

CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level

MARK SCHEME for the October/November 2012 series

8041 DIVINITY

8041/02

Paper 2 (The Four Gospels), maximum raw mark 100

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

Cambridge will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

Cambridge is publishing the mark schemes for the October/November 2012 series for most IGCSE, GCE Advanced Level and Advanced Subsidiary Level components and some Ordinary Level components.

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Candidates are expected to show ‘ability to organise and present information, ideas, descriptions and arguments clearly and logically’ and to write their answers ‘in continuous prose’. A good essay answers the question holistically; the interpretation and comparison of issues will be demonstrated in the course of explanation and analysis of the relevant material, and thus evidence of the fulfilment of the assessment objectives will be inextricably interwoven. Marks are always awarded for the two assessment objectives which, when combined, produce a mark which is appropriate for the overall grade descriptions.

NB. Any response which is appropriate (i.e. a response to a reasonable interpretation of the question) is assessed according to the extent to which it meets the syllabus requirements and fulfils the objectives, conforming to the mark band descriptions.

The Examiner’s task is to assess the ability of each answer according to the descriptions provided. The marks are an intermediate stage on the route to assessment of attainment, which is ultimately reported as a grade. The mark for an answer is a true reflection of the candidate’s level of attainment in the assessment objectives for the syllabus according to their weightings, bearing in mind the Syllabus Aims and what may reasonably be expected of an 18-year-old who has studied the syllabus for two years.

The descriptions are cumulative, i.e. a description at one band builds on or improves the description at lower bands. Not *all* the qualities listed in a band may be demonstrated in an answer for it to fall within that band (some of the qualities are alternatives and therefore mutually exclusive).

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ASSESSMENT OF OBJECTIVES

The examination will assess the candidate's ability:

- 1 To demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the main approaches to the aspects of religion specified in their chosen area through the selection, explanation and interpretation of relevant material (60%).**

0	none evident
1–2	very limited/serious inaccuracies and/or relevance/completely unacceptable quality of language
3–4	some significant omissions/some knowledge but no attempt at explanation of interpretation/very poor quality of language
5	knowledge and understanding partial and insufficient/any explanation attempted betrays poor understanding/interpretation incorrect/definite evidence of a serious error which outweighs otherwise acceptable demonstration of knowledge and understanding/poor quality of language.
6	some irrelevance but sufficient material present/quality of explanation basic/interpretation limited but attempted/significant error(s) of fact but otherwise promising/quality of language fair.
7–8	mostly accurate and relevant/evidence that knowledge and understanding are wider than merely basic/competent handling of material/reasonable quality of language
9–10	accurate, comprehensive, apposite, largely coherent/good quality of language
11–12	selection of material is wide and detailed and is restricted to the relevant/explanation shows full understanding/interpretative skills well evidenced/excellent quality of language
13–15	sophisticated in explanation and interpretation of scholarship; outstandingly mature in approach.

[NB 'relevant material' includes both objective evidence (usually original texts/writings by protagonists/contemporary observers, but could include archaeology, tradition etc.) and 'recent [19th & 20th C] mainstream academic study' (see NB to AO2).]

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2 To analyse and evaluate the issues that arise from a consideration of a mainstream academic study in their chosen area, using an appropriate quality of language (40%)

Evaluative ability will be assessed on the quality of the reasoning and evidence used to arrive at a position rather than the position itself. It is thus impracticable to include likely responses in this area in the outlines

0	none evident
1	only vestigial evidence/largely incoherent/completely unacceptable quality of language
2	very little evidence/serious misapprehensions and inaccuracies/poorly structured/very poor quality of language
3	very limited and largely unsuccessful/analysis very restricted/judgement not supported by evidence/poor quality of language
4	attempted, but limited or only partially successful/a few glimpses of genuine ability/quality of language fair
5	some evidence of ability/reasonable attempt to analyse and evaluate/fairly well-structured/some skill at communication/reasonable quality of language
6	having identified them, analyses and evaluates the main relevant opinions competently/logically structured/good quality of language
7	some well grounded insights and judgements/coherently and systematically constructed/excellent quality of language
8+	personal insights and independent thought/sophistication and elegance in expression, construction and quality of language

[NB 'mainstream academic study' is intended to exclude GCSE level textbooks and material that is not widely accepted in the academic community (e.g. *The Holy Blood* and *The Holy Grail*; anything to do with the Egyptian pyramids, Stonehenge, astrology etc. in a pseudo religion context; material such as *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, *The Satanic Verses* etc. which is offensive and /or libellous)].

