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FOREWORD

This booklet contains reports written by Examiners on the work of candidates in certain papers. **Its contents are primarily for the information of the subject teachers concerned.**

RELIGIOUS STUDIES/BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

GCE Ordinary Level

Note: Syllabus 2041 will be replaced by a new syllabus (2048), which will be examined for the first time in 2005.

Paper 2041/01

Paper 1 - The Life and Teaching of Christ as in Gospel of Luke

General comments

There were some good scripts which showed an accurate knowledge of Luke's gospel and a good understanding of its meaning. There were, however, many poor scripts: knowledge of factual material was inadequate and comment on its meaning was often not attempted.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Candidates were asked to answer four sections of this question, but quite a number attempted all six.

- (a) The naming of John by Zechariah was well given and the fact that John prepared the way for Jesus was well known, but not many stated that John called on people to repent in preparation for his coming.
- (b) The parable of the two houses was known in outline, but it was often given in the version found in Matthew's gospel rather than the one found in Luke. Many said that its meaning was having faith as a foundation, but Jesus said that those who heard his words and acted upon them were like the wise man. Jesus was stressing that to hear his words was not enough.
- (c) The rejection of Jesus by the Samaritan village was often given accurately, but a number of candidates saw the reference to James and John and confused the incident with Jesus sending two disciples to prepare for the Passover in Jerusalem. Many candidates said that the Jews and Samaritans hated each other with no explanation of why they did.
- (d) The parable of the leaven was usually given accurately, but quite a number of candidates did not refer to the large amount of flour and the fact that the whole was leavened: a detail which is essential as it stresses the great growth of the Kingdom of God.
- (e) A number of candidates stated that the accusation was made to Herod or the Jewish Council rather than to Pilate. Very few recognised that the charges brought against Jesus were political — refusing to pay taxes to Caesar and stirring up trouble — accusations which the Roman Governor had to take seriously as they were charges that carried the death penalty.
- (f) Joseph of Arimathea's role in the burial of Jesus was well known. Most stated that he showed sympathy for Jesus but few mentioned his courage in linking himself with one who was condemned and crucified.

Question 2

- (a) The visit of Jesus to Jerusalem at the age of twelve was usually correctly identified but a number described Jesus being taken to the Temple as a baby and being welcomed by Simeon. Some stated that Jesus went to Jerusalem because of a census rather to share in the Passover.

- (b) The cleansing of the Temple was not well known and many did not attempt this part of the question. Few stated that Jesus quoted scripture to explain his action. The importance of the Temple was given as a place of prayer and worship. Few made any reference to it being the place where sacrifices were offered and the great Jewish festivals were celebrated, and so was the focal point of Judaism at the time of Jesus.

Question 3

- (a) In the account of the healing of the man with the withered hand, details from other healings were often included: for example, Jesus is said to have forgiven the man's sins, and others said Jesus referred to helping animals on the sabbath.
- (b)(c) The importance of the sabbath was stated to be a day for rest and worship. Few mentioned that it was one of the Ten Commandments or that it was linked with God resting after the six days of creation.

Question 4

The question about John the Baptist sending two of his disciples to Jesus was not popular, but those who answered it showed that they knew the incident and there were some very good answers.

Question 5

- (a) The question asked what Jesus said about the rich and the poor when he taught his disciples on a 'level place'. This was the occasion when Jesus said 'Blessed are you poor' and 'Woe to you that are rich'. However, many candidates gave sayings of Jesus which were given on other occasions – for example, how it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God.
- (b)(c) The parable of the 'rich fool' was given accurately and was explained well.

Question 6

- (a) The entry of Jesus into Jerusalem was given in outline, but often many details were omitted.
- (b) The meaning of the incident was given very briefly. Few candidates said that Jesus chose a donkey, not a horse, to fulfil an Old Testament prophecy which said that the Messiah would come in peace.

Question 7

- (a) The parable of a man who planted a vineyard and let it out to tenants was frequently not correctly identified. Some gave the parable of 'the labourers in the vineyard', which is found in Matthew's gospel, but not in Luke. Others gave the parable about a man who went on a journey and entrusted his money to his servants while he was away. Those who correctly identified the parable gave an accurate account, but few gave the sayings given at the end of the parable about the stone rejected by the builders.
- (b) The meaning of the parable was given accurately by many candidates, but many who referred to the rejection of Israel did not go on to say that the giving of the Vineyard to other tenants referred to the Gentiles.

Question 8

- (a) Most candidates identified the occasion when Peter confessed that Jesus was 'The Christ of God'. However, a surprising number gave the wrong context: some gave the call of Peter and the large catch of fish, others said that the confession was made when Jesus stilled the storm. Peter's denial of Jesus was given well, but many gave more material than the question required – for example, some gave the prophecy of the denials in the Upper Room and others gave a full account of the arrest in Gethsemane.
- (b) Comments on Peter's character were usually appropriate but not always linked to the text.

General comments

On the whole, candidates wrote clearly on the questions which they had selected. A small number wrote in the form of a list, and the tendency in these cases was for ambiguity and insufficient display of a full knowledge of the facts. In any case, candidates are expected to write in continuous and grammatical sentences.

