and the notion of 'serving' and giving his life as 'a ransom for many'. This reflected a detailed understanding of this verse.
- (e) There were some detailed answers to this question although weaker candidates felt they should comment in detail on the Temptation accounts as a whole and did not restrict their answer to this passage only.
- (f) This passage proved challenging for candidates to identify and contextualise and was not a popular choice.
- (g) This was a popular choice and was correctly identified by most candidates. There was good comment about the context being Jesus' first miracle in John. The majority of answers confined themselves to writing about the passage here and not the miracle in general.

- (h) Although this was not a popular choice, those candidates who chose it were generally able to give detailed comment on John's Gospel and produced good answers.

### **Question 2**

This was a popular choice of questions with many candidates giving full and detailed answers. It gave candidates the opportunity to present their knowledge of the Old Testament usage in Matthew and many candidates were able to demonstrate a detailed understanding of Matthean theology.

### **Question 3**

This was a well answered question and most candidates covered the expected material with relevant references. Candidates who achieved best, ensured that they gave full attention to all three aspects of the question.

### **Question 4**

This was also a popular question. It was clear that some Centres had used wider reading on the title 'Son of Man' and prepared the candidates to write about this in detail. Many candidates were able to demonstrate good awareness of current scholarly developments which enabled them to produce very good written answers.

### **Question 5**

This question provided candidates with the opportunity to demonstrate their wider reading on Mark and some candidates performed well here although it was not a popular choice. For some candidates, answers were more general and not Markan specific which inevitably limited how well they could achieve.

### **Question 6**

This was a popular question but was not always answered well. Candidates needed a good knowledge of the key texts in Luke which endorse this view of Luke being the most historically accurate. Some candidates were able to compare the information found in Luke with that found in the other Gospels and therefore produced good answers. Some stronger answers also made reference to Luke's 'second part', i.e. the Acts of the Apostles, in the quest to show Luke's interest in writing an accurate account. Candidates who had wider reading to draw on were able to answer this question well.

### **Question 7**

This question produced some interesting answers although it was not as popular as other questions. There were instances of non-Lucan material being used to try to evidence the question. Again the type of answers produced reflected a strong level of understanding and evidence of access to scholarly material and wider resources.

### **Question 8**

Too few candidates chose this question for a report to be produced.

### **Question 9**

Too few candidates chose this question for a report to be produced.

**Question 10**

This was a very popular question and was usually done well. Candidates were able to show their wide knowledge and understanding around the Roman and Jewish authorities of that time.

**Question 11**

This question brought a variety of detailed answers and candidates were able to discuss the various texts which relate to this topic. It was important to remember that material could be used from across all Gospels and a lot of candidates did this. Better responses were able to demonstrate the extent of the candidates' wider reading in answering this question.

**Question 12**

This was not a popular choice. Many candidates restricted their answers to material found mainly in the Sermon on the Mount. Parables and teaching could have been used from many different occasions in Jesus' ministry drawing on material from all the Gospels.

**Question 13**

This question was well done by almost all candidates who chose it. A lot of candidates referred to the usual scholars when tackling this question and many produced their evidence in diagrammatic form. It was essential that any diagram given carried a written explanation with it which addressed the specifics of the question.

**Question 14**

This was a popular question which was well done by the majority of candidates. Good candidates displayed a genuine attempt to assess why Jesus used parables and gave explanations as to the benefits of this form of teaching.

# DIVINITY

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Paper 9011/31  
The Apostolic Age

## Key Messages

In **Question 1**, candidates need to pay close attention to the actual wording of the set text.

In essay answers, candidates need to check that what they write relates directly to the question they are answering.

In essay answers, writing a brief plan listing the main points the candidate wants to make before starting the answer is useful in keeping the answer relevant to the question.

In essay answers, candidates do not need to quote the biblical text exactly. They can usefully refer to it, or paraphrase it, for example, 'In Galatians, Paul refers to the Jewish Law as a teacher. This means that Jesus' life and death make it redundant'.