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3 To organise and present information, ideas, descriptions and arguments clearly and logically, taking into account the use of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

In essay answers, the organisation and presentation is inherent in the quality of the coherence and progression of the exposition; grammar, punctuation and spelling make a slightly less direct contribution to it but must be taken into account. Overall adjustment to the final mark for an essay [out of 25] is unlikely to be more than one mark in either direction, and is best carried out as part of the final judgement according to the overall descriptions. Examiners should refer to the Level exemplars of quality of language for SCAA.

The overall mark for a question (all are allotted 25 marks) reflects the descriptions below, which are cumulative, with due allowance being made for variation between the levels achieved in the two objectives, and reflecting their weightings:

0	Answer absent/gibberish/completely irrelevant
1–4	Largely irrelevant/very short/in note form making very few significant points/completely unacceptable quality of language
5–7	Unfinished and without much potential/high level of inaccuracy outweighing accurate material/high level of irrelevance but makes some creditable points/in note form which might have been developed into an acceptable essay of moderate quality/very poor quality of language
8–9	Too short/immature/limited knowledge/unable to create a coherent argument/poor quality of language
10–11	Basic factual knowledge accurate and sufficient/largely relevant/analysis, critical ability, reasoning limited but occasionally attempted/has seen the main point of the question/a promising start but finished in note form/quality of language fair but limited
12–13	Accurate factual knowledge slightly wider than just basic/in general sticks to the point/fairly complete coverage of the expected material/competent handling of main technical vocabulary/some evidence of reading/glimpses of analytical ability/fairly well-structured/moderate quality of language
14–15	Good and accurate factual knowledge/coherently constructed/some telling points made/definite evidence of reading/displays analytical ability/includes all the expected main points/competent handling of technical vocabulary/shows some knowledge of critical scholarship/understands what the question is looking for/reasonable quality of language
16–17	Evidence of wide reading/quotes scholars' views fairly accurately/addresses the substance of the question confidently/is familiar with different schools of religious thought/good quality of language
18–19	Up-to-date, accurate and comprehensively demonstrated knowledge of reputable schools of scholarly and religious thought/coherently and systematically constructed/well-informed evaluative judgements/in complete control of the material/excellent quality of language
20+	Can compare, contrast and evaluate the views of scholars and schools of religious thought/personal insights and independent thought evident/outstanding maturity of thought and approach [for an 18-year-old]/sophistication and elegance in expression, construction and quality of language

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Question 1 – Gobbets

Each gobbet is marked out of 6. An extra mark can be awarded at the end for the overall quality of the performance. Examiners are reminded that without this 'extra mark' this question is only being marked out of 24.

Half marks may be awarded for each part of this question, but the final total must be rounded up. Remember that in the marking of individual gobbets a $\frac{1}{2}$ mark represents a whole grade difference, i.e. $4 \times 2\frac{1}{2} = 10 = E$; $4 \times 3 = 12 = D$. If a candidate's mark is rounded up, the additional mark for overall performance should *not* be awarded as well. If an examiner thinks it necessary both to round up the mark *and also* award the extra mark, this probably indicates that some of the individual gobbets are being under marked.

The points provided below are not exclusive.

- (a) Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem...** (Matthew 2:1)

Context: Birth Narrative – after the angel's appearance to Joseph in a dream and prior to their meeting with Herod.

Points:

- only in Matthew
- comparison with Luke relevant: no reference to the census, inn, stable, shepherds, etc
- importance of Bethlehem in Judea
- identity and relevance of Herod (Herod the Great 37–4 BC)
- 'wise men' = *magoi* which can also be interpreted as magician (cf Acts 13:6) as per the NIV version – significance of their coming 'from the East'

- (b) And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.**(Matthew 7:28–29)

Context: The end of the Sermon on the Mount, after the teaching on the wise and foolish men.

Points:

- Matthean material - the way he ends the five discourses
- the 'crowds' - Jesus had addressed the Sermon to the disciples
- 'astonished', 'authority', 'not as the scribes'... reference to the nature of Jesus' teaching; plenty of points that might be developed here but must be kept relevant

- (c) And he awoke and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.** (Mark 4:39)

Context: from the story of the stilling of the storm on the lake; Jesus and his disciples crossing the lake 'in the evening' after preaching to the crowds.

