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<p>Paper 9011/01 Prophets of the Old Testament</p>
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General comments

Most candidates answered four good questions, and there were very few instances of poor time management. The depth of knowledge displayed by some Centres was very impressive. Some candidates tended to list their points, with the result that the flow of argument was lost.

Perhaps unusually, there were no questions that were significantly more popular than others, and there were no questions where candidates' responses were weaker than for other questions. This was a testimony to the in-depth nature of the teaching, and Centres are to be congratulated for this.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

'Israelite prophecy originated outside Israel.' Discuss.

This was perhaps the one question where the depth of knowledge displayed was more impressive than for other questions. Comparisons ranged from Egypt to Mesopotamia to Canaan, and were very erudite indeed. Weaker responses tended to assume that Israelite prophecy *must* have originated in Israel because it had unique characteristics.

Question 2

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

The best responses were wide-ranging in what they covered, and it was interesting that they usually dealt well with Elijah's sense of personal inadequacy, suggesting that this made him more human and more approachable as a prophet. Weaker responses tended to retell the story of the fight with the 450 Baal prophets on Mount Carmel, dwelling indefinitely on the narrative and seldom on the meaning.

Question 3

How far can it be argued that the story of Samuel is an ideal one, not a real one?

Most candidates argued that it was a combination of both. Samuel was the ideal prophet (it was argued) because he had so many important roles, not least in relationship to the founding of the monarchy. He was a real one because his place in the history of the tradition as a real figure is so firmly established. If we tried to get rid of him, somebody else would have to be put in his place. Less successful approaches simply listed Samuel's achievements.

Question 4

'Moses was a prophet but more than a prophet.' Discuss.

Answers to this were predictable but sound. Moses' prophetic credentials were established on the basis of his call, his intercessory function, his miracle-working ability, and so on. Very few candidates actually questioned the historicity of the portrait of Moses, but most did a good job on the question anyway. Moses was held to be more than a prophet because of the variety of his functions, such as his leadership qualities, his background in the Egyptian royal house, his priestly role and so on. Some of the best responses took the line that all these qualities were prophetic anyway, because Moses simply adopted them as part of his commission from Yahweh.

Question 5

Discuss the view that there is very little difference between true and false prophets in ancient Israel.

The general opinion was that there was a great deal of difference, for all sorts of reasons, most of which are time-honoured. One general weakness in responses to this question was the reluctance to consider the possibility that false prophets and true prophets were part of the same cultic establishment. Isaiah's temple vision, for example, suggests that he was a cultic functionary, and the OT books abound with references to the cultic background of the prophets. Some used the episode of Micaiah ben Imlah to good effect, pointing out that the lying spirit was from Yahweh. Some candidates made equally good use of the Balaam story.

Question 6

'The whole of the Book of Amos is concerned with social justice.' Discuss.

This was done well by virtually all who answered it. Amos' critique of social injustice was very well known, and was supported by good textual references, in some cases outstandingly so. Most argued that the concern with social justice was important but not exclusive, in that Amos talked about the foreign nations, the Day of the Lord, possible restoration (depending on whether or not such material is original), religious sins, and so on.

Question 7

Examine the use that Hosea makes of the concept of God's love.

Weaker responses to this question simply detailed the story of Hosea and Gomer and their children, making vague references to love and the family. Some essays were superbly crafted, and included, for example, Yahweh's corrective love, Yahweh's 'allure' to Gomer/Israel, the technical term *hesed*, and more. There were several maximum scores achieved here.

Question 8

Assess the importance of Isaiah's call for his work and message.

Some candidates had prepared this as a standard Isaiah question, and answered it very well, linking the wording of the call to Isaiah's work and message. Others simply detailed Isaiah's story, without necessarily linking it to the call narrative. One area of weakness was the lack of knowledge of the historical background to Isaiah's ministry.

Question 9

'Jeremiah was a prophet of doom.' Discuss.