## General Comments

The overall standard of scripts this session was very high. Candidates wrote well informed answers to all the questions. Answers included references to a good range of scholars, both commentators on biblical books and more general writers about the New Testament. In most cases, essays were well structured and coherent. Gobbet answers to Question 1 included both context information and comment on the exact wording of the text.

There were two cases of rubric error. In both, candidates only submitted answers to questions from **Section A**. This limited the possible award of marks.

There were very few cases of apparent timing difficulties. Generally, candidates managed their time very well and wrote fourth answers that were of the same quality as earlier ones. Where there were clearly problems with timing, candidates remembered to write notes covering the full range of points they intended to make. This allowed them to score as good a mark as possible for their answer.

Candidates do need to make sure that they address the question precisely and avoid writing general material about the biblical book or the theological idea which is their topic. For example, in writing about I Corinthians, it is not necessary to discuss each section of the letter. The question directs the candidate to a particular chapter or a particular aspect of Paul's teaching. This year, **Question 10** asked about Paul's teaching about the Eucharist. Thus the main focus was on Chapters 10 and 11, with reference to divisions in Chapter 1 and meat offered to idols in Chapter 8. Other chapters were not relevant to answering the question.

## Comments on Specific Questions

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

This was a popular question. This year most candidates scored as well in answering it as they did in their essays. Candidates were equally knowledgeable about Acts and Galatians.

- (a) There were some excellent comments on this text which scored full marks. Candidates correctly identified the day of Pentecost and the descent of the Holy Spirit as the context. They wrote correctly about the apostles' speaking in tongues, both foreign languages and glossolalia. There were perceptive comments about the similarities between the latter and drunkenness.

- (b) Candidates were not always successful in identifying which Herod appeared in this question – Herod the Great, Herod Antipas and Herod Agrippa were all suggested. Only a few candidates wrote enough about James, the brother of John, as one of the inner group of Jesus’ disciples in the Gospels, and as the first of the Twelve to be martyred. There were references to the positive results of persecution for the growth of the Church. The shift from religious to political persecution was not always noted.
- (c) Candidates were clear about the importance of Paul’s move from Asia to Europe and about the divine plan. They were equally good about the absence of a synagogue at Philippi and the use of the river bank as a place of prayer. They noted the significance of women for Luke and the presence of Lydia, a wealthy merchant, among them. The only point generally missed was Luke’s accurate and technical description of Philippi as a colony and the leading city in that district of Macedonia.
- (d) This text produced some excellent answers with a number scoring full marks when candidates followed the words and ideas in the verses closely. Many candidates picked up the allusion to Jeremiah’s description of his prophetic call. Most candidates wrote clearly about the role of grace and the revelation to Paul on the Damascus road. The mission to the Gentiles and Paul’s independent authority as an apostle were almost universally accurately noted.
- (e) Candidates recognised where these verses come in Paul’s argument, but they were less sure about what they actually say. God sending his Son and Jesus’ birth from a woman, Mary, were not generally written about. Too many candidates moved too far on in the chapter and wrote about the Hagar/Sarah analogy in its final verses. The powerful comparison of freedom from the law and adoption as sons was too often not mentioned.
- (f) Candidates were very clear about circumcision, its significance in Paul’s argument with the Galatians and its irrelevance to Gentile Christians. The relationship between faith and love was generally competently discussed. The context of this verse at the start of Paul’s ethical teaching was often missed.

## Question 2

Candidates found this a question they liked. They answered well and thoroughly. The main weakness in less successful answers was not providing a conclusion. The theological themes in Acts, the Holy Spirit, the preaching of the Gospel, the positive attitude to potential outsiders such as women and Gentiles were all thoroughly discussed. There were some excellent uses of scholars to frame and illustrate the debate. There were good summaries of scholars’ ideas and accurate brief quotations. Comments about history pointed to Acts’ unique and irreplaceable role in allowing us to understand the post-resurrection progress of the gospel. Some candidates drew attention to Luke’s precise description of aspects of the 1<sup>st</sup> century Roman Empire. More candidates might have reflected on Luke’s technique as a historian, particularly in composing the speeches and sermons in Acts.

