

Examiners' Report
June 2018

GCE Religious Studies 8RS0 4E

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Introduction

This is the second year of this examination. There were some good results last year and this standard continued this year.

The paper is divided into Part A and Part B and candidates must answer ALL questions.

Part A consists of three questions:

Question 1 has 8 marks for AO1

Question 2 has 9 marks with 3 for AO1 and 6 for AO2

Question 3 has 9 marks with 3 for AO1 and 6 for AO2

Part B consists of one two part question:

Question 4a has 8 marks for AO1

Question 4b has 20 marks with 5 for AO1 and 15 for AO2

Centres and candidates are reminded to check the meanings of the three command words used in the AS papers found in Appendix 1 of the AS Spec. The weightings of AO1 and AO2 are equally weighted across the whole of the paper: 50% for AO1 and 50% for AO2

Question 1

This required candidates to explore the importance of belief in God as creator. Candidates emphasized monotheistic belief in this context, focused on the wording of the question and referred to closely related topics. This included the Shema and significance of the mezuzah. Some explored differences between Orthodox and Reform interpretations about God as Creator. Although not required at AS, candidates were credited with information from Maimonides' 13 principles regarding God as Creator.

These two scripts display work in the highest levels. They are good because:

- candidates focused on key important ideas/beliefs
- they gave systematic attention to the details in the question
- candidates elaborated on a few closely related topics such as the covenant
- within the time available some considered a few implications of these beliefs such as ethical and social factors.

SECTION A

Answer ALL questions. Write your answers in the spaces provided.

1 Explore the importance of belief in God as Creator.

In Judaism the idea / concept of God being belief in God as Creator is significantly accepted and believed. The Jews are monotheistic meaning that they believe in one God, the God of Israel and he is the Creator. It is very important to Jews that God is the creator, as ~~illustrated in the text~~ this can be seen with the Mezuzah, which is a piece of parchment put in a decorative case, Jewish people have a Mezuzah at every door in their home to show how God is everywhere with them at all times and God loves Jews as they are God's 'treasured people', everytime before entering a room they kiss the Mezuzah to show respect and honouring. Inside the Mezuzah is the shema prayer "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one", this quote from the shema prayer evokes the idea of how important it is to Jews of belief in God as creator. The importance of belief in God as a creator also derives from the 13th principles and the 10 commandments, and due to the covenant made with God and the Jews, Jewish people heartily agree ~~and say~~ that God is the creator. Some Jewish men wear the kippah at all times of a day to remind them of God and remind them that God is above them which also illustrates the importance of belief in God as creator.

(Total for Question 1 = 8 marks)

and is mentioned by George Robinson as the chosen people as seen in *Quetzalcoatl* 7:7.



The candidate was awarded 8 marks.

1 Explore the importance of belief in God as Creator.

God's importance is very clear when talking about the creator. This is very clear within the Shema prayer, "Hear O Israel... he is one". mitzvot clearly state God works alone and he is one. Within Judaism, this is ^{main} ~~clearly~~ to be very important ^{by the} ~~because~~ way it is used and portrayed. For example, the prayer is in a little short (mezuzah) and in a kaphitah and is acknowledged everyday regularly. This shows the importance because of the fact Jews are accepting God as one and as their creator.

Belief in God is important because ~~#~~ of the covenants. "accept me and my covenants and you shall be my own". ~~#~~ Jews are seen by God to be the chosen people because they believe in God and his covenants made with Moses, Noah and Abraham. In order for them to be the chosen people they must have a belief in God as creator. This signifies the importance because it is what keeps the Jews together.

Having this belief in God allows for Jews to carry on ~~all the messages that~~ all the Noahide laws and laws (mitzvot) that are mentioned all talk about accepting God as one and as your creator. This shows high level of importance for **(Total for Question 1 = 8 marks)** the belief in one God.