Those who did this question invariably made a good job of it, with such success that the Examiners felt somewhat doom-laden having read their efforts. Centres have clearly been at pains to teach this part of the course in some detail. Where there was a weakness, which was rare, it was usually because candidates did not consider that some aspects of Jeremiah's message were hopeful rather than the reverse. Most did indicate at the start of their essays that at the start of his prophetic life, Jeremiah was called to build and to plant, and towards the end of it, he is in a hopeful state about the exiled 'good figs'.

Question 10

Most candidates looked at gobbets (b),(d),(e),(f),(g) and (h). Those who did (a),(c),(i),(j) and (k) did not produce inferior answers, although it is worth mentioning that some weaker responses identified (b) as the words of Samuel because they occur in the Book of Samuel.

(b) (on Samuel's call)

This was indeed the favourite gobbet, and it was good to see that candidates did not confine their comments to accounts of Samuel's call, although where responses were weak, it was usually through over-focus on the story-line. There was a lot of interesting comment about life in the sanctuary, and about the general significance of Samuel's call. Some went into useful detail about the Ark as a symbol of God's presence.

(d) (on Jezebel's message to Elijah)

Most candidates referred to the context of this gobbet in the destruction of the Baal prophets, and in Elijah's subsequent experiences on Horeb. There was also useful comment on Jezebel's assumption of power by a swift counter-attack and threat against Elijah, although some commented also on the oddity of Jezebel's bothering to send a message instead of an assassin.

(e) (on Naboth's vineyard)

This was second in popularity to gobbet (b), although it was not always a good choice for some, since there was a tendency simply to tell the story of Naboth's vineyard. That story is of course central to the gobbet, but for higher grades answers should include comment. There was much amusing comment about Jezebel's assumption of power over her hen-pecked husband.

(f) (Amos 3:7-8, on the compulsion to prophesy)

In some respects, answers to this were weaker than those to (b),(d) and (e). Some candidates did no more than make general comments about prophets knowing secrets, and God being powerful. The best responses focused on the compulsion to prophesy; when God reveals his will, the prophetic word cannot be denied (there was some useful cross-referencing here to Jeremiah). Some candidates had obviously done some detailed research on lions, since the roar of the lion was referred to in very poetic terms.

(g) and (h) (two extracts from Hosea).

Weaker responses to these gobbets simply went through each extract, line by line, and made general comments that could have referred to virtually anything in the prophetic literature. Few candidates knew about the 'controversy' as a '*rib*' – a technical term for God's 'covenant lawsuit' against Israel for having abrogated the Sinai agreement and for disobeying the commandments. 'Kindness' again is a technical word in Hosea – *hesed* – often translated as (divine) love. Quite a few did point out that "murder follows murder" could well refer to the fate of successive kings. For the extract from chapter 11, most candidates referred to the different names given to God in the Old Testament – in this case *El Qadosh* – Holy One, and illustrated the tension between destruction and salvation in Hosea.

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

General comments

The overall performance of the cohort was, in comparison to previous years, weaker. There were no instances of very high quality answers this session and the highest marks achieved were noticeably lower than in previous sessions. The overall standard of the paper was not deemed to be more difficult; it had a good balance of questions and differentiation was achieved.

Once again a number of candidates made the mistake of answering only **Question 1** and producing four extended answers for the gobbet question. This tended to be in Centres with low candidate numbers. In preparation of candidates for this examination, Centres are reminded of the need to ensure candidates are fully aware of what is required of them and that they adhere to the rubric.

In general, time was used wisely. Only one or two candidates ran out of time on their last answer and resorted to writing bullet point notes in order to reproduce all they knew.