The most common fault was to infringe the rubric. This happened often in **Question 1**. The number of context questions set was six, and candidates were asked to answer four only. Time was wasted when all six parts were answered, because only four parts were awarded marks. Occasionally, all seven essay questions were answered, instead of the three that were demanded. This had the same effect in terms of awarding marks. Only three questions received marks. The candidates who achieved good marks were those who carried out the instructions on the Paper accurately, and received higher grades for their work.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a)(i) Not all candidates remembered that it was immediately after Pentecost and the receiving of the Holy Spirit that marked the time when the first disciples began the common fund.
- (ii) Many forgot to mention that Barnabas was important at this time and sold a property, the proceeds of which he gave to the apostles' fund.
- (b)(i) Most candidates recalled that it was Peter who healed Aeneas, but forgot that it happened in Lydda. Only a minority made the point that the use of Jesus' name in healing gave power and authority to the one performing the miracle. Some expressed it well by saying that it was not Peter who gave healing, but through the name of Jesus alone.
- (ii) This healing was often confused with that of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the temple. What was required here was some reference to the medical details given by Luke (bearing in mind that he was referred to as a physician) – namely, that Aeneas was a paralytic and had been bedridden for eight years.
- (c)(i) Candidates were rather vague as to why the beginnings of the church at Antioch were unusual. The point to be made here was that instead of the expected mention of the apostles or the scriptures, Gentiles themselves were first on the scene, preaching to fellow Gentiles already at Antioch.
- (ii) Most remembered that it was Barnabas and Saul who built the church further in that town.
- (d)(i) Providing that candidates remembered that it was the Jews in Thessalonica who were jealous of Paul's preaching success, the answer was secure. Too often, candidates were vague about this fact.
- (ii) Good candidates were able to explain that by mentioning Caesar to the authorities, the case against Paul was strengthened, because it might be perceived that Paul was in some way a threat to Caesar's power. Some failed to see the cunning implied in this false argument against the apostle.
- (e) It was not always recalled that Apollos was the man referred to here. Sometimes candidates thought that it was Paul. The answer which scored highly was when the candidate recalled that Apollos was a good preacher, but he only knew the baptism of John the Baptist. After Aquila and Priscilla had guided him, he preached strongly from the scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah.

- (f)(i) Not everyone remembered that the occasion being referred to was Paul's farewell speech to the Ephesian elders in Miletus. Perhaps one of those facts was recalled, but not all three.
- (ii) The required explanation of the meaning of "fierce wolves" conjured up various ideas. Those who referred to coming persecution in this connection were on the right lines. Also, reference to false or divisive teaching had better marks.

Question 2

- (a) The occasion of the Ascension was sometimes confused with the Last Supper, or one of the gospel Resurrection appearances, or with Pentecost itself. For candidates under any of these misapprehensions, parts (b) and (c) inevitably suffered. The good answers, and there were many, pointed to Jesus telling his disciples that their role was to preach the gospel through the world, starting in Jerusalem.
- (b) In the light of this, part (b) should have included that the disciples would be helped in their task when they received the promised Holy Spirit.
- (c) There should have been a reference to Acts being the author's second book. In the first (Luke's gospel), he had outlined the life of Jesus. In Acts, his continuation or second book, he described the life of the apostles and the growth of the church.

Question 3

- (a)(i) Candidates were asked to describe the circumstances which led to the appointment of the seven. Some answers contained a vague reference to the ministry of preaching. This was not the case as described in Acts. The seven received the laying on of hands for the special task of distributing the daily fund, thus leaving the apostles free for their spiritual work.
- (ii) It was not always recalled that Philip had conducted a mission and had made many converts, but that they had not received the Holy Spirit when he had baptised them. Many did remember that Peter and John were able to complete Philip's work by giving the Holy Spirit by laying their hands on Philip's converts.
- (b) For those candidates who saw the difference in purpose between (i) and (ii), part (b) gave them no problems. They were able to point out that the seven were appointed to an office of caring for the Hellenists and poor, whereas in Samaria, Peter and John gave the Samaritan converts spiritual strengthening.

Question 4

- (a) This was a popular question, and almost all candidates gave good answers which involved giving an account of Saul's journey to Damascus and his subsequent conversion.
- (b) Candidates did not always come to terms with the effect Saul's conversion had upon the Jews. Good answers contrasted Saul's former persecution and threats against the Christians, with his new life of preaching Jesus as Messiah. Weak answers overlooked the Jews' jealousy of his preaching to the Gentiles. Most remembered Jewish attacks against Paul (as he became), in the form of riots, stoning, plots against his life. Regrettably, few recalled that there were many Jews who did accept his teaching and were converted themselves.

Question 5

- (a)(b) This was a popular question, but two areas of confusion kept appearing. The first mistake concerned the vision which led Paul to visit Philippi. Instead of the man of Macedonia appearing to Paul at night in Troas, candidates referred to Peter's vision on the rooftop at Joppa. The other mistake was to confuse details of the imprisonment at Philippi with Peter's release from prison by an angel. Provided that candidates avoided these pitfalls, and many did, parts (a) and (b) were answered well.
- (c) Some forgot that the real reason that Paul and Silas were imprisoned illegally was that they were Roman citizens, and as such were entitled to a proper trial, and a public beating was completely out of order for such citizens.