The candidate was awarded 8 marks

Question 2

The question with a mix of AO1 and AO2 required candidates to assess the influence of Judah Halevi on Rabbinic Judaism. It was important to focus on his influence. Some presented detailed biographical information at the expense of concentrating on the thrust of the question. Candidates selected useful themes as a way of assessing his influence. These included the special relationship between God and the chosen people and the importance of Israel, resulting in some criticisms of Christianity. Judah Halevi stressed the importance of knowledge of God through revelation and prophecy. This entailed his criticisms of the place of reason in Greek philosophy and in kalam thought. He created a range of ideas and beliefs, but an assessment required a focus on the supremacy of Judaism. Some candidates assessed his influence with reference to other notable rabbis which was an effective method of approaching part of this question.

These two scripts display good quality of work at the highest levels:

- candidates saw the fundamental importance of the Torah
- candidates stressed the importance Judah Halevi gave to ascertaining the purpose of some texts
- some focused on the multiple meanings Judah Halevi gave to selected passages
- candidates were knowledgeable about the complexities of Judah Halevi and the range of his writings
- some evaluative material assessed the significance of Judah Halevi among other prominent rabbis such as Rashi.

2 Assess the influence of Judah Halevi on Rabbinic Judaism.

Rabbinic Judaism focusses on the meaning and interpretations of the Torah, in Rabbinic Judaism rabbis study the word of God and write down interpretations from it and ways in which Jews can follow it and place it into their daily lives to truly carry out God's will. Judah Halevi influenced Rabbinic Judaism heavily as his philosophy and poetry outlined multiple meanings and purposes of different subjects spoken about in the Torah. Judah Halevi is mainly remembered and remembered by in Judaism for his songs of Zionism and his journey to Israel in the late 11th century.

Judah Halevi believed and taught that the most important thing to do as a Jewish person is to travel to the land of 'milk and honey' Israel. Judah Halevi's songs of Zionism and philosophy is still remembered and spoken about today as he is seen as a big figure and influence in Rabbinic Judaism.

Furthermore, other philosophers and poets have also influenced Rabbinic Judaism alongside Judah Halevi. Influencers such as Rashi have contributed to what Rabbinic Judaism is today.

As Rashi's teachings of the soul and multiple concepts and interpretations of important Jewish values; have added to Jewish understandings of God's word and Jewish purpose on earth.

Overall, Judah Halevi along side other philosophers and ~~poets~~ poets have helped and influenced Rabbinic Judaism. As Halevi's teachings and songs of Zionism have contributed to Jewish understanding of their purposes and what is expected of them on earth in order to behave and truly be the 'Chosen people' of God.



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The candidate was awarded 9 marks

2 Assess the influence of Judah Halevi on Rabbinic Judaism.

Judah Halevi has greatly influenced Rabbinic Judaism, for example Judah Halevi was a famous poet. To an extent this has influenced Rabbinic Judaism as many read his work. Judah Halevi believes how Jews are special in the way God reveals himself, for example on Mount Sinai (in the Torah) God revealed himself to a large number compared to other religions which God revealed himself to few numbers. This can heavily influence Rabbinic Judaism as it can show Jews are special and reinforces the view that Jews are God's chosen people.

However the influence of Judah Halevi is limited as to a large extent the work of Rashi can be viewed as more influential on Rabbinic Judaism. For example Rashi opened ~~the~~ ~~rep~~ responses to help others ^{with} ~~to~~ their questions. To a large extent this can be viewed as more influential as ~~Rashi's~~ the first printed Hebrew bible had Rashi's commentaries alongside, ~~Hebrew~~

Also Rashi's work can be viewed as more influential on Rabbinic Judaism as Rashi also translated Hebrew to French ~~so~~ to also help French Jews with their issues such as daily ~~prob~~ occurrences.

Therefore in conclusion the view ~~that~~ the influence of Judah Halevi on Rabbinic Judaism was enormous is to a large extent wrong as in my view, ~~Rab~~ Rashi's work can be more influential than Judah Halevi.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate was awarded 9 marks

Question 3

The mix of AO1 and AO2 required an assessment of the ways Jewish scriptures are used across different Jewish traditions. A number of candidates presented considerable detail about Jewish scriptures and their range and classifications. Many emphasised their sacred value as the Torah as being revealed by God to Moses and how this was revered in synagogues. Different types of authority of scriptures were identified and these were exemplified in different Jewish traditions and in their various festivals. Candidates were credited with material on halakha and mitzvot. A notable stress was on differences between Orthodox and Reform views about scriptures and this resulted in well-structured answers including implications for the role and status of rabbis in the context of the place of scriptures. The standard could have been improved for some candidates by giving greater prominence to AO2 demands, such as including different Jewish traditions.

