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## FOREWORD

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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

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## GCE Ordinary Level

Paper 2040/01

The Life and Teaching of Christ in the Synoptic Gospels

### General comments

Almost all candidates answered **Question 4** and scored well on it.

There was still quite a lot of wrong identification of persons and wrong interpretation of questions. Despite what the questions asked candidates to supply, they too often supplied what they knew or had been told, even when that had nothing to do with the question asked.

As usual the standard of English language was very creditable to all concerned with the preparation of these candidates.

### Comments on specific questions

#### Question 1

- (a) Although many candidates were able to give the rest of the quotation – ‘She refused consolation because they were no more’ – relatively few knew the prophet was Jeremiah and most gave the whole account of the Wise Men and Herod, but missed out Bethlehem. Herod was tricked by the Magi and flew into a furious rage.
- (b) This was not well answered. Candidates were asked to state the circumstances which *led* to the elders’ request. Instead, candidates gave what *followed*. Comments on what was said were seldom at all relevant. It was normally against the Law to go to a Gentile’s house. This person was probably a God-fearer or Gentile believer. It was usual for Jews to be as liberal as this. They assumed Jesus would keep the Law. The passage fits in with Luke’s emphasis on the Gentiles.
- (c) The questions were answered quite well: Herod said it about Jesus, and the other things said about Jesus were that he was Elijah or a prophet. Explanations and comments were poor. The Jews believed Elijah would return, preceding the Messiah. There was a desire for prophetic ministry. Jesus’ miracles were similar to those of Elijah, and his preaching was similar to that of a prophet.
- (d) The full response of Jesus was not often given. A reasonable number of candidates saw that Peter was taking the part of Satan, and that Jesus was being tempted to avoid the cross. Nobody saw that because Jesus’ Messianic status was now out in the open so it must not run on Jewish misconceptions, exemplified by Peter’s outburst.
- (e) This was confused with every possible Sabbath healing controversy, except the right one, which concerned the woman bound for 18 years by Satan. Comments, where relevant, were satisfactory. It would have been relevant to mention the Jewish connection between illness and evil.
- (f) The parable was well remembered, plus Jesus’ subsequent question, but the rest was nearly silence. Jesus said that the tax collectors and harlots went into the kingdom before the Jews. John, a righteous man, came and was not believed. However, the publicans and sinners believed him, but the Jews, seeing this, did not repent or believe.
- (g) It was clear that candidates do not know the Markan version of the resurrection narrative, and that they did not know the contradictions between it and the other Synoptics. Only one or two candidates seemed to know that Mark breaks off at 16:8, and that the rest was added later.

### Question 2

Although this was a popular question, few candidates knew well the required answer in Luke 1:26-38. Instead, all the other birth narratives were given, with some correct phrases thrown in. On the other hand, there were some illuminating comments on Mary's reaction. The physical impossibility, fear about the reactions of Joseph and others, were some of them.

### Question 3

This was the least popular essay question. Those who did answer it were fairly accurate in their memory of the narrative but (b) and (c) were weak. The hostility was caused by the fact that they knew him too well, that there were no Capernaum type events, and that Jesus' remarks about Gentiles went down badly, as did his criticism of Jewish reactions to prophets throughout their history.

The Isaiah passage shows Jesus' bias to the poor and the rejects. He foresees his own rejection and Gentile salvation. He is prepared to hint at Messiahship so soon.

### Question 4

Almost all candidates tackled this question. They knew the narratives well, and, since that (for them) included Matthew 5:16, were often able to score high marks. Since comments were also reasonable, this meant a significant increase in scores. However, too many candidates wasted time and space by writing about their interpretation of the meanings instead of, as asked, Jesus' hearers' interpretations.

### Question 5

Whereas the Biblical narrative for (a) was well known, that for (b) was much thinner. Answers to (c) were weak. The ministry of Jesus to the disadvantaged is part of the kingdom. It would be preceded by a prophetic messenger: John Baptist equals Elijah. The kingdom experience is the greatest! The material about force/violence in Matthew 11:12 may refer to opposition from various sources, to the violent change to publicans and sinners, or it can mean using force against the Romans.