## Question 3

This popular question encouraged candidates to write good answers. These showed a sound knowledge of the text and a clear understanding of Paul’s main argument. Essays were also focused on the relevant material – with one notable exception. Very few answers looked at the actual justification argument in Galatians 2:16–21. Having posed the problem, candidates moved directly to Abraham in Galatians 3, and then on into Chapter 4, with a clear contrast between salvation by faith and by observing the law. The omission of Galatians 2:16–21 was a serious problem. It is the heart of Paul’s argument. It sketches the much longer version which he writes in Romans 1–8.

## Question 4

There were a great many very good answers to this question. Candidates were clearly informed about Peter and Cornelius in Acts 10 and 11, and the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15. There were useful references to the universal mission outlined in Acts 1:8, to Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch, and to Paul circumcising Timothy despite the judgment of the Council because his mother was a Jew. In Galatians, candidates tended to be kind to Peter and soften Paul’s famous rebuke at Antioch. Candidates were very clear about the problem of Judaizers in Galatia and the power of Paul’s criticism of them. There could have been clearer recognition of the difficulty in reconciling the accounts of Acts and Galatians. If the Council of Jerusalem was so clear, why did Peter withdraw from eating with Gentiles when James’ messengers arrived?

## **Section B**

### **Question 5**

This was a popular question and was generally well answered. Answers drew on Romans as well as Galatians. Jesus' role in transforming the relationship between human beings and God by his death was explored in terms of taking away, or redeeming from, sin, in reconciling those who were separated, in opening up the new life of the resurrection. The main omission was mention of the central role of sacrifice in Old Testament religion and the variety of sacrifices offered in the Temple. There was little reference to the idea of sacrifice in the Eucharist or to modern problems with the very idea of sacrifice.

### **Question 6**

Candidates were clearly aware that Paul teaches his converts about moral matters. There were useful discussions of his teaching about marriage and generosity and food offered to idols from I Corinthians 7–10, and of I Thessalonians 5. There was very little use of Galatians 5–6 where Paul carefully distinguishes the works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit. Paul also teaches that sinners should be treated gently. The longer discussion in Romans 12–15 and the valuable material in Colossians 3:5–4:6 were generally missed. Candidates had a low view of pagan moral standards. This is slightly unfair. Many of the apostles' pagan contemporaries did think they lived a moral existence. The early Christians had to persuade them to shift their perspective.

### **Question 7**

This was not a popular question. Candidates who did answer it clearly knew Colossians thoroughly. They wrote reflective answers. A clearer definition of 'mystically' would have been helpful in some cases.

### **Question 8**

This was a popular question and encouraged candidates to write some very good answers. It was very pleasing to see candidates shaping their argument and their discussion of the text to the precise demands of the question. There were good comparisons with Paul's thoughts in Galatians and Romans and with the ideas in Hebrews 11. There were informed accounts of James' actual teaching about faith expressed in works. There were also discussions of Paul's teaching which knew that he did expect faith to be reflected in behaviour and in the practice of love.

### **Question 9**

Very few candidates answered this. There were good discussions of the centurion Cornelius in Acts 10 and the conversion of Sergius Paulus in Acts 13. There was no use of Gallio's studied indifference in Acts 18, or of the magistrates at Philippi and their treatment of Paul the Roman citizen, or of the Town Clerk of Ephesus in Acts 19. There was nothing about the key text, Romans 13, which has so shaped Christian understandings of the state in following centuries. There was some reference to how the Empire enabled Paul in practical terms, by providing roads along which he could travel, towns in which to preach to crowds, a universal knowledge of Greek to allow understanding of his message, and an area of peace and security for his mission.

### **Question 10**

There were good answers which talked about social divisions in Corinth at the celebration of the Eucharist. There were references to the problem of idol meat, though ignoring I Corinthians 10:14–21 meant that the real spiritual danger Paul saw was not looked at. The main weakness was the failure to discuss the bread and wine as the body and blood of Christ, and the Eucharist as a proclamation or making present of Jesus' death in the Christian community. It followed that the danger of unworthy communion in 11:27–32 was missed.

