

## Teacher Resource Bank

GCE Religious Studies

Unit D (RSS04) *Religion, Philosophy and Science*

June 2009 Examination Candidate Exemplar Work:

- Candidate A



## 2009 (June) Unit D Religion, Philosophy and Science

### Example of Candidate's Work from the Examination

#### Candidate A

- 1 (a) 'Miracles are described as events of religious significance.'

Explain the meaning of this statement.

(30 marks)

AO1

#### Candidate Response

1a Hume = V of NL.  
 Swinburne = R & C. sign. for  
 against = cultures - cultures.  
 = T. G map. - never - wrong to say not I  
 = H. G. H.  
 = miracles  
 = coincidences.  
 ✓ G.H.

1a Miracles, according to Hume are simply violations of natural law, however, Richard Swinburne has adapted this to say that they also have to have religious significance. There are examples of miracles in the Bible, such as the resurrection of Jesus, healing, and the parting of the sea.

An example of a miracle is in Florida, an image of the virgin Mary was revealed on nine pieces of glass. This was believed to be true, because it is so unrealistic, it was over nine pieces of glass, and the image retained by rain after corrosive liquid was spilled on it.

Miracles do however happen in the natural world, it is just the timescale, and the conditions that makes them appear miraculous. For example Swinburne's examples is the tide do happen, people can recover from comas and water can be turned into wine. This is therefore proof against miracles, as to be a

miracle it has to be an exception of what occurs naturally.  
 An example of a religious miracle is if someone experiences a personal experience from God. However, as this is just one person, they may be lying or mistaken as to what they have seen. There has never been a historical group, but it is actually wrong to say that ~~there is~~ to the eye witnesses have no intention

**Commentary**

AO1 (30 marks)

The candidate has identified a definition of miracles at the start of the answer. This is acceptable but there is no explanation as to how the definition relates to the question. Throughout, there appears to be an attempt to discuss the legitimacy of miracles, even suggesting that miracles do not occur at all. This is not the focus of the question or indeed the point of AO1. Scholars are mentioned but with no real understanding of their scholarship.

**Level 2 (7 marks)**

(b) Discuss how far miracles make it reasonable to believe in God.

(15 marks)

AO2

**Candidate Response**

miracles do not prove a God, but they do prove a theistic God, as ~~some~~ belief in God is needed for a belief in miracles.  
 As miracles are against natural law and have a religious significance, it shows that someone must be controlling them. They are not natural even though miracles sometimes appear to happen, have been known to occur in nature anyway, and they happen all the time in other regions and times, which makes them less realistic. Additionally, miracles from different religions cancel each other out, which leads to they do not exist. Miracles do have prove of a theistic God, as only He is powerful enough and ~~any~~ nature itself could not have the strength to make a miracle happen, so this means that God must create them, proving for an interventionist God.

It refers back to the miracle of the virgin Mary in Florida, there was also another of this in Mexico, it was blown by wind as well as simply too unrealistic.

If God managed to intervene to save people's lives, then ~~it would be~~ <sup>should have been able to</sup> for the Holocaust. This shows he intervenes selectively and can only perform miracles when he wishes to.

**Commentary**

AO2 15 marks

The opening sentence makes a rather odd distinction between proving a god and proving a theistic god. The candidate understands the arguments on both sides of the question here: that miracles both do make it reasonable and do not make it reasonable to believe in God. Although the organization of the material is not at its best, there is plenty of material to assess. Unfortunately, there is no assessment of the kind required at AO2. At no stage does the candidate evaluate the points made and justify why one point is better than another. Without such assessment, the maximum number of marks available would be Level 4 (9).

**Level 4 (7 marks)**

- 2 (a) Examine ways in which religious believers explain the origin of life on Earth. (30 marks) AO1

**Candidate Response**

2a Religious believers say that God created the universe in 7 days. This account of creation is ~~found~~ <sup>found</sup> in Genesis (1-3) by Christians and Jews. On the 1st day, God made a separation between light and dark "let there be light"; on the 5th day, he created the ~~marine~~ <sup>sea</sup> creatures of the sea, specific to other birds, and on the 6th day, God created humans, in the image and likeness of God and to have priority ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> superiority over the other animals. <sup>non-believers</sup> <sup>nevertheless</sup>, this could have been ~~not~~ a mistaken account, as the writers of the bible were ~~medieval~~ <sup>medieval</sup> & lacked scientific knowledge. Therefore, the account of Genesis that is on the bible may not be entirely correct as to how God created the earth. Christians believe their humans are more than just natural selection (the anthropic principle) and that the word

must have had an intelligent designer, as it is too complex. This relates to Behe, who says that the universe is "irreducibly complex" and all parts work like a machine, with one <sup>part</sup> stopping, so ~~stop~~ the others. If Christians have to say that evolution exists, does it is in terms of God's mechanism. This relates to God of the gaps theory, which is when science can't explain something, God is the ~~answer~~ answer. Christians have different responses to miracles - God is believed as either the creator or sustainer, but never both. This is because theists believe as God is the sustainer, he is transcendent and immaterial and superior to the physical material world. However, ~~designer~~ ~~my~~ ~~that~~ ~~God~~ ~~left~~ ~~the~~ ~~world~~ ~~to~~ ~~grow~~ ~~itself~~.

**Commentary**

AO1 30 marks

The candidate has identified as primary material the account in Genesis and something of Michael Behe. Credit can be given for describing some aspects of Genesis 1 and elements of Behe's ideas. The candidate has not developed the ideas presented and the material is presented in a disjointed manner. The candidate seems to think that Christians cannot believe both in God as sustainer and God as creator. Much of the material available for this question has not been referred to.

**Level 3 (10 marks)**

(b) Assess the view that evolutionary theory conflicts with belief in a creator. (15 marks)

AO2

Candidate Response

A scattering of ideas.

2b sci = Big bang → f.c → G.E + N.E  
 bicannel b + P.c.  
 E c.c + L.c.  
 s.s.T. - answers - God interested

science believes that the world began with the big bang. This refers to the work of Hubble and Gamow. Science, after the big bang - 10-15 billion years ago, time began, lower the temperature dropped to let the gases Hydrogen and Helium form. Instead of God creating the world in <sup>six</sup> days, scientists ~~believe~~ ~~that~~ believe that we evolve from each other. The theory of natural selection and the way of Darwin is used to explain that the best features creatures develop is up one then passed on to all offspring, which is how we evolve. However, Christians say that <sup>in order</sup> for evolution to happen, God must be directly involved, which is the case of Progressive creationism, where plants and animals are created still, and therefore, someone or someone must be doing this. Some Christians believe that the earth is <sup>young</sup> (10-10,000 years old) and that Noah's <sup>great</sup> flood made the earth seem ~~like~~ older. However, old earth creationism says that the earth was created in six periods of time of great intervals length, and that there was no need for the ~~earth~~ biblical flood to have created the fossils. Religion has many answers to the scientific theories, and the steady state theory (no beginning and no end to the world) are in agreement with Christians as they say that this is proven by the day of judgement and the end of time.

Difficult to find AO2 here.

### **Commentary**

AO2 15 marks

The start of the answer demonstrates that the candidate has not seen that the focus is on life on Earth not on the creation of the cosmos. When life on Earth is considered, the material presented is AO1 and there is no attempt to assess how far evolution can challenge religious beliefs about creation.

**Level 2 (4 marks)**