It is of note for Centres and teachers preparing candidates for both AS and A Level that the majority of candidates who attempted **Question 2** did not fully understand the meaning of the word "ethical". It was a popular choice of question but candidates tended to write answers about Matthew's parables and general teaching of Jesus. Few candidates made mention of the Sermon on the Mount's teaching.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

As always, the gobbet question proved popular. There were some candidates who failed to adhere to the rubric by answering this question only and writing four essay length answers in response. Centres are advised to remind candidates of the need to adhere carefully to the rubric or they will forfeit a considerable number of marks.

Candidates also need to be reminded to give the context of each gobbet. There are still a reasonable number of candidates who just re-tell the instance from which the quotation arises (in narrative form) and give no further comment or insight.

All gobbets were drawn from familiar passages. The most popular choices were those taken from Matthew, Mark and from John. Question 1(g) was poorly answered with several candidates confusing this quotation with the height of the World. Questions (e), (f) and (h) were rarely attempted.

Many candidates did not select key words or issues in the gobbets but opted instead for a general overall comment. More specific comment and detail is required in responses to this question.

Question 2

The majority of candidates who attempted this question did not understand the meaning of the word "ethical". These candidates offered a lot of irrelevant comment on parable teaching in Matthew and little comment on the Sermon on the Mount. As in previous years, candidates did not find it easy to limit their answers to specifically "ethical" material in responding to this question.

Question 3

The wording of this question, which asked *when, where and by whom* Matthew's Gospel was written, guided candidates and most answers followed this plan. Some answers were clearly restricted by the access some candidates have to up-to-date text books. Generally, however, this question was well attempted.

Question 4

Responses to this question were disappointing. Some candidates did discuss Mark's other interests apart from suffering and death which was good. However, many candidates used it as an opportunity to write all they knew about Markan themes without structuring their response to answer the specific question asked.

Question 5

For those who attempted it, this question was answered satisfactorily with comment on the reason why Jesus spoke in Parables. This did not prove to be as popular a question as imagined.

Question 6

In answers to this question, not all candidates endeavoured to discuss *the truth* for Theophilus or indeed who Theophilus might be. General comment on Luke was satisfactory but there was little if any comment on the historical context of Luke.

Question 7

This was not a popular choice. Few candidates commented on the closeness or immediacy of the Kingdom. Most offered a general answer without mention of the Magnificat, the Benedictus etc. from Chapters 1 and 2. In addition, there was a noticeable absence of comment on John the Baptist and the preparation and heralding of the Kingdom.

Question 8

This was not a popular choice of question. The one or two candidates who did attempt it failed to highlight what they understood as "anti-Jewish".

Question 9

There was some emphasis on miracles being signs in John which was good but most answers stopped short of taking this further and developing its significance.

Question 10

The question was very poorly answered. Candidates tended to discuss Jesus' relationship with Pharisees and Sadducees in all aspects of the Gospel not just the Jerusalem section. These candidates gave an overall view of the Gospel.

Question 11

This question proved to be a popular choice which was generally well answered. Some responses lacked depth, however.

Question 12

This was again a popular choice, though few candidates made links with the Baptism. Most responses re-told the two instances but offered little comment or depth of analysis.

Question 13

Most candidates who answered this question re-told the Judas part in the Jesus story but not did not attempt to discuss *why Judas may have betrayed Jesus*.

Question 14

Few candidates attempted this question. In general, answers were confused (including comment on life in Palestine in the 20th/21st century) and rather short with little depth of discussion.

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Paper 9011/03
The Apostolic Age

General comments

This session saw a decline in the overall standard of candidates' work. As usual there were some candidates who showed little evidence of having studied the whole syllabus in any depth, while others appeared only to have studied the books prescribed for special study. As has been stated regularly in past reports, it is impossible for candidates to get a high grade in this paper, if they approach the examination in this manner. The questions set on the prescribed texts in **Section A** often require knowledge of the rest of the syllabus, and some of these questions may actually ask for reference to, or comparison with, other books and topics in the rest of syllabus.

In spite of the overall decline in the standard this year, there were still some excellent answers to all of the gobbets, and to nearly all of the other questions.