Points:

- triple-tradition material (comparisons useful)
- significance of Jesus sleeping
- significance of the wind being *rebuked*
- significance of the words directed to the sea
- Jesus showing 'Divine' power (cf. Moses, Elijah, Elisha)

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- (d) **And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory."** (Mark 10:37)

Context: from the story of the Sons of Zebedee, James and John, where they offer to do anything for Jesus in return for him granting their request. Jesus then talks of servitude.

Points:

- paralleled almost exactly in Matthew 20 (except below on 'in your glory'), but the version in Luke 22 is much changed with references to James and John removed
- discussion on the part played by the disciples in Mark
- the positions on either side of the host were considered the most favourable
- discussion as to what is meant by 'in your glory' – Matthew has 'in your kingdom', thus referring to future messianic rule – but it could be reference to a messianic feast or to judgment

- (e) **But woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation.** (Luke 6:24)

Context: from the 'woes' that follow Luke's beatitudes at the beginning of the Sermon on the Plain

Points:

- only in Luke; the direct denunciation of the rich is typically and exclusively Lukan; Matthew's beatitudes are more 'spiritually-minded'
- this 'woe' stands in contrast and compliment to 6:20, "*Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God*"
- the problems raised by this apparent attitude to the rich; is it a genuine *logion*? Or, is it more likely a Lukan redaction?
- '*consolation*'... the problems raised by a message which offers direct rewards and punishments
- the contrasting of blessings and woes can also be found in the Magnificat

- (f) **And when he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples.** (Luke 19:28–29)

Context: Jesus and his disciples are nearing Jerusalem – just prior to the 'triumphal entry'.

Points:

- In all three synoptics, but only Luke refers to going 'up' to Jerusalem
- The two disciples were sent to find the colt (though no specific comment required on the colt)
- Comment on the whereabouts of Bethpage, Bethany and Olivet
- Jesus seems to have made advance arrangements – some comment can be made on Jesus' intents here
- Importance of Jerusalem in the Lukan account

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- (g) And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"** (John 9:2)

Context: Healing of the man born blind - following discourse on the Light of the World

Points:

- first mention of the disciples since chapter 6 - some doubts that they were the Twelve here
- the link between sin and suffering, especially through the parents (some rabbis taught that an infant could sin in its mother's womb)
- the address '*Rabbi*'
- the dualism in John of *blind* and *sight*

- (h) I am the door; if any one enters by me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.** (John 10:9)

Context: The Good Shepherd discourse - Jesus' listeners have not understood so Jesus begins to explain...

Points:

- only John
- I am sayings generally with any specific reference to this one
- One might have expected Jesus to describe himself as the 'shepherd', but instead he is the 'door through which one can choose to enter (or not) the Kingdom
- 'find pasture' – reference to spiritual nourishment

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Essays: each marked out of 25 as per previously recorded instructions (see the preamble to this mark scheme). Essays must deal with the question asked and some of the points outlined below may be expected but they are not definitive or exclusive.

2 Assess the view that Matthew’s gospel presents Jesus as the New Moses.

This standard Matthean theme and Mosaic material should have been covered by most Centres. There is plenty to write about, and best candidates should make a genuine effort to assess. Good answers are likely to include most of the following points.

- Five-fold division of the gospel.
- The beginning of the gospel and how it parallels the beginning of Genesis...
- Jesus’ teaching in the Sermon on the Mount.
- Power over nature miracles (although not exclusively Matthean).
- The ten miracles of chapters 8 & 9 offering a parallel to the ten plagues.
- The parallels with Moses in the Transfiguration account.
- The closing verses of the gospel which show Jesus on the mountain, resembling Moses.

3 Discuss the authorship of Matthew’s gospel.

The best answers should look at all three aspects of when, where and by whom, though some good essays will concentrate largely upon ‘by whom’.

- When: after Mark (brief evidence for this – church tradition: Ignatius, *Didache*, etc); probably after the fall of Jerusalem (AD 70), Matt 22:7?
- Where: Greek speaking Jewish environment (evidence should be given), Antioch (guesswork but acceptable); unlikely to be in Palestine?
- By whom: Papias tradition; connections with the tax-collector of the gospels - Son of Alphaeus, tax-collector based in Capernaum. Other references in the gospel to Matthew are relevant.