### Question 6

The two healings were narrated with a moderate degree of accuracy, but comments on what Jesus said were weak. Jesus could have been stating the limits of his mission or trying to elicit the faith of the woman. His use of the word 'dogs' sounded rude, but perhaps Jesus was teasing. He may have used the word for 'pet dogs'. The use of Aramaic needed mention, also keeping the Messianic secret.

### Question 7

The opening and the closing of the narrative were seldom known; only the centre was well remembered. Comments on the argument should have included such things as: the Pharisees and Herodians only allied in common desire to trash Jesus publicly and get him into serious trouble with the Romans or the religious authorities; they were prepared to concede his ability as a religious teacher. Jesus was within the rules for such arguments by asking them to produce the coin. The fact that they had such a coin rather undermined their cause. This meant that when he gave his final answer he could afford to support the Roman tax since they intended to pay it. However, Jesus was able to suggest, as he did in the vineyard parable, that the Jews were not rendering to God the fruit that was his.

### Question 8

The only fig tree mentions really known were those in Luke 13:6-9 and Matthew 21:18-22 (also parts of Mark 11). The generous mark scheme allowed for more marks for Matthew 7:16 and 24:32, 33 and parallels.

'Significance' remarks were very thin. The fig tree stands for the Jewish nation. God will not immediately disown them, but give them a last chance to be near fruit for his kingdom. Detecting false prophets, the nearness of the End, so be ready could have been mentioned. Is Matthew 21 (Mark 11) an acted parable or an actual event.

### Question 9

Candidates confused betrayal and denials. The narrative about Judas was satisfactory, but only the cockcrow and the three denials were usually supplied about Peter.

The reasons for what Jesus said were that he wanted the disciples to be able to recover from shock, and to see that God's purposes were being carried out. He might have been giving Judas a last chance to repent.

He was very concerned about the effect on Peter, so he tells him of the way back into the task he's been given. Jesus realises he is still over-confident, and so warns him of coming failures. This would help the others to accept him as reader.

### Question 10

Far too often the required material was confused with, even replaced by, the account in John's Gospel about Thomas. The contents of Luke 24:36-49 need to be known as one important post-resurrection account.

Things that would help the disciples to believe in the resurrection might have included the following: by allowing sight and touch and by eating Jesus evidenced the reality of the body; referring back to the teaching he had given them from the Jewish scriptures would help them to see that all this fitted in with God's purposes in his kingdom; this was going to be a vital part of their message to people; they were witnesses of his resurrection; and the promise of the Holy Spirit and the command to wait for him would reinforce their belief.

**Paper 2041/01**

**The Life and Teaching of Christ in Gospel of Luke**

### General comments

There were some excellent scripts which showed an accurate knowledge of Luke's gospel and a good understanding of its meaning. There were, however, many poor papers: important facts were not given and comments on the meaning of the gospel were given briefly or not even attempted.

### Comments on specific questions

#### Question 1

- (a) The healing of Simon's mother-in-law was well answered, but significant details were often not given - for example, Jesus was asked to help her and when she was healed she waited on them. The question asked for another occasion when Jesus visited a synagogue; a significant number of candidates gave either the visit to the Temple 'at the age of twelve', or the 'cleansing of the Temple'. This showed a confusion between a synagogue and the Temple.
- (b) This paper is based on Luke's gospel, but in this question many candidates gave the beatitudes that are found in Matthew's gospel, but are not given in Luke.
- (c) John was the disciple who tried to stop the man from casting out demons in the name of Jesus; many said it was Peter. The rest of this question was usually correctly answered.
- (d) The parable of those invited to a feast was popular and was very well known.
- (e) The question about Jesus weeping over Jerusalem was not often attempted, but most of those who answered it gave full and accurate answers.
- (f) This was not a popular question. Few could complete the saying of Jesus which began 'Simon, Simon, behold Satan has demanded to have you...', but the conversation between Jesus and Peter about his denials was accurately given. Most candidates were able to give other references to Satan in Luke's gospel.