Last year attention was drawn to the recurrent problem of candidates writing long introductions to their answers, including the gobbets, giving detailed background information, which is not strictly relevant to the actual question set. It is pleasing to be able to report that there were no examples of this happening this year. There were, however, several instances of another common problem, that of candidates writing unbalanced answers through neglecting an important part of the question. For example, in their answers to **Question 8**, several candidates made little or no attempt to answer the first part, i.e. "Explain Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians on the Church as 'the body of Christ', but wrote at length on the second part, which was concerned with the reasons which led him to give this teaching. Likewise in **Question 7**, which asked candidates to discuss the statement, 'For both Paul and the author of Hebrews, Abraham was a figure of greater significance than Moses', several candidates wrote at length about the significance of Abraham and Moses for Paul, with little or no reference to their significance for the author of Hebrews.

Question 3 was the most popular question in the paper followed closely by **Question 1**. In **Section B** **Question 5** was the most popular; followed by **Questions 6** and **10**. The least popular were **Questions 7** and **9**. In **Question 1**, the gobbets question, (d) and (f) on Galatians were the most popular, followed by (a) on Acts.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Six marks were awarded for each of the gobbets with one additional mark available for overall performance. This question was answered fairly well, most candidates showing knowledge of the context and the points of interest or difficulty requiring comment, except in the case of 1(a). Please note: RSV only given in this report.

Comment on points of interest or difficulty in four of the following, with brief reference to the general context:

- (a) After him Judas the Galilean arose in the days of the census and drew away some of the people after him; he also perished, and all who followed him were scattered. So in the present case I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone. (Acts 5:37-38a)

The context was Gamaliel speaking to the Sanhedrin following the arrest of the Apostles, and Peter's defence and charge against the Sanhedrin. The 'him' referred to is Theudas. This is an important passage for the historical accuracy of Luke, since Josephus, in his *Antiquities* written c.93CE, refers to a false prophet Theudas, who was captured and beheaded some time after 44CE, when Fadus became procurator, which is several years after the events Luke is describing, which occurred c.36CE. A further chronological and historical problem arises from Luke's reference to the rising of Judas the Galilean in the days of the census. Credit was given for information about Gamaliel. As usual he was confused with the Italian scientist and astronomer Galileo.

- (b) Men, why are you doing this? We also are men, of like nature with you, and bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to a living God who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. (Acts 14:15)

Here the context was the healing of the man crippled from birth at Lystra. The crowd, who witnessed the miracle, thought their gods had come down to earth, believing Barnabas to be Zeus, and Paul to be Hermes, the messenger of the gods, since he was the main speaker. Priest of Zeus offers garland, oxen for sacrifice, etc. More able candidates commented on Paul's doctrine of a universal creator God, and his call for them to turn to 'the living God', etc. There were some candidates who erroneously referred to Barnabas as one of the seven 'deacons' appointed in Acts 6.

- (c) And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." And he [Paul] said, "Into what then were you baptized?" (Acts 19:2-3a)

The context of this gobbet is Paul at Ephesus; 12 disciples who knew, and had received, only John's baptism. Their baptism and laying on of hands in the name of Jesus, which leads to a further 'Pentecost', c.f. others in Acts in addition to Acts 2, i.e. 8:14, the outpouring of the Spirit on the converts in Samaria, and 10:44, the outpouring of the Spirit on Cornelius and his household: the Gentile Pentecost. This incident is regarded as possible evidence for a sect of John's disciples at Ephesus, c.f. link with treatment of John the Baptist in 4th Gospel, and its possible Ephesian origin.

- (d) For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it... (Galatians 1:11-12a)

This was the most popular of the gobbets and generally quite well answered. Points requiring comment and explanation are: the situation in the Galatian Churches, the false gospel of Paul's opponents, the Judaisers, and their insistence on circumcision and the observance of the Mosaic Law as a requirement for Gentile converts to be accepted into the Church; their attempts to discredit both his gospel and apostleship, and the arguments Paul uses to counter these charges, especially his claim to receive the gospel 'by revelation from Christ'; Paul's gospel of justification by grace through faith, and not through the observance of Mosaic Law.

