

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (BIBLE KNOWLEDGE)

Paper 2048/12
The portrayal of the Life and Teaching
of Jesus

General comments

It was encouraging to see an improvement in the **Part (c)** answers, with many candidates evaluating an issue and reaching a fully supported personal response. As a result, there were fewer candidates who just presented arguments without any evaluation or weighing up of their relative strengths and weaknesses.

However, there were a few candidates who presented the arguments in bullet points rather than continuous prose. Answers need to be in continuous prose so that a reasoned argument can be presented.

It should be noted that there is no cross credit. For example, material relevant to **Part (a)** cannot be credited if it only appears in **Part (b)** where it is not relevant.

Some candidates did not manage to complete all parts of some questions. This appears to be caused by candidates going beyond the demands of the question. For example, in **Question 1**, a significant number of candidates recounted in detail all three temptations when only two could be credited. There is no negative marking but candidates penalise themselves by spending time writing material that is not relevant.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Apart from a number of candidates recounting the temptation of turning stones into bread, most knew the text. There was some confusion in location as to where Jesus was tempted to throw himself down and to where Jesus was tempted to worship the devil. A common omission was the devil saying to Jesus "If you are the Son of God ..." in **Part (i)**.
- (b) Again, this was an example where some candidates went beyond the demands of the question and explained all three temptations. Candidates need to read the question carefully. A few candidates tended to give a global answer rather than discussing the individual temptations.
- (c) This was the best answered evaluation question. Candidates seemed confident about the issue and there were some very good thoughtful answers.

Question 2

- (a) This was best answered question on the paper with only the occasional candidate confusing it with Jesus and Peter walking on the water. A few candidates only gave a limited account of the dialogue between Jesus and the disciples in the boat.
- (b) The most common answers made reference to Jesus as compassionate and as someone who could perform nature miracles. However, very few went beyond that to discuss the link with eternal life and Jesus being ever present in the storms of life.

- (c) Again this evaluation was well answered with a number weighing up the arguments on each side. It was encouraging to see reference to examples from other parts of the text to support arguments.

Question 3

- (a) This question led some candidates to confuse the account with other accounts of Sabbath events. As a result only partial answers were given. References to "... something greater than the temple is here" and "... I desire mercy, not sacrifice ..." were mostly omitted.
- (b) Most answers were limited to discussing Jesus challenging their beliefs about the Sabbath. Few developed the idea of the sacrificial system not being sufficient or the idea that the person of Jesus was the divine presence incarnate.
- (c) Most candidates were able to give arguments for both sides although these often tended to be limited to issue of attending worship. Only a few candidates seemed aware that the Sabbath is not a Sunday. However, even when there was this confusion, their arguments were still valid.

Question 4

- (a) This part question produced some good answers, with many candidates showing sound knowledge of the text. **Part (iii)** caused the most difficulties with many responses omitting reference to "bound in heaven" and "loose on earth".
- (b) This question proved to be the most difficult for candidates. Some opted to just omit answering this part whilst others did not always focus on what the title 'Son of Man' would have meant for Jews at the time. As a result a lot of candidates talked about Jesus and his suffering. However, a number of candidates had clearly studied this topic and made good reference to the Book of Daniel.
- (c) Many candidates tended to just list the various titles but not engage in much discussion about them in terms of what they might reveal about Jesus. A significant number of candidates focused just on the name "Jesus" and related it back to the birth narrative.

Question 5

- (a) This question was generally well answered with good knowledge of the details of the parable. A few candidates confused it with the parable of the tenants.
- (b) There were some good answers given that highlighted God's grace and generosity, and that the benefits of the kingdom of heaven are for all whenever they enter. Comment was also made on those in the parable who complained at the employer's generosity.
- (c) This is an issue that many candidates had clearly studied. There were some thoughtful answers that evaluated the various arguments. Again, it was encouraging to see that many answers engaged in evaluation rather than just restating arguments.