### **Question 2**

Most answers stated that he was named John, despite the fact that no one in his family had that name and that then his father regained his power to speak. What Zechariah went on to say was only briefly given; often, only that John would prepare the way for the Messiah. Few emphasised that it was believed that the Messiah would be from the family of David and that Jesus fulfilled this hope because he was of the family of David and was born in Bethlehem.

### **Question 3**

The question about the teaching of Jesus on loving your enemies was not popular. The saying of Jesus from the cross about forgiveness was given in nearly every answer. The question clearly states, 'when Jesus was teaching on a level place'. Quite a number of candidates gave the parable of the Good Samaritan. There were some good comments on the relevance of this teaching for today.

### **Question 4**

The healing of the man among the tombs was well answered. Most candidates knew that the destruction of the pigs was unusual, but few went on to explain that it was out of character for Jesus to destroy life. The instruction of Jesus to go and tell what had happened was stated to be unusual, but few said that Jesus had been asked to leave the area and so this healed man would be his witness in this gentile territory.

### **Question 5**

The teaching of Jesus about prayer was well known. Many candidates gave the more familiar version of the Lord's Prayer found in Matthew's gospel rather than the distinctive wording given in Luke. Comment on the significance of prayer was often general, rather than specifically linked with the incident referred to in the question.

### **Question 6**

The parable about a king who entrusted his money to his servants was well answered by many candidates. Some gave the parable of the talents as contained in Matthew's gospel: there are many similarities in the two versions, but also some important differences. Comments on service were usually better than those on judgement.

### **Question 7**

Most candidates gave valid information on the Sadducees. Many gave only part of Jesus' answer to the question of the Sadducees about the seven brothers. The skill Jesus used in answering his opponents was not clearly explained. For example, they only accepted the Law of Moses as found in the first five books of the Old Testament and it was from this that Jesus quoted in his reply.

### **Question 8**

The question about the trials of Jesus was not popular. Often the accusations made against Jesus at the different trials were confused. Only a few candidates stated that the accusations at the trial before the Jewish Council were 'religious', while those brought before Pilate were 'political'. The Roman governor could not ignore these and they could lead to the death penalty.

<p><b>Paper 2041/02</b> <b>Acts of the Apostles</b></p>
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### **General comments**

Although there were few scripts of outstanding quality, a pleasing number showed accurate knowledge of the biblical text and were thoughtful in their approach to the questions. Far too many had a sketchy knowledge, producing answers which were a miscellany of various events in Acts and indeed sometimes in the Gospels. Vague comments of a generally Christian nature are not sufficient. This paper is intended to test Bible knowledge and understanding.

Candidates need to be reminded that the individual sections of **Question 1** require only brief answers. Maximum marks allocated are indicated in the right hand column of the question paper. **Questions 2-8** require fuller answers. Infringing the rubric by answering extra questions does not gain additional marks.

### Comments on specific questions

#### **Question 1**

- (a) Many gave good answers.
- (i) The Sanhedrin were referring to Peter and John, intending to prevent the gospel from spreading.
  - (ii) This was Peter and John's first trial after healing a lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the temple. They had preached about Jesus and his resurrection. The Sadducees were hostile, not believing in resurrection, so arrested them to await questioning.
- (b) Again good answers on the whole, with accurate detail. Some misunderstood (ii), and described the healing of a blind man.
- (i) Saul became blind on his way to Damascus. A bright light made him fall to the ground. He was subsequently converted and healed by Ananias of Damascus (not Ananias the high priest).
  - (ii) The other incident concerned Elymas (Bar-Jesus), the sorcerer at Paphos (Cyprus), whom Paul made temporarily blind for trying to prevent Sergius Paulus, the proconsul, from accepting the gospel.
- (c) The answers here were thin.
- (i) Lystra was the place where Paul was stoned. Jewish jealousy at Paul's success in Antioch and Iconium, and a desire to be rid of him, was the cause.
  - (ii) Stephen was stoned (most candidates knew this) for proclaiming Jesus as Messiah - blasphemy to Jews punishable by stoning.
- (d) This was often done well though a few confused it with Peter's vision in Joppa (**Question 4**).
- (i) This was Paul's vision of a man from Macedonias asking him to go and help them. It occurred in Troas. The leading city visited was Philippi.
  - (ii) Present were Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke too (because it is a 'we' section).
- (e) Rarely attempted and few knew the correct answer.
- (i) It is a saying of Jesus, recorded nowhere else, hence its importance.
  - (ii) Paul was at Miletus making his farewell speech to the Ephesian elders, urging them to be self-supporting in the ministry.
- (f) Few were able to deal with this in any detail.
- (i) This was at Paul's second hearing before Festus. Festus invited Agrippa to be present because Paul had appealed to Caesar and Festus needed Agrippa's help in drafting a written report for the emperor.
  - (ii) Paul wished everyone to become like he was (i.e. a Christian), except for the chains.