These scripts represent work in the highest levels. They are good because:

- candidates presented a range of relevant material
- they drew concise comparisons between different types of scriptures
- they highlighted the complexity of interpretations across a range of Jewish traditions, including Orthodox and Reform Judaism.

~~It Interprets~~ ~~Interprets~~

3 Assess the ways in which the Jewish scriptures are used across different Jewish traditions.

The Jews follow the beliefs of the Tanakh. This is the Torah, Nevi'im and Ketivim. The Torah is the five books of Moses however, different Jewish groups have different views on the Torah. Orthodox Jews believe the Torah is the literal Word of God. Whilst Reform Jews believe that the Torah was written by Jews with divine influence. However, due to the Torah being complex the Talmud was created. The Talmud is a series of commentaries used by the Jews to help them interpret the Torah. The Jews look toward the Halakha as their source of ethics. For they follow the 613 commandments given by God on Mount Sinai. Well orthodox Jews do but Reform Jews don't follow the commandments as literally. The Talmud is composed of the Gemara and the Mishnah. The Jews are also given the Tzedekah which is the law in Judaism. Obviously the Orthodox Jews follow it very carefully however, Reform Jews don't follow the text so literally. ~~and~~ This therefore leads them to breaking many of the laws orthodox Jews

follow so closely. Reform Jews basically believe that Judaism should adapt through time to fit the era. They are ~~a~~ Modern Jews. Whilst orthodox Jews believe the texts are eternal and they do not adapt.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate was awarded 8 marks

3 Assess the ways in which the Jewish scriptures are used across different Jewish traditions.

Jewish scriptures means the Babylonian Talmud and the Torah. In each different type of Judaism they are read and taught to Jews differently.

In ~~most~~ ^{Rabbinic} Judaism, the Babylonian Talmud is taught in schools and read aloud in the synagogue. This is done because it includes the 613 mitzvot and the 10 Commandments which are rules that every Jew should follow. The Babylonian Talmud is also read aloud in Synagogues because Rashi's commentary on the Talmud answers questions that any Jew might have, e.g. is murder allowed in cases of self defence? In Reform Judaism, Jewish scriptures are not used as much because it seems as something that takes a Jewish perspective sense of freedom away from them. Reform Judaism is a modernised way of ~~just~~ Judaism, and many of the rules are not followed, e.g. dress, food laws and the Sabbath. As these Jews do not follow most of the rules God has created it is not seen as very important. In Orthodox Judaism the scriptures are used a lot as

Orthodox Jews are very strict. They follow the 10 commandments, all the 613 mitzvot and are very strict on the way they live their life around it. The Torah is seen as God's words and teachings, therefore to not break the bond and covenant they have with God they follow all the rules to do on judgement day they will be rewarded.

In conclusion, all different types of Judaism follow the scriptures differently. Some are strict and think that it is very important while others ignore the Talmud, Torah and God's teachings completely.



The candidate was awarded 8 marks

Question 4

4a: This AO1 question required candidates to explore universal values associated with Judaism. This included the notion of values being based on monotheism and the context within the Torah. A popular topic among candidates was gemilut hasadim involving loving kindness without expecting anything in return.

4b: This was the highest number of mark in the whole paper with 5 marks for AO1 plus 15 for AO2. Candidates structured their material in an effective manner with an analysis of distinctive features of Orthodox and Reform Judaism separately followed by their similarities and differences. Some of this material included beliefs about the authority of revelation compared to the evolving beliefs and customs of Reform. Candidates selected a range of topics to illustrate their views and arguments such as Jewish identity, dress and food codes, sabbath and festivals, gender and sexual issues. There were interesting discussion about the differences between halakhah and haskalah. Some of the more subtle evaluations involved a consideration of a range of different emphases within Orthodox traditions and similarly difference stances across some Reform schools.

These two scripts display good practice because:

- candidates paid explicit attention to the issue about Jewish identity
- they examined a broad range of information with sufficient attention to detail
- candidates showed a good level of insight in their differentiation between halakhah and haskalah
- they displayed interesting scholarly challenges in their AO2 material.