- (e) Now we, brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now. (Galatians 4:28-29)

This proved to be a popular gobbet and generally quite well answered. Points for comment include Paul's exposition of justification by faith as opposed to law based on the figure of Abraham, and his allegorical interpretation of the relationship between Sarah and Hagar, and Isaac and Ishmael; the reasons why Paul gave this teaching, i.e. to counter the false teaching of the Judaisers; also history is now repeating itself in the persecution of Gentile Christians, 'born according to the Spirit', by Jews, just as Ishmael persecuted Isaac. 'Born according to the flesh', i.e. Ishmael originally, may also now include Gentile proselytes.

- (f) For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love be servants to one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word... (Galatians 5:13-14a)

The context of this extract is that it follows Paul's teaching on the superseding of circumcision and law. Points for comment include Paul's view of Christian freedom, and its limitations. Does 'occasion to the flesh' refer to their acceptance once again of circumcision, or is he speaking of antinomian behaviour, or both? Flesh/lower nature in opposition to the Spirit. One word/commandment, i.e. 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'

Question 2

Why was the Council of Jerusalem held, and what decisions did it reach? How difficult is it to reconcile the account of the Council in Acts with the evidence of Paul's letters?

A good answer required summary and explanation of Acts 15 as it stands, and the events which led to the Council of Jerusalem, confirming from Galatians what the problems were, distinguishing terms for admission of Gentiles, problem of circumcision, table fellowship, etc. Not many candidates were aware of the main internal problems in Acts, e.g. why does Peter again defend the Cornelius episode? Why is circumcision not explicitly mentioned in decisions, but only terms, if that is what they are, for table fellowship?

Some comparison with Pauline epistles was also required, especially Galatians. Much depends on whether it was written before or after the Council of Jerusalem; events appear very similar, but, if the same, many difficulties; problem of identifying the accounts of Paul's visits to Jerusalem recorded in Acts, and reconciling them with those he refers to in Galatians. Why does Paul not refer to the Council and its decisions elsewhere in his epistles, especially in Romans and 1 & 2 Corinthians, bearing in mind the problems they deal with and their later date? These problems raise doubts about Luke's historical accuracy in Acts, when compared with the primary evidence of Paul's letters.

Question 3

Discuss the role and the importance of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church and of the individual Christian as portrayed in Acts.

This was the most popular question on the paper. While there were a few very good answers, too many candidates merely gave a précis of the events on the Day of Pentecost, and other passages referring to the Holy Spirit, with little or no analysis.

Although there is no systematic or developed teaching about the person and work of the Holy Spirit in Acts, a considerable amount is implied or illustrated, and overall there is a similar emphasis on the importance of the Spirit to that in Luke's gospel, which has led to the frequent comment that a more appropriate title for the book would be 'The Acts of the Holy Spirit'. The Spirit came as the fulfilment of the promise of Jesus, 1:4-8; importance of day of Pentecost for Jews - commemoration of giving of Law/'birthday' of Judaism, and climax of the wheat harvest; O.T. background, fulfilment of Joel 2:28ff; manner of the Spirit's coming and symbolism of wind, fire, etc.; reversal of curse of Babel? Samaritan Pentecost - 8:17, and Gentile Pentecost - 10:44, c.f. 19:1-6. Holy Spirit guides and empowers mission of Church - 9:31, 13:3, 15:28 & 20:44, and individuals (power, boldness, gifts of healing, etc.) 4:8, 4:31, 6:3, 8:29, 16:7. The essential gift, given or confirmed by the laying on of hands. Luke clearly implies, what Paul says explicitly in Romans 8:9: 'If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.' Given following repentance and faith expressed in commitment of baptism (2:38), though sometimes presence of the Spirit manifested before baptism, e.g. Cornelius. The Spirit inspires prophets, e.g. Agabus, 11:28 & 21:11. The consequences of attempting to deceive the Holy Spirit - 5:1ff.