# DIVINITY

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Paper 9011/32  
The Apostolic Age

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## General Comments

The overall standard of scripts this session was very high. Candidates wrote well informed answers to all the questions. Answers included references to a good range of scholars, both commentators on biblical books and more general writers about the New Testament. In most cases, essays were well structured and coherent. Gobbet answers to Question 1 included both context information and comment on the exact wording of the text.

There were two cases of rubric error. In both, candidates only submitted answers to questions from **Section A**. This limited the possible award of marks.

There were very few cases of apparent timing difficulties. Generally, candidates managed their time very well and wrote fourth answers that were of the same quality as earlier ones. Where there were clearly problems with timing, candidates remembered to write notes covering the full range of points they intended to make. This allowed them to score as good a mark as possible for their answer.

Candidates do need to make sure that they address the question precisely and avoid writing general material about the biblical book or the theological idea which is their topic. For example, in writing about I Corinthians, it is not necessary to discuss each section of the letter. The question directs the candidate to a particular chapter or a particular aspect of Paul's teaching. This year, **Question 10** asked about Paul's teaching about the Eucharist. Thus the main focus was on Chapters 10 and 11, with reference to divisions in Chapter 1 and meat offered to idols in Chapter 8. Other chapters were not relevant to answering the question.

## Comments on Specific Questions

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

This was a popular question. This year most candidates scored as well in answering it as they did in their essays. Candidates were equally knowledgeable about Acts and Galatians.

- (a) There were some excellent comments on this text which scored full marks. Candidates correctly identified the day of Pentecost and the descent of the Holy Spirit as the context. They wrote correctly about the apostles' speaking in tongues, both foreign languages and glossolalia. There were perceptive comments about the similarities between the latter and drunkenness.

- (b) Candidates were not always successful in identifying which Herod appeared in this question – Herod the Great, Herod Antipas and Herod Agrippa were all suggested. Only a few candidates wrote enough about James, the brother of John, as one of the inner group of Jesus’ disciples in the Gospels, and as the first of the Twelve to be martyred. There were references to the positive results of persecution for the growth of the Church. The shift from religious to political persecution was not always noted.
- (c) Candidates were clear about the importance of Paul’s move from Asia to Europe and about the divine plan. They were equally good about the absence of a synagogue at Philippi and the use of the river bank as a place of prayer. They noted the significance of women for Luke and the presence of Lydia, a wealthy merchant, among them. The only point generally missed was Luke’s accurate and technical description of Philippi as a colony and the leading city in that district of Macedonia.
- (d) This text produced some excellent answers with a number scoring full marks when candidates followed the words and ideas in the verses closely. Many candidates picked up the allusion to Jeremiah’s description of his prophetic call. Most candidates wrote clearly about the role of grace and the revelation to Paul on the Damascus road. The mission to the Gentiles and Paul’s independent authority as an apostle were almost universally accurately noted.
- (e) Candidates recognised where these verses come in Paul’s argument, but they were less sure about what they actually say. God sending his Son and Jesus’ birth from a woman, Mary, were not generally written about. Too many candidates moved too far on in the chapter and wrote about the Hagar/Sarah analogy in its final verses. The powerful comparison of freedom from the law and adoption as sons was too often not mentioned.
- (f) Candidates were very clear about circumcision, its significance in Paul’s argument with the Galatians and its irrelevance to Gentile Christians. The relationship between faith and love was generally competently discussed. The context of this verse at the start of Paul’s ethical teaching was often missed.

## Question 2

Candidates found this a question they liked. They answered well and thoroughly. The main weakness in less successful answers was not providing a conclusion. The theological themes in Acts, the Holy Spirit, the preaching of the Gospel, the positive attitude to potential outsiders such as women and Gentiles were all thoroughly discussed. There were some excellent uses of scholars to frame and illustrate the debate. There were good summaries of scholars’ ideas and accurate brief quotations. Comments about history pointed to Acts’ unique and irreplaceable role in allowing us to understand the post-resurrection progress of the gospel. Some candidates drew attention to Luke’s precise description of aspects of the 1<sup>st</sup> century Roman Empire. More candidates might have reflected on Luke’s technique as a historian, particularly in composing the speeches and sermons in Acts.