4 (a) Explore the universal values associated with Judaism.

(8)

Jewish values are very important in the Jewish community. George Robinson talks about how morals and values is the key to believing in God. Jews believe that God had created the world and his people with divine love, therefore, Jews should have good values in order to show their love back.

Jewish people are expected to carry out gemilut khasadim, (acts of loving kindness), consisting of ~~visiting~~ ^{visiting} the sick, comforting the ~~bereaved~~ ^{bereaved} or simply showing hospitality. This allows Jews to become closer to God and Jews believe they are chosen by God to show these acts of kindness, therefore they feel like they have a duty and responsibility. They also believe in giving Tzedakah, which is charity (10% of their income) to help ~~to~~ the poor and deprived.

(b) Analyse the similarities and differences between ^{strict} Orthodox and ^{modern} Reform Judaism.

(20)

Although both Orthodox and Reform Judaism have similar values and morals, they also have many differences such as traditions, opinions and daily life. Some similarities may be the holy book and opinion on values, however overall, Orthodox and Reform Judaism are very different.

A similarity of Orthodox and Reform Judaism is the belief in the Torah. The Torah will always be the most holy book for Jews and as the Torah consists of the 613 mitzvot, all Jews try to follow this. The 613 mitzvot are rules that help Jews live their best life and become closer to God. The Torah is a huge influence on Judaism and all Jews believe that it was revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai when God made Jews his 'chosen people'.

The Torah is used and recited on every Jewish boy's Bar Mitzvah ^{when he turns 13/14}. However, a difference with this is that Reform Judaism also perform Bat Mitzvahs, as they believe gender equality is important. The Torah is at the heart of Judaism and will always be

important to all Jews.

When Reform Judaism was emerging, what took place was the ~~the~~ Haskalah. The Haskalah made freedom and liberty more accessible as made Judaism more modern. A difference between the ~~the~~ two would be practices and traditions. Reform Judaism changed a lot of the customs. For example, their Sabbath day would change ~~to~~ from Friday to ~~Saturday~~ Sunday, in order to fit in with the popular religion; Christianity. Reform Jews believe they should change in order to fit in with the majority. Also in terms of food and dress, reform Jews would normally be less strict about eating kosher food and dress ~~is~~ between men and women would be more equal. As for orthodox Jews, they believe that Jews should stick to their own traditions and practices as this is what God asked them to do. They are God's 'chosen ones' therefore, they should obey him and show they believe in him by preserving their identity. Orthodox Jew's clothing would be very modest and unrevealing, where men would wear tallits and tephillin

and women would be covered. They would also ~~be~~ always have their sabbath on Friday.

Orthodox Jews reject modern views and believe that if you reject the Jewish community, then you will be isolated from Jews. They believe in Zionism and how every Jew is important to God. However, Reform Jews reject ~~this~~ these views on Zionism and believe we should all intergrate with society and other religions and ~~as~~ as this is a way of showing love. Reform Jews choose to study secular subjects and learn the vernacular language of where they are living. whereas Orthodox Jews would disagree with this and only learn Hebrew or Yiddish.

However, another similarity is that both Orthodox and Reform Jews carry out the 10 commandments and 613 mitzvot. Every Jew believes these are the rules that help Jews to live a good and happy life. Also believe in the Halakah which is Jewish Law, the belief that if

you follow these laws, you will be happy in life. All Jews follow rules to show obedience ~~and~~ towards God and show that there is a one and only God.

In conclusion, ~~orthodox~~ Orthodox and Reform Jews have few similarities, such as the belief in the revelation of the Torah and rules set out for Jews to follow. However, there are several differences that make each of them distinct from each other such as their traditions and beliefs about their religion.



The candidate was awarded 8 marks for Q04a and 18 marks for Q04b

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- It is vital to focus on the precise wording of the questions.
- Candidates are encouraged to link across other AS boxes in this component where there is relevant material. For example question 4b refers to Jewish scriptures and this comes from box 2.1 and in addition boxes 3.1 and 3.2 refer to Orthodox and Reform Judaism.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

