

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Paper 2048/01

Paper 1 (Luke and Acts) Short Answer Questions

General comments

Although the full range of marks was achieved, a significant number of candidates gained less than 25%. Some centres showed little evidence that candidates had been prepared for the exam and, in such cases, many questions were left unanswered. By contrast, a pleasing number of centres showed excellent knowledge and understanding with some candidates gaining full marks. Examiners commented that the variance of marks was often greater between centres than between candidates within the same centre. It was also noticeable that some candidates only answered the questions on Luke and left blank the ones on the Acts of the Apostles. This suggests that they were not prepared for this part of the syllabus.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) The majority of candidates answered this correctly. The most common incorrect answer was Jerusalem.
- (b) The question asked for the first reaction, which was about being amazed at, or speaking well of, Jesus. Many candidates referred instead to the crowd being angry, which was a later reaction. There were also indications that some candidates were confusing the story with Jesus' visit to the Temple when he was 12 years old.

Question 2

- (a) Generally well answered.
- (b) There was some confusion with the story of Jesus' feet being washed with perfume.

Question 3

- (a) Most candidates answered this correctly.
- (b) A large number of candidates failed to mention that the sinner repented.

Question 4

- (a) Generally well answered.
- (b) A number of candidates confused Peter with Judas and said that he killed himself.

Question 5

- (a) – (b) There was some confusion with the account in Acts and some candidates linked the answer to Pentecost and looking up into the sky.

Question 6

- (a) Generally well answered.
- (b) Clearly this story is well known and most candidates scored full marks.

Question 7

- (a) – (b) A variety of different answers were accepted by examiners, but some candidates struggled to answer and made wrong guesses.

Question 8

- (a) It seems that the term 'proconsul' confused some candidates.
- (b) This was better answered than part (a) though a significant number of candidates said that Elymas died.

Question 9

- (a) Generally well answered.
- (b) This was the least well answered part of **Section A**. There was much evidence of guesswork by candidates.

Question 10

- (a) A number of candidates omitted the important point that Agabus tied his own hands and feet rather than Paul's.
- (b) This part was not as well answered as (a).

Section B

Question 11

- (a) – (b) Both these parts were generally well answered.
- (c) A number of candidates wrote about things Jesus did rather than what John said about Jesus.

Question 12

- (a) (b) (c) The main error by candidates was to mistake the text as referring to the events after the Transfiguration.

Question 13

- (a) Some candidates clearly knew the event well. However, most did not, and there was evidence in (b) and (c) of candidates confusing it with Peter's call to discipleship. Hence candidates tended either to score very few marks or full marks.

Question 14

- (a) (b) (c) Like **Question 13**, this event did not appear to be known by many candidates. Indeed, as with **Section A**, candidates struggled with the Acts of the Apostles and, in general, they gained lower scores than in the section on Luke.

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Paper 2048/02

Paper 2 (Luke and Acts) Essay Questions

General comments

The marks covered the full range with evidence of some excellent answers. Clearly some candidates had learnt the text well and showed good understanding. Most candidates selected their fifth question from **Section A**. There were also some very poor scripts that suggested candidates had done very little preparation of the detailed content of the syllabus. Some candidates clearly relied more upon general knowledge of some New Testament stories than a thorough study of the texts. Answers in **Section B** showed some confusion between certain events. Many were unable to distinguish between events in Thessalonica, Ephesus and Athens, for example.

Examiners noted that some candidates did not seem to be aware of the difference between the skills being assessed in part (a) and those being assessed in part (b). Candidates should note that the (b) part questions are assessing AO2 skill (understanding/discussion) and the level descriptors make clear that Level 3 and 4 involve more than “a purely descriptive approach”, but rather “a willingness to engage with and discuss the material.” Clearly candidates often find the part (b) questions challenging. Centres are advised to develop the AO2 skills further with their candidates. It may help candidates to appreciate what is expected of them in the exam if they are provided with a copy of the level descriptors by their teachers.

Some candidates still write out the question before answering. This is unnecessary and wastes time in the exam. The vast majority of candidates correctly adhered to the rubric.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) This was a popular question. However, there was the inevitable confusion and conflation with Matthew’s account. As a result, many candidates referred to the star and the wise men as well as the shepherds.
- (b) Although most candidates were able to explain why Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the reason this was significant to the Jews was rarely addressed. This meant that very few candidates scored beyond Level 3.

Question 2

- (a) Another popular question which produced some good, accurate accounts.
- (b) This question led many candidates to recite the relevant text but they failed to explain it. The AO2 level descriptors make clear that for Level 3 and 4 candidates have to engage with and discuss the material rather than write merely descriptive narrative.

Question 3

- (a) Some candidates confused the transfiguration with the Garden of Gethsemane, whilst others confused it with the Feeding of the Five Thousand. A significant number of candidates made no reference to the spoken words “This is my Son, listen to him”.
- (b) Most candidates who attempted this question scored quite well but few achieved Level 4. Some candidates gave relevant material for (b) in part (a) and this was given appropriate cross credit.

Question 4

- (a) Surprisingly, this account was not well known and many candidates did not finish the narrative but just had Jesus vaguely healing the man. Others had Jesus preaching in the Temple. Level 2 was awarded if answers did not include what Jesus said. For Level 4 there needed to be a reference to the statement made by Jesus about the son of man having the authority to forgive.
- (b) This question led some candidates into vague general comments unrelated to the story in (a). The question specifically requested for it to be discussed with reference to the story, and so there had to be some reference to the text for Level 4 answers.

Question 5

- (a) Although only a few opted for this question, those that did answer it generally knew the text well and gained good marks.
- (b) Some good answers here but often not developed or only a single point made.

Section B

Question 6

- (a) Many candidates gave an account of the escape from prison rather than Acts 4:5-21 or Acts 5:27-42. Either account was credited though quite a few candidates tended to conflate the two separate incidents. For Level 4, answers had to include either Peter's reply to the Sanhedrin or Gamaliel's reasoning from the Acts 5 account.
- (b) This was generally poorly answered with some candidates not fully understanding the meaning of the word "persecuted".

Question 7

- (a) A well rehearsed account and candidates gained good marks.
- (b) Another part (b) question that many candidates just answered by narration of the account. There was also some confusion from some centres between Barnabas and Ananias.

Question 8

- (a) Only a few candidates attempted this question. Those that did generally knew the material and gained good marks.
- (b) Again this was generally well answered.

Question 9

- (a) A significant number of candidates who attempted this question wrote about the wrong incident and gave detailed accounts of the demon-possessed girl.
- (b) This was either omitted and only part (a) was answered, or narrative was offered. Few candidates were able to discuss Paul's strategy.

Question 10

- (a) The question was focused on Paul's advice but many candidates ignored the focus and gave confluences of various other events. There were some candidates, however, who gained full marks showing an impressive ability to select appropriate detail from the narrative.
- (b) There were signs that many candidates struggled to work out how to answer this question. They knew of the event but only a few could do more than just relate it. There were a few candidates who were very confused and thought Eutychus was a place that Paul visited.