In the end we can only be sure that he was a Greek-speaking Jewish Christian, though the claims that he wrote in Hebrew/Aramaic should be discussed (Irenaeus, Origen, etc).

4 “In Mark’s gospel the disciples are far from perfect.” Discuss.

This question should not cause too many problems for the well-prepared candidate. When the role of Markan discipleship has come up before the role of the ‘inner circle’ has been widely referred to as have been the much vaunted ‘misunderstandings’ of the disciples. The best candidates will also make something of the specific parts played by Peter and Judas. The disciples are central to the gospel story but they are far from perfect figures and their relationship both with Jesus and within themselves should evince some good answers. Despite the ‘failings’ of the disciples, the top essays should come to some general conclusions about their importance in the Markan message - it’s not just a matter of their short-falls - and the significance of discipleship as a major concern of the readership of the gospel. Thus, there is plenty of scope, especially in Mark, for a balanced assessment. Some major references:

- Mk 1: the calling, also 3:13–19
- In Galilee, Jesus is often pictured as travelling with the 12 (such as through the grainfields) or withdrawing with them away from the crowds
- The specific instructions to the 12 about the purpose of parables (4:10–25)
- The storm on the lake and the disciples lack of understanding (4:35–41)
- The sending out of the 12, a successful mission (6:7–13)
- Jesus walking on the water and the disciples lack of understanding, ‘their hearts were hardened’ (6:45–52); again in a boat, the disciples lack understanding of the feedings of the multitudes (8:14–21)

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- The confession of Peter at Caesarea Philippi (here, Peter is speaking 'on behalf of' the disciples)
- The incident with the epileptic boy immediately after the transfiguration, itself attended by the inner circle (9:14–21); the passion predictions and the apparent failure to understand
- Arguing about who is the greatest, forbidding a man to cast out demons in Jesus' name, turning away people who bring children to Jesus, the question about places of honour (James and John) (ch. 10)...
- The Passion Narrative, numerous references to their failings...

5 Examine Mark's use of the term 'Son of Man' in his gospel.

Questions about the Son of Man have been fairly regular over the years, although they have not tended to specify one gospel for attention. However, this should not inhibit candidates as most of the material runs across the three synoptics. That said, the best answers will really try to do something with the Markan material, ideally making note of Mark's preoccupation with suffering: Mark has more sayings of this type than do the others and it seems that the suffering son of man sayings themselves are rooted firmly in the Markan tradition (not in Q, M or L). There should be a good textual knowledge, but credit should certainly be given to answers that develop theological/christological ideas and Markan themes. The following points could be included in a good essay.

- Different type of Son of man sayings: present, future and suffering with examples of each and discussion as to meaning and authenticity.
- Some background discussion concerning the term, i.e. origins in Jewish apocalyptic.
- Identity of the Son of man.

Discussion as to why Jesus used the term - did he prefer it to 'Christ/Messiah' (if so, why?) - and what might he have meant? Messianic secret?

6 Consider the role played by John the Baptist in Luke's gospel.

John the Baptist questions are always popular: there is plenty of familiar and well-covered Lukan material for candidates to employ including:

- John is used to show the connection and continuity with Judaism, especially through the birth stories which demonstrates a consistent line of salvation history with the introduction to the Gentile mission demonstrating the next stage
- The preaching of John introduces that of Jesus
- The importance of the baptism
- John is used to reveal Jesus' identity through the questions from his disciples and the subsequent response of Jesus
- The death of John foreshadows that of Jesus (although not dealt with in the same detail as in Mark)
- The best candidates *may* notice some of the inconsistencies in the Lukan account (eg how can John and Jesus be related and John not seem to know Jesus later?)

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7 To what extent can it be argued that Luke’s gospel was written for a Gentile community?

A familiar theme which should present candidates with few problems in terms of material, but the best responses should focus upon the Gentile community. The counter-argument (that it was directed towards Jews and their attitudes to Gentiles) should certainly be considered as there is a strong case that Luke is a liberal Jew writing to persuade Jews of the need to welcome Gentiles into the community of salvation.

