



General Certificate of Education

Religious Studies (2060)

RST3D Old Testament

Report on the Examination

2010 examination - June series

Further copies of this Report are available to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2010 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

COPYRIGHT

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number 3644723) and a registered charity (registered charity number 1073334). Registered address: AQA, Devas Street, Manchester M15 6EX

General Comments

Candidates' answers displayed a wide range of ability. Question 4 was the most popular question. Very few candidates attempted Question 1. With the exception of Question 3, most gave effective exemplification from the Bible. There were also many references to scholars' views, although less able candidates sometimes gave quotation after quotation, but failed to explain or expand on them. Some candidates were able to make links in their answers with material from other parts of the unit or from their AS studies.

Question 1 *Ways of reading the Old Testament*

Part 01

Responses here were generally weak, with limited understanding of the critical theories selected and little exemplification. There are many critical theories that might have been applied, for instance, source and reader response criticism to the Exodus narrative and form criticism to Exodus 15.

Part 02

Again, a variety of approaches were possible. Candidates might, for instance, have assessed fundamentalist and more liberal approaches to the text. Candidates might also have considered the continuing significance of the Exodus narrative for Jews and/or its use in liberation theology.

Question 2 *God and humanity*

Part 03

There were many well informed and perceptive answers to this question. Even the weaker responses contained some comment on both parts of the question. More able candidates made connections between this and the first topic by considering the contributions made by source and form criticism to an understanding of the views expressed in Genesis 1-3.

Part 04

Most candidates made reference to the concept of stewardship and many argued that dominion was not to be understood in the sense of domination. Some candidates referred to the man's naming of animals as a symbol of power and linked this to the command to fill the earth and subdue it. A few candidates considered Genesis 1 and 2 in relation to environmental concerns; assessment might have been made of Singer's claim that such texts are speciesist.

Question 3 *The way in which people believed they should live their lives*

Part 05

Although candidates did note the requirement to examine the influence of both Wisdom literature and the Law on the everyday lives of those in ancient Israel, many made only generalised reference to Wisdom literature, and some restricted consideration of the Law to the Decalogue. The more able candidates examined both in detail, including exemplification from a variety of texts. Although a few candidates referred to Wisdom of Solomon, little use was made of Ecclesiasticus.

Part 06

Those who had given competent responses to the first part of this question were able to deal well with this. Many answers concentrated on assessing the relevance of the Law, making brief reference to Wisdom literature.

Question 4 *How the people coped in times of crisis – suffering and hope*

Part 07

All candidates were able to refer to some difficulties faced by those in exile and there were many excellent responses with sound exemplification from Psalm 137. Many candidates, however, failed to take note of the trigger words. They were required to outline the difficulties and examine the response, but in many cases, far more was written about the former than the latter. There were, however, a few excellent responses that showed detailed knowledge and understanding of the set texts in Isaiah, applying them effectively to the plight of those in exile. Answers included the explicit assertion of monotheism and the futility of idolatry as well as the portrayal of God as the Lord of creation and of history. Although they are not set texts, a number of candidates exemplified their points from Jeremiah and Ezekiel; providing the information was accurate and relevant, credit was given.

Part 08

Although many candidates referred again to the despair shown in Psalm 137, only a few commented on the bitterness and vindictiveness of the closing verses. Candidates might also have pointed to the strong nationalism of some of the set texts. On the other side of the argument, many candidates argued from the very practical advice given in Jeremiah's letter and from the fact that when permission was given to return to Judah, only a limited number of exiled Jews in fact availed themselves of this. Others argued that the Deuteronomistic and Priestly histories began to take form in this period and pointed to scholars' views that the exile marked the beginnings of features that were to typify later Judaism, e.g. rituals such as circumcision and the Sabbath, the synagogue system. More candidates might have commented on the universalism present in some of the set texts from Isaiah and to his vision of the Servant's mission.