## Question 3

This popular question encouraged candidates to write good answers. These showed a sound knowledge of the text and a clear understanding of Paul’s main argument. Essays were also focused on the relevant material – with one notable exception. Very few answers looked at the actual justification argument in Galatians 2:16–21. Having posed the problem, candidates moved directly to Abraham in Galatians 3, and then on into Chapter 4, with a clear contrast between salvation by faith and by observing the law. The omission of Galatians 2:16–21 was a serious problem. It is the heart of Paul’s argument. It sketches the much longer version which he writes in Romans 1–8.

## Question 4

There were a great many very good answers to this question. Candidates were clearly informed about Peter and Cornelius in Acts 10 and 11, and the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15. There were useful references to the universal mission outlined in Acts 1:8, to Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch, and to Paul circumcising Timothy despite the judgment of the Council because his mother was a Jew. In Galatians, candidates tended to be kind to Peter and soften Paul’s famous rebuke at Antioch. Candidates were very clear about the problem of Judaizers in Galatia and the power of Paul’s criticism of them. There could have been clearer recognition of the difficulty in reconciling the accounts of Acts and Galatians. If the Council of Jerusalem was so clear, why did Peter withdraw from eating with Gentiles when James’ messengers arrived?

## **Section B**

### **Question 5**

This was a popular question and was generally well answered. Answers drew on Romans as well as Galatians. Jesus' role in transforming the relationship between human beings and God by his death was explored in terms of taking away, or redeeming from, sin, in reconciling those who were separated, in opening up the new life of the resurrection. The main omission was mention of the central role of sacrifice in Old Testament religion and the variety of sacrifices offered in the Temple. There was little reference to the idea of sacrifice in the Eucharist or to modern problems with the very idea of sacrifice.

### **Question 6**

Candidates were clearly aware that Paul teaches his converts about moral matters. There were useful discussions of his teaching about marriage and generosity and food offered to idols from I Corinthians 7–10, and of I Thessalonians 5. There was very little use of Galatians 5–6 where Paul carefully distinguishes the works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit. Paul also teaches that sinners should be treated gently. The longer discussion in Romans 12–15 and the valuable material in Colossians 3:5–4:6 were generally missed. Candidates had a low view of pagan moral standards. This is slightly unfair. Many of the apostles' pagan contemporaries did think they lived a moral existence. The early Christians had to persuade them to shift their perspective.

### **Question 7**

This was not a popular question. Candidates who did answer it clearly knew Colossians thoroughly. They wrote reflective answers. A clearer definition of 'mystically' would have been helpful in some cases.

### **Question 8**

This was a popular question and encouraged candidates to write some very good answers. It was very pleasing to see candidates shaping their argument and their discussion of the text to the precise demands of the question. There were good comparisons with Paul's thoughts in Galatians and Romans and with the ideas in Hebrews 11. There were informed accounts of James' actual teaching about faith expressed in works. There were also discussions of Paul's teaching which knew that he did expect faith to be reflected in behaviour and in the practice of love.

### **Question 9**

Very few candidates answered this. There were good discussions of the centurion Cornelius in Acts 10 and the conversion of Sergius Paulus in Acts 13. There was no use of Gallio's studied indifference in Acts 18, or of the magistrates at Philippi and their treatment of Paul the Roman citizen, or of the Town Clerk of Ephesus in Acts 19. There was nothing about the key text, Romans 13, which has so shaped Christian understandings of the state in following centuries. There was some reference to how the Empire enabled Paul in practical terms, by providing roads along which he could travel, towns in which to preach to crowds, a universal knowledge of Greek to allow understanding of his message, and an area of peace and security for his mission.

### **Question 10**

There were good answers which talked about social divisions in Corinth at the celebration of the Eucharist. There were references to the problem of idol meat, though ignoring I Corinthians 10:14–21 meant that the real spiritual danger Paul saw was not looked at. The main weakness was the failure to discuss the bread and wine as the body and blood of Christ, and the Eucharist as a proclamation or making present of Jesus' death in the Christian community. It followed that the danger of unworthy communion in 11:27–32 was missed.

# DIVINITY

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**Paper 9011/33**  
**The Apostolic Age**

There were too few candidates for us to be able to produce a report.