- The most common references are likely to include the accounts of the Nunc Dimittis and John the Baptist (both indicating that *all flesh* will see salvation), together with the various references to the ‘lost’ (which can justifiably include Gentiles as well as the ‘lost’ within Israel) and the universal aspect of salvation (note the address to Theophilus and the part played by the Roman centurion). Note that there is also a lack of ‘hebraic’ terms in the Gospel. In addition, the connection with Luke the ‘physician’ in the epistles is strong and, in Col. 4:14, Luke is excluded from the “fellow workers of the circumcision”.
- However, as stated, the best essays *might* demonstrate a greater analysis of the question itself and deal with whether it is *accurate* to limit the Gospel in this way. For example, it can be stressed that Luke also deals with Jews – he uses the OT throughout the Birth Narratives and places Jerusalem as central to his story. In addition, it should be pointed out that the other Gospels do not ignore Gentiles – even Matthew seems to include them when he declared that the gospel be taught to *all nations*.

8 “John’s gospel was written to interpret and improve the synoptic gospels.” Discuss

Although this is not a question specifically requiring a comparison between John and the synoptics, both in terms of individual ‘stories’ and of overall theology, this is an acceptable approach, so long as the candidate makes an effort to deal with the way John has used (or hasn’t used) synoptic material. There is also opportunity to develop the idea that John is the more *spiritual* of the gospels, although candidates should not just reproduce a prepared essay on this topic. There are similarities between John and the synoptics which suggest he may have used, developed and interpreted them (or one of them). However, if John did use the synoptics, why did he omit/change so much material? We are at the heart of what has been called ‘the Johannine problem’ here and the best candidates will recognise that there is no straight and easy answer. John may have used the synoptics, with the aim to interpret them, but he certainly made good use of other material as well (eg the practice of the early Church). He also had other *aims* as well. Some points:

- The basic story of Jesus is the same but John adds explanation, comment and spiritual (even sacramental) significance... But, there are a number of important synoptic events which John has and seems to take much further in terms of explanation and significance (eg feeding of the 5000, the walking on the water)
- John is distinct in many places: the order of events is also different (examples required – see last bullet point)
- Prologue provides a full explanation as to Jesus’ identity from the outset
- John’s interpretation of synoptic eschatology could be discussed
- Parallels and differences in the Passion Narrative: Jesus seems to be crucified on ‘the day of Preparation’; Jesus bears his own cross; there is further discussion between the Jews and Pilate over the title on the cross; there is the reference to Jesus’ mother and the Beloved Disciple and different words again at his death; the piercing of Jesus’ side is also only found in John; John does not emphasise the agony of the cross, but its glory ... the whole gospel has led up to this moment: Jesus is to be ‘lifted up’

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9 Examine the part played by women in John's gospel.

A new question, but one in which candidates with a good knowledge of John should be able to score well. Although questions on women in the gospels are usually directed towards Luke, there are more references elsewhere to women than is commonly supposed, especially in John. However, there should be a genuine attempt to discuss, and to come to some conclusion, rather than simply listing examples. The following references to women are *only* found in John:

- The **Mother of Jesus** at the Wedding of Cana, and afterwards going with him to Capernaum (2:1–11)
- The **Samaritan Woman** at the Well (4:1–42)
- **Martha and Mary** ask Jesus to help their brother Lazarus (11:1–45)
- **Mary of Bethany** anoints the feet of Jesus during a dinner (12:1–8)
- The **Mother of Jesus** and **other women** are present at the Cross (19:25b–27)
- **Mary Magdalene** discovers the empty tomb and tells the disciples; the first to see the risen Jesus (20:1–2, 11–18)
- Also dubious tradition, but acceptable for discussion: The **Adulterous Woman** (8:1–11)
- Other references to women in: 3:4, 3:29, 6:42, 9:18–23; 12:15; 16:21; 18:16–17

10 Assess the importance of the accounts of the Last Supper in the Gospels.

Candidates may discuss the importance of the Last Supper in the Early Church, but the main force of the essay will concern the relevance and significance in the gospels narrative themselves. The better candidates will know the distinctive features of the accounts dealt with by John and the synoptics, though a successful essay can be written in relation to the synoptics alone. Essays *should* refer, however, to *more than one* gospel narrative.