In view of the considerable amount of relevant material, candidates were not expected to discuss all the points mentioned above for a very high mark.

Question 4

When and why was Galatians written?

When? The date of the epistle depends on its destination. If to the Galatai proper, i.e. North Galatian theory, then not before Acts 16:6, and probably during Paul's stay at Ephesus in Acts 19, or Macedonia, i.e. 53-55CE. If to South Galatia, then either from Syrian Antioch just before Paul left for the Council of Jerusalem about 49CE, or during his journey to the Council, if it is held that Galatians refers to the same occasion as Acts 11:30, 12:25. Some also argue for a later date, if written to South Galatia, e.g. from Ephesus as above. Internal evidence may favour a later date, i.e. similarity of subject matter to Romans, and Galatians 4:13, which seems to indicate that Paul had visited Galatia at least twice when he wrote. It can also be argued that subject matter also favours an earlier date, c.f. Acts 15. Full credit was given for a well argued case for either destination, and any sensible date.

Why? Paul has heard that Christians of Jewish origin, or, as is also argued by some scholars, Gentile converts, who have adopted Jewish customs, have insisted that his converts must accept circumcision and take on the obligation to obey the Law of Moses, including the observance of the Jewish calendar (4:10), in order to share in the covenant community. Thus they were in imminent danger of adulterating his gospel of freedom with elements of Jewish legalism. Hence Paul's urgent and intense response. From Chapter 1 it is also clear that these Judaizers had cast doubts on his apostolic status. Although Paul refers to a group who propagated this false teaching, 5:10 would seem to indicate there may have been a particular person who was mainly responsible for this heresy.

Section B

Question 5

Assess the role and importance of Peter in the development of the teaching and mission of the early Church.

Full discussion, with analysis, was expected of Peter's ministry and teaching as recounted by Luke in Acts 1-12 and 15. Clearly Peter is the leading apostle in the early chapters of Acts, (but note the role and importance of James in Acts 15); his authority and the way it was exercised; the apostolic *kerygma*, i.e. the gospel message he proclaimed, as seen in his early sermons and the response to his preaching; his healing ministry; his visit to Samaria (Acts 8); the Cornelius incident, the Gentile Pentecost, and the role of Peter in welcoming Gentiles into the Church, including the Council of Jerusalem. More able candidates were also aware of the relevant material in Galatians and 1 Corinthians. From Galatians it is clear that Peter still had problems over the admission of Gentiles into the fellowship of the Church, even after the Cornelius incident. 1 Corinthians would seem to indicate that Peter had visited Corinth.

Although this was the most popular question in this section of the paper, and there were some good answers, it was generally not well answered. Too many candidates merely gave a précis of the incidents recorded in Acts, which involve Peter, with little or no attempt to assess his importance 'in the development of the teaching and mission of the early Church'.

Question 6

How did Paul's conversion experience shape his faith and theology?

Candidates were expected to cover the relevant points from the account of Paul's conversion in Acts 9, and also evidence in his letters, which is of primary importance, especially Galatians 1:11ff., and incidental comments such as Romans 1:1, 1:5, 6 & 7 and 1 Corinthians 15:1-7.

Paul's conversion experience gave him a deep-rooted assurance and a unique consciousness of the grace of God, and the authority given to him as the 'apostle to the Gentiles', e.g. Galatians 1:16. His experience and knowledge of the mercy and grace of God was the foundation of his doctrine of 'justification by faith', which was so important in relation to the admission of Gentiles into the Church.