## Question 2

This was a popular question and **(a)** was on the whole accurately done, with **(b)** less well done in some instances where details were inaccurate.

- (a)** The strange event was the coming of the Holy Spirit on the apostles, a sound like rushing wind, tongues like fire, resting on each of them. They began to speak in different languages (glossolalia). Jews from many nations had come to Jerusalem for the festival and were amazed at hearing the languages. Some said the disciples were drunk.
- (b)** Peter explained this was not the result of drink, but fulfilment of Joel's prophecy (Joel 2:28-31). Some candidates knew the passage well and quoted Joel. Peter then associated the Spirit with Jesus, whom they had crucified by the hands of lawless men, but God raised him from the dead. Peter quoted also from the psalms proving that, since David had died, the promises must refer to the Messiah of David's line (Acts 2:25-31).
- (c)** The hearers were moved and asked what they should do. Peter replied, repent and be baptised in Jesus' name, for forgiveness and promise of the Holy Spirit. They responded and continued in the apostles' teaching.

## Question 3

A fairly popular question though many candidates failed to include reference to Philip's meeting with the Ethiopian.

- (a)** Philip was one of the seven deacons appointed to deal fairly with the distribution to the Hellenist (Greek speaking) widows. He was full of the Spirit, wisdom and of good repute. When the church was scattered Philip went to Samaria, preached, performed miracles, made and baptised many converts, including Simon Magus, whom Peter had to reprimand. On the road to Gaza he met an Ethiopian reading from Isaiah about the suffering servant (Isaiah 53). Philip preached Jesus, the Ethiopian believed, was baptised and Philip was caught up by the Spirit to Azotus. At Caesarea he was visited by Paul and Agabus. Also, Philip had four daughters who prophesied.
- (b)** Philip's special contribution was his mission to non-Jews, fulfilling Jesus' command to take the gospel into the world. The conversion of the Ethiopian, a high official in his own country, would take the gospel to Africa.

## Question 4

This was the most popular of all and usually well done.

- (a)** Most knew well the story of Tabitha/Dorcas and gave detailed answers, including the fact that she was a disciple, full of charitable works, a dressmaker. She died, was laid in an upstairs room, mourned by local women who showed Peter her handiwork. He asked all to leave, prayed and restored her to life.
- (b)** The details here were also well known. Many clearly revelled in the story. Peter was praying, on the roof top of Simon the tanner's house. He was hungry, fell into a trance, saw what looked like a sheet being let down by its four corners (not the four corners of the earth), full of all kinds of animals. A voice said 'Peter, kill and eat'. He refused because some of these were unclean according to Jewish law. This happened three times, and finally a voice told him not to call unclean what God has cleansed.
- (c)** This part, explaining the consequences of the healing miracle and the vision, caused rather more difficulty in some cases. The comment should include that many believed as a result of Dorcas' healing and as the news carried, the gospel spread. The significant point about Peter's vision was the request by Cornelius, a Gentile, for Peter to visit him. Gentiles were regarded as 'unclean' and Jews did not associate with them. But Cornelius and his household received the Holy Spirit as Peter preached to them, a sign that they also were God's people. Thus they were admitted to the church and this was confirmed later by the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:6-21).

### Question 5

Many candidates attempted this but rarely successfully.