- John:
 - central position in the gospel story - together with the discourses, this makes the whole incident more pivotal than in synoptics - not a Passover meal;
 - foot-washing, the discussion with Peter, the beloved disciple, the dramatic exit of Judas, the last discourses but no words of institution;
 - Jesus in control of events, date allows crucifixion to take place 'as the lambs are slaughtered', dualism in Satan's role.
- Synoptics:
 - dating and position - Passover meal - just prior to the crucifixion;
 - a way of preparing for and setting the betrayal in motion;
 - the words of Jesus - similarities with Paul in 1 Corinthians 7 - the importance of the 'new covenant' - the significance of the 'shedding of blood', etc.;
 - note the distinctive elements in Luke: Jesus' welcome at the beginning of the meal, he only names Peter and John as the ones who prepare the feast, the words about his betrayal are at the end in Luke (at the beginning in Matthew and Mark), Luke softens Jesus' words by omitting *it would have been better for that man if he had never been born*, adds a conversation with the disciples to the prediction of Peter's denial, points to a future supper in the kingdom.

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11 Assess the reasons why Judas betrayed Jesus.

Questions on Judas were asked in 2000 and 2007. They give candidates room to explore some interesting ideas as well as showing their knowledge of the text. The two obvious gospels here are Matthew and Luke. There may be some confusion between the narratives. The best candidates, however, will probably be those that *know their gospels*.

- Among the ideas likely to be discussed: for the money; disillusioned zealot; wanted to effect the arrival of the kingdom; jealousy.
- Good answers will need to be backed up by textual material reference to the Last Supper accounts:
 - Luke's '*Satan entered into Judas*' (22:3) - the account of his death in Acts 1 is important here but examiners **cannot** expect candidates to know this;
 - that the whole thing was preordained is supported by John 6:70–71 and 13:2;
 - Matthew's account of his death (27:3–10) gives rise to speculation about why he betrayed Jesus...as does John 12:4;
- Discussion concerning the name/title Iscariot is also useful.

12 Examine the arguments for the existence of Q as a separate source for Matthew and Luke.

Questions have been asked before about various elements of the synoptic problem and the Four Document Hypothesis, but not one specifically about 'Q'. Examiners should all be aware that they will not have all been taught the best of modern scholarship and many answers will refer to standard mid-20th century (or earlier) material. Don't expect much referring to an earlier common sayings source for 'Q' and the Gospel of Thomas, though candidates should be credited if they argue this knowledgeably. Nor should references to Thomas, though desirable, be expected to gain high marks. What might reasonably be expected are:

- An understanding of the Q source, its history in the discussion about the synoptic problem and its part played in the proposed solution.
- The reasons for its hypothesis: doublets; striking similarities in wording between Matthew and Luke; commonality in order between Matthew and Luke; Luke's reference to other 'sources'.
- The proposed composition of 'Q': a 'sayings' source (examples required).
- Questions need to be asked as to whether it was really a document, or merely common oral tradition.
- The case against: why has it not been found? Why did it not contain a Passion Narrative? Why no reference in the Early Church? Etc.

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13 To what extent can it be said that the Gospel writers show Jesus as totally rejecting violence?

Answers should not simply be a list of Jesus' sayings, but should contain a genuine attempt to interpret and appraise, as credit should be given for showing the teaching in historical context. Main passages include: Matthew 5:38–48 and parallels; Matthew 26:47–56 and parallels. In addition, Jesus' teachings on forgiveness (Matthew 18:21–22) and on not judging others (Matthew 7:1–5) are relevant to the discussion. Jesus did mention soldiers in his teaching – he did not tell them to disarm. Was Jesus a zealot? It is possible that the Gospels are written for apologetic motives in order to disassociate Jesus from violence – he was charged with treason (see especially Luke 23:1–5).

14 Discuss the purpose of the parables in the gospels.

Likely to be a popular question - it should give candidates a chance to show their knowledge of the parables, but it is hoped that they will not fall into the trap of simply narrating with just a little limited comment on meaning and importance. There is room here for detailed discussion as to why Jesus used parables as a method of teaching and a contrast between the way the parables are used by the different evangelists. Were the parables designed to 'confuse' and 'obscure' the teaching or were they designed to 'clarify' and 'illustrate'? The question of allegorical interpretation has been asked before and should come into the best discussions (Parable of the Sower is an obvious example). Examiners must be prepared to credit candidates who do argue effectively that a number of the parables have a distinct allegorical interpretation. There are many examples to choose.