Question 6

- (a) This was the least popular question. Those who did attempt it often struggled to address the focus of the question. A significant number of candidates did not read the question carefully enough and wrote about events covering Jesus' trials onwards. Candidates conflated the details of the text, often having the right information but in the wrong part of the question.
- (b) Most candidates were able to refer to the curtain splitting and the darkness. However, other events were often omitted and explanation about their significance was usually only about the curtain. The better answers gave good explanations and also included the tombs splitting open.
- (c) Candidates were clearly much more confident about answering this issue. Many gave good evaluation and a variety of arguments that were well supported.

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RELIGIOUS STUDIES (BIBLE KNOWLEDGE)

Paper 2048/22

The portrayal of the birth of the early church

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It was encouraging to see an improvement in the **Part (c)** answers, with many candidates evaluating an issue and presenting a fully supported personal response. Fewer candidates just presented arguments for and against without any evaluation or weighing up of their relative strengths and weaknesses.

It should be noted that there is no cross credit. For example, material relevant to **(a)** cannot be credited if it only appears in response to **(b)** where it is not relevant.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a)** This was generally well answered with many candidates identifying all the relevant text. In **(i)** the area that was most omitted concerned the reference to "... witnesses in Jerusalem, and all in Judea and Samaria, and to ends of the earth". In **(ii)** some candidates went beyond the focus of the question and included events leading up to what the two men dressed in white said.
- (b)** Some candidates, whilst omitting reference to the Holy Spirit in **(a)**, wrote about Pentecost. Cross credit is not allowed so they could not be credited in **(b)** for what they clearly showed they knew in **(a)**. Given the reference to mission was the most omitted part of text in **(a)**, it was not surprising that a number of candidates only wrote about Pentecost.
- (c)** This was the best answered evaluation question. Candidates seemed confident about the issue and there were some very good thoughtful answers.

Question 2

- (a)** This was the most popular question on the paper and also the best answered. Candidates clearly knew the details of the healing.
- (b)** In contrast to **(a)**, candidates struggled and material pertinent to **(i)** was included in **(ii)**. Although candidates knew the actual story of the healing, they were not so confident about what happened following the healing.
- (c)** Although most candidates were able to give some arguments on both sides of the issue, only a few were able to provide support to those arguments by giving examples from Paul's missionary work.

Question 3

- (a) Most candidates were confident identifying at least two of the three people. Some often confused Lydia with Dorcas. Details about Priscilla were also quite limited – usually just stating that she was expelled from Rome and met Paul.
- (b) Candidates either limited their discussion to material in Acts 2 or ignored Acts 2 and just discussed the Seven and establishment by Paul of churches and appointment by him of elders. Few covered both areas. Some just discussed the Council of Jerusalem. Examiners commented that generally candidates did not seem to be aware of the various roles held in the early church.
- (c) This was generally well answered. Arguments were supported by reference to events in Acts. Most candidates made reference to material in Matthew's Gospel concerning Jesus' words to Peter as the rock and building his church.

Question 4

- (a) This question as a whole was the least popular. The speech at Pisidian Antioch was not well known by most of the candidates and answers therefore consisted of vague statements about Jesus' death. Knowledge of the kerygma was noticeable by its absence.
- (b) A significant number of candidates gave no response to this question. Those that did attempt this question usually selected Athens as an example but did not explain how Paul adapted his speech. Most candidates were only able to give one occasion rather than the two required.
- (c) This produced the weakest answers of all the evaluation questions. The responses suggested that not all candidates had studied this area of the syllabus and therefore had to improvise rather than answer from a position of knowledge.

Question 5

- (a) This question was generally well answered. However, a significant number of candidates confused the account with that of Peter being released from prison by an angel.
- (b) Few candidates knew much about Silas other than what had already been provided in (a). Answers were generally vague and so many were awarded only lower level marks.
- (c) Most candidates were able to give arguments on both sides but these often lacked examples from the text to provide support.

Question 6

- (a) This was generally well answered with most candidates showing good knowledge of the text.
- (b) As expected, some candidates merely wrote about Pentecost, or, if they did describe two occasions, they did not draw out any differences. However, most candidates were able to identify points of differences with clear reference to the accounts in the text.
- (c) Candidates were confident about answering this issue. Many gave good evaluation and a variety of arguments that were well supported.

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