

Report on the Units

June 2006

1943/MS/R/06

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All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

The reports on the Examinations provide information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the syllabus content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Mark schemes and Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers.

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GCSE Biblical Hebrew (1943)

REPORT ON THE UNITS

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GCSE BIBLICAL HEBREW

EXAMINERS REPORT

1943/01 PAPER 1 - LANGUAGE

General Introductory Comments

The examiners are very pleased to report that this examination has retained its popularity. Some 487 candidates entered the examination from 26 centres in the UK. Some new centres feature this year as well as more privately taught candidates. As in previous years the script marking reflected a wide diversity of responses and successful outcomes.

Question 1

While the level of difficulty of vocabulary and grammar mirrored that of previous years, it is clear that certain centres did not follow the subject specification recommendations relating to the vocabulary list. Words and phrases must be translated accurately and in context - some centres may have been unaware of this. Some common errors were:

- a) **ויערכו** - verb not recognised.
- b) **פנים ואחור** - literal translation given rather than idiomatic. Sometimes **ואחור** was mistranslated as 'other'.
- c) **והושעתיד** - Candidates often did not appreciate that the root **ישע** is an 'internal' Hifil root and 'causing' does not need to appear in the translation.
- d) **ונתחזקה** - Hitpael often not recognised. Cohortative ending also not given in the translation.
- e) **ערי** - The construct plural ending of the noun was often not translated as 'of'
- f) In all the verbs asked candidates often were unsure of subject pronouns, for example, **ויגש** was translated as 'and they approached'.

Question 2

Following the popularity of 'themed' comprehension questions of previous years, the 2006 examination featured 'war and conflict' as its theme. Questions at the start of the comprehension were relatively easy but progressively became more testing. Graded questions test candidates of differing abilities and this aspect was as obvious in this year as in previous years. Centres should teach 'examination technique' to candidates in order to familiarise them with how to successfully negotiate different styles of question e.g. "comment on....." or "show how a root is used differently in the following" (see question (e).)

The majority of candidates gained full marks in question (a). Question (e) proved to be more problematic for a large number of candidates who were unaware that the root **לחל** was used in the Nifal conjugation in the chosen text. Also many candidates did not appreciate the use of tense in part (h). The vowel under the **ל** of **לחל** (question (k)) was poorly explained. It goes without saying that centres which adopt a rigorous teaching method to Hebrew grammar answer such questions with ease.

Question 3

The translation was generally well done with the large majority of students gaining more than 15 out of 30.

As in previous years a minority of papers demonstrated a naïve approach to translating a Hebrew text. Hebrew words were translated singly and unrelated to other words in the clause. Because of this, the 'word-based' rather than the 'clause-based' marking scheme had to be adopted so that candidates could be given credit for positive input.

On a few occasions, candidates ignored the fact that 'vocabulary assistance' appeared in the paper.

A recurring mistake was an inability to recognise verbal prefixes and suffixes. Happily this situation obtained only in a small number of scripts and it was clear that the majority of centres prepared their candidates well in all aspects of Paper 1.

EXAMINERS' REPORT : GCSE BIBLICAL HEBREW ; PAPER 2
LITERATURE (1943/02) - 2006

Question No. 1

(b) (ii) Only a minority of candidates commented on the root and the unusual features of the *mapiq*. The purpose of the rider question was to test the candidates' ability to understand why specific words are translated in a particular way.

(g) There was, generally a good response which demonstrated that the majority of candidates understood the principle that words can have different nuances dependent on their contextual use. Few commented on the particular root in order to demonstrate that difference. This did not, however, detract from gaining full marks for this question. Sometimes the contextual meanings were mistakenly reversed which could indicate that candidates failed to understand the wider context.

(i) Generally a well answered question. There were a minority of candidates who failed to appreciate the fraction, 'four-fifths'.

Question No. 2

(b) (ii) Surprisingly only a minority of candidates were able to score more than one mark for this question. The examiners would point out that the specification does require knowledge of the background to events.

(d) A minority of candidates confused the root *שוב* with *ישב*.

(g) A comment on the particle *לו* was sometimes neglected in response to this question. Basic knowledge (or at least recognition) of conditional clauses is required. A sizable minority of candidates confused the particle with the preposition and attached suffix *לו* and then reconstructed the phrase which was a fruitless amendment.

Question No. 3

(c) (ii) Although many candidates commented on the *piel* form and therefore gained credit, they did not necessarily attempt to use this information to explain their translation of the verb ויסקל.

(h) Some were confused as to the use of a ה attached to an imperfect verb in the first person. Seemingly it was confused by a minority of candidates with the locative ה at the end of some nouns.

Question No. 4

(c) (ii) The response to this question was sometimes vague. Its aim was to test candidates' ability to explain how an individual root can be used in both verbal and nounal forms. Without this specific recognition, only a minimal mark could be awarded.

(h) The question was testing candidates' recognition of idioms. Only a minority of candidates realised that the noun נא mean a 'nose'.

Question No. 5

(b) (ii) Very few candidates realised that the Biblical calendar was based on the lunar pattern. The New Moon (month) was therefore commemorated as a festival. This is evidenced, for example, in Numbers 28:11. This question was demanding background information.

(b) (iii) Few candidates realised that this was an ancient form of the demonstrative pronoun.

(e) (ii) Admittedly, this was a more difficult question. It was often answered in a vague manner. Some successfully compared this phrase to its parallel in II Kings 4:16 or argued for contextual justification. For a full treatment, see the Solutions.

(h) Some candidates added well documented agaddic expansion to Gehazi's activities. Since they were non-Biblical in origin, they could not be given credit.

**General Certificate of Secondary Education Biblical Hebrew 1943
June 2006 Assessment Series**

Component Threshold Marks

Component	Max Mark	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
01 - Language	100	80	68	56	49	42	36	30
02 - Literature	100	79	69	59	52	45	38	31

Each component represents 50% of the overall award

Overall

	Max	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Overall Threshold Mark	200	179	159	137	115	101	87	74	61
Percentage in Grade		10.37	35.69	28.01	13.69	4.36	3.11	1.45	1.66
Cumulative Percentage in Grade		10.37	46.06	74.07	87.76	92.12	95.23	96.68	98.34

The total entry for the examination was 482

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