- (a) Most candidates dealt well with this part. They were aware of Mark's desertion of Paul and Barnabas at Perga on the first missionary journey and of the subsequent split between Paul and Barnabas. Mark later went to Cyprus with Barnabas and was eventually reconciled with Paul (2 Timothy 4:11 though not recorded in Acts). His mother Mary (not Jesus' mother) used her house as a meeting place for prayer. Peter called here after his miraculous release from prison. Mary had a servant Rhoda, suggesting she was a person of some means.
- (b) Timothy had a Jewish Christian mother and Greek father, an advantage to Paul in his work among Jews and Greeks. Timothy had a good reputation in Lystra and Iconium. Despite the Jerusalem Council's decrees that Gentile Christians need not be circumcised, Paul decided this was necessary for Timothy in order to avoid disputes with strict Jews. Timothy was present on Paul's second and third missionary journeys.
- (c) There was some confusion in this section, with Lydia mistaken for Dorcas (**Question 4**). Lydia, a native of Thyatira, was a seller of purple cloth living in Philippi. Her business probably brought her considerable income. She was converted through Paul's preaching and baptised with her household. She offered hospitality to Paul and his companions. Paul and Silas visited her after their release from prison.

### Question 6

Only a small proportion of candidates attempted this and details were often shaky.

- (a) *Religious reasons.* In Ephesus the goddess Artemis/Diana, famed throughout Asia, was worshipped. Paul's preaching of the gospel was successful and many realised that man-made gods are not gods at all. Thus the temple and worship of Diana would diminish.  
*Commercial reasons.* The silversmiths made and sold silver images of Diana to visiting pilgrims. This trade, and their income, depended on the maintenance of Diana's worship. Paul's preaching and miracles began to take effect, hence the silversmiths, led by Demetrius, rioted in order to destroy Paul's mission.
- (c) The town clerk quietened the crowd, affirming that Diana's position was secure. They should not act rashly. Paul had committed no blasphemy or sacrilege. They should bring the matter to the lawcourts or any further problem to the city assembly. Otherwise they might be accused of rioting with no justification. They dispersed and Paul left the city.

### Question 7

This question, particularly parts (b) and (c), proved difficult for some and was not a popular choice.

- (a) The Sanhedrin was drawn from chief priests and scribes. Both Pharisees and Sadducees were represented. There were 70 members, with the High Priest as leader making 71. Their function was to deal with civil and criminal cases within the Jewish community. They could pronounce the death sentence for blasphemy, but only the Roman authorities could administer it.
- (b) This caused the greatest problem. The tribune, Claudius Lysias, brought Paul before the Sanhedrin, wishing to know why the Jews had mobbed Paul after his speech outside the barracks and why they wanted to kill him. Knowing that Paul was a Roman citizen, the tribune wished to treat him fairly according to law.
- (c) Here, few answers were adequate. The trial was disorganised. Paul insulted the High Priest, not recognising him. Paul then divided the Sanhedrin. Half were Pharisees as he was, believing in resurrection; the others were Sadducees who had no such belief. Uproar ensued. Claudius Lysias had to rescue Paul again and, since nothing came of the trial, sent him to Felix, the governor at Caesarea.



**Question 8**

This was a popular question. Part **(b)** in particular was answered well. Part **(c)** received thin comment in general.

- (a)(i)** The message Paul received was that despite the storm, no lives would be lost, only the ship. Paul would stand before Caesar in Rome, the object of his journey.
- (ii)** The sailors tried to escape by lowering a boat, leaving the passengers in danger. Paul reported this to the centurion who ordered the soldiers to cut the ropes. When the ship capsized the soldiers planned to kill the prisoners to prevent escape. The centurion prevented this and thus saved Paul's life.
- (b)** The islanders welcomed them, lit a fire, a viper fastened to Paul's hand as he gathered sticks. He shook it off unharmed. The chief man Publius offered hospitality for three days. His father was healed by Paul. Then others brought the sick for healing. At Paul's departure they provided provisions for the journey.
- (c)** The islanders initially thought Paul a murderer whom justice would not allow to live, although he had escaped drowning. This implies they had some kind of ethical code. When he was unharmed by the viper they decided he must be a god, implying they were polytheists.