His period of blindness seems to have brought home to him the blindness of the human mind, especially his own in his pre-conversion zeal as a Pharisee, and the hardness of the human heart, when it is not enlightened by the Holy Spirit, c.f. 1 Corinthians 2. His meeting with the risen Christ convinced him of the reality of the resurrection and its importance, c.f. 1 Corinthians 15:12ff, and also the importance of the hope of resurrection to eternal life with Christ.

The conversion of such a leading Jew and his teaching on justification made him a centre of discussion on the place of the Law in Christian living, especially for Gentiles. There was limited Gentile mission until the major mission of Paul and Barnabas. Paul the theologian, and his importance in the development of the theology of the early Church; new ideas and expressions suited to the proclamation of the gospel in Gentile settings; Christ as the Second Adam, the Wisdom of God, Saviour from principalities and powers, etc.

In view of the abundance of relevant material, candidates were not expected to cover everything mentioned above. While it was a fairly popular question, and generally quite well answered, some candidates lost marks by basing their answers almost entirely on the account of Paul's conversion given in Acts 9.

Question 7

'For both Paul and the author of Hebrews, Abraham was a figure of greater significance than Moses.' Discuss.

Candidates were expected to cover the relevant material in Romans, Galatians and Hebrews.

Paul: For Paul Moses tends to represent the old covenant, whereas Abraham, as father of the faithful, represents the new. Candidates were expected to discuss Paul's use of the figure of Abraham in Romans 4 and Galatians 3 and 4; Romans 9:6ff also relevant. Paul does, however, link baptism into Moses with Christ (1 Corinthians 10:1ff). Other references to Moses in the Pauline epistles in the syllabus are Romans 5:14, 9:15, 10:5, 19.

For a high mark some reference to the reasons why Paul attached such importance to Abraham was required: (i) to counter false teaching from Judaisers (and others?), who opposed Paul's teaching on justification by grace through faith; (ii) to show that this doctrine has its roots in the O.T. prior to the giving of the Law and was the basis of God's relationship with Abraham; (iii) indirectly in Romans (more directly in Galatians) to defend himself against attacks on his authority as an apostle.

Hebrews: Abraham - 2:16, 6:13ff, 7:1ff, 11:8ff, 11:17ff. Moses - 3:1ff, 7:14, 8:5, 9:19, 10:28, 11:23-24, 12:21, and especially 4:1ff. In contrast to Paul, the author of Hebrews does not use the example of Abraham's faith(fulness) as the basis of any particular doctrine. He also uses the example of Moses and his faithfulness in a far more positive way than Paul.

While it can obviously be argued on the basis of the evidence of Romans and Galatians that Abraham was a far more significant figure for Paul than Moses, it is very difficult to maintain the same for the author of Hebrews on the basis of the passages referred to above. As usual, some candidates confused Paul's use of the figure of Abraham with that of James, e.g. James 2:21, where he refers to Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac as an example of his active faith, which led to his being 'considered righteous'.

Question 8

Explain Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians on the Church as 'the body of Christ', and the reasons which led him to give this teaching.

Candidates were expected to cover in some detail Paul's teaching on 'the body of Christ' in 1 Corinthians 12-14, but other passages relevant where Paul expresses a similar understanding of the Church using other images or metaphors, e.g. 1 Corinthians 3:9, 3:16-17, 5:6ff, also 16:1ff.

Reasons which led Paul to give this teaching: the threat to unity as seen in 1:10ff. and 3:1ff. through the existence of factions and party spirit of prime importance, but other issues also threatened the unity of the Church at Corinth, e.g. disorder in public worship and the use of spiritual gifts, law suits, immorality, food offered to idols, false doctrine - especially on resurrection, role of women, etc.

Question 9

What, according to the Epistle of James, is the essence of true Christianity? Comment briefly on the circumstances which may have led the author to give this teaching.

Although this was a fairly straightforward question, it was one of the least popular. This may reflect the fact that, except when it is one of the prescribed texts, some candidates do not study the Letter of James in depth. Candidates were expected to explain and comment on the main points of James' teaching, and especially the main theme of Chapters 1 and 2, i.e. 'faith without works is dead'.

To James, the Christian life is a call to a life of holiness and love, which expresses itself in good works and concern for one's neighbour, e.g. 1:27, also to endure suffering, 1:12. The 'perfect law' gives freedom, 1:25. James' teaching on works may be compared with Paul's ethical teaching in Romans 12-14, and Galatians 5:13ff. There is a strong emphasis in James on the importance of prayer, also the ministry of healing. Like Paul, James believes that Christians should live as those who are accountable to God as Judge, c.f. 5:9 and Romans 14:10. Also relevant is: the tongue (3:1ff), wisdom (1:5 and 3:13ff.), and riches (4:13 ff).

Other points which were worthy of some credit, provided they were discussed in a manner relevant to the question, include the almost complete lack of reference in James to distinctively Christian beliefs, e.g. the Holy Spirit, resurrection, etc. This has led some scholars to regard it as a Jewish and not a Christian document. On the other hand there are striking parallels with the teaching of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, e.g. 2:13 & Matthew 5:7; 3:12 & Matthew 7:16.

The circumstances which may have led James to give this teaching: the need to counter Paul's teaching on justification by faith, or misunderstanding of it, but this assumes a later date; to counter antinomian tendencies, or the adulteration or neglect of aspects of Christian doctrine, which James believed to be important; also a pastoral letter James considered necessary for (Jewish?) Christians of the Dispersion? Brief comment only required.

Question 10

What may be learned from Acts and the epistles you have studied for this paper concerning the organisation of the early Church and the development of its worship?

This was one of the more popular questions in this section. Although it was quite well answered on the whole, there were no outstanding responses.

The Christian Church came from the matrix of Judaism; its first leaders, including Paul, were Jews who saw the gospel and the Church as the fulfilment of Judaism; its doctrine was based in the Old Testament as well as the teaching of Jesus. Its organisation and worship therefore owed a great deal to Judaism especially in the early years. The apostles continued to worship at the Temple and observed the Jewish hours of prayer, etc. On his missionary journeys, Paul preached first at the local synagogue; local Churches grew out of synagogues, or the nucleus of its membership if a split took place.

Organisation: local Churches, like synagogues, enjoyed a degree of independence under authority of the apostles; governed by elders; 'deacons' put in charge of alms, etc., c.f. officer in charge of alms distribution in synagogue. Similar method of disciplining errant members, e.g. excommunication. Fellowship meals; experiments in community living, c.f. Qumran. Catechetical instruction, etc. As with the Temple and the Sanhedrin in Judaism, the Jerusalem Church seems to have been accorded special standing at first.

Worship: emphasis in Acts on Christianity as the fulfilment of Judaism. Apostles attend the Temple and observe the Jewish hours of prayer. New Christian dimension: Jesus the Messiah, the Law of Moses now superseded, circumcision replaced by baptism, Passover by Communion/Lord's Supper. Had much in common with that of synagogue; public reading and exposition of the O.T. scriptures; hymns and psalms, c.f. Colossians 3:16; private prayer and study of scriptures also encouraged, c.f. Pharisees; baptism as initiatory rite(?); ecstatic experience c.f. O.T. prophets, (but prophecy long since ceased); women to 'keep silent in Church' as in the synagogue, but changes perceptible, c.f. Priscilla, Phoebe, etc. As in Judaism, eschatological teaching/worship, but, of course, much stronger in the early Church, centred on Christ, with the hope and promise of eternal life, his return as judge, and the 'end of the age', etc., c.f. 1 Corinthians 16:22, *Marana tha* – 'Come, O Lord!'

More able candidates commented on the fact that Churches in Gentile areas, with a high proportion of Gentiles among their membership, obviously owed somewhat less to Judaism.

For a high mark, candidates were expected to quote or refer to relevant material in both Acts and the epistles to illustrate the points they made, but they were not expected to cover in detail everything listed above.