

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

University of London

EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS

For The Following Qualifications:-

B.A. *LL.B.*

Judaism and the Origins of Christianity

COURSE CODE : HEBR7759

UNIT VALUE : 1.00

DATE : 11-MAY-06

TIME : 10.00

TIME ALLOWED : 3 Hours

BA Examination**HEBR7759: Judaism and the origins of Christianity**

Answer FOUR questions: ONE from section A, ONE from section B, ONE from section C, and a FOURTH from ANY section. All questions carry equal marks.

SECTION A

1. Discuss the relationship between religion and political activity in 1st-century CE Judaea.
2. In what sense did the Pharisees constitute a 'sect'?
3. To what extent has the identification of the Qumran sect with the Essenes effected the interpretation of the Dead Sea Scrolls?
4. Assess the importance of Apocalyptic literature to EITHER early Judaism OR early Christianity.
5. What is the value of the New Testament for the study of Judaism in the 1st century CE?

SECTION B

6. To what extent can Jesus be compared to other early 1st-century Jewish preachers?
7. Discuss the significance of the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15, Galatians 2) on the formation of Paul's theology.
8. At what stage can it be argued that Judaism and Christianity had parted ways?
9. Discuss the purpose of anti-Jewish Christian polemics.
10. Assess early rabbinic attitudes towards Christianity.

TURN OVER

SECTION C

Select ONE of the following passages and explain and discuss its context, contents, and general significance.

11.

Col. 1 1 [...] settled [up]on him and he fell before the throne 2 [...] king for ever. You are angry, and have changed you 3 [...] ... your vision, and everything that shall come for ever. 4 [...] mighty ones, oppression will come upon the earth 5 [...] and great slaughter in the provinces 6 [...] king of Assyria [and E]gypt 7 [...] and he will be great over the earth 8 [...] they [will d]o, and all will serve 9 [...] great will he be called and he will be designated by his name.

Col. 11 1 He will be called son of God, and they will call him son of the Most High. Like the sparks 2 that you saw, so will their kingdom be; they will rule several year[s] over 3 the earth and crush everything; a people will crush another people, and a province another provi[n]ce. 4 *Blank* 5 Until the people of God arises and makes everyone rest from the sword. *Blank* 6 His kingdom will be an eternal kingdom, and all his paths in truth. He will jud[ge] 6 the earth in truth and all will make peace. The sword will cease from the earth, 7 and all the provinces will pay him homage. The great God is his strength, 8 he will wage war for him; he will place the peoples in his hand and 9 cast them all away before him. His rule will be an eternal rule, and all the abysses

12.

Nor is Palestinian Syria, which is occupied by a considerable part of 75 the very populous nation of the Jews, barren of virtue.¹ Certain among them, to the number of over four thousand,² are called Essaeans;³ although this word is not, strictly speaking, Greek, I think it may be related to the word 'holiness'.

As regards philosophy, 80 they first of all leave logic to word-chasers, seeing that it is useless in the acquisition of virtue; then they leave natural philosophy to street

orators, seeing that it is beyond human nature, except, however, in what it teaches of the existence of God and the origin of the world. But they work at ethics with extreme care, constantly utilizing the ancestral laws, laws which no human mind could have conceived without divine inspiration.⁹ They continually instruct themselves in these laws but 81 especially every seventh day; for the seventh day is thought holy.¹⁰ On that day they abstain from other work and proceed to the holy places called synagogues, where they sit in appointed places, according to their 82 age, the young men below the old, attentive and well-behaved. One of them then takes up the books and reads, and another from among the more learned steps forward and explains whatever is not easy to understand in these books. Most of the time, and in accordance with an ancient method of inquiry, instruction is given them by means of 83 symbols. They learn piety, holiness, justice, the domestic rule, the constitution, knowledge of what is truly good or bad or indifferent, and how to choose what must be done and how to flee from what must be avoided.

CONTINUED

13. (199) but this younger Ananus, who, as we have told you already, took the high priesthood, was a bold man in his temper, and very insolent; he was also of the sect of the Sad-

ducees, ^a who are very rigid in judging offenders, above all the rest of the Jews, as we have already observed; (200) when, therefore, Ananus was of this disposition, he thought he had now a proper opportunity [to exercise his authority]. Festus was now dead, and Albinus was but upon the road; so he assembled the sanhedrin of judges, and brought before them the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James, and some others, [or, some of his companions]; and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered them to be stoned; (201) but as for those who seemed the most equitable of the citizens, and such as were the most uneasy at the breach of the laws, they disliked what was done; they also sent to the king [Agrippa], desiring him to send to Ananus that he should act so no more, for that what he had already done was not to be justified; (202) nay, some of them went also to meet Albinus, as he was upon his journey from Alexandria, and informed him that it was not lawful for Ananus to assemble a sanhedrin without his consent; ^b—(203) whereupon Albinus complied with what they said, and wrote in anger to Ananus, and threatened that he would bring him to punishment for what he had done; on which king Agrippa took the high priesthood from him, when he had ruled but three months, and made Jesus, the son of Damneus, high priest.

- 14.

2. Those who are called Ebionites agree that the world was made by God; but their opinions with respect to the Lord are similar to those of Cerinthus and Carpocrates. They use the Gospel according to Matthew only, and repudiate the Apostle Paul, maintaining that he was an apostate from the law. As to the prophetic writings, they endeavour to expound them in a somewhat singular manner: they practise circumcision, persevere in the observance of those customs which are enjoined by the law, and are so Judaic in their style of life, that they even adore Jerusalem as if it were the house of God.

1. God, then, was made man, and the Lord did Himself save us, giving us the token of the Virgin. But not as some allege, among those now presuming to expound the Scripture, [thus:] “Behold, a young woman shall conceive, and bring forth a son,”⁵ as Theodotion the Ephesian has interpreted, and Aquila of Pontus,⁶ both Jewish proselytes. The

Ebionites, following these, assert that He was begotten by Joseph; thus destroying, as far as in them lies, such a marvellous dispensation of God, and setting aside the testimony of the prophets which proceeded from God.

TURN OVER

15.

R. Abbahu praised R. Safra to the *minim*

saying that he was a great man. They exempted him from taxes for thirteen years. One day they (the *minim*) found him (R. Safra) and said: "It is written, 'Only you have I known from all the families on earth, therefore I will repay you for all your sins' (Amos 3:2). If someone is angry, does he then punish his beloved?" (Why is the Holy One, Blessed be He, angry with His people?) He was silent and did not say anything to them. They threw a scarf around his neck and taunted him. R. Abbahu passed by and discovered them. He said: "Why are you taunting him?" They answered: "Did you not tell us he is a great man (yet he does not know how to explain this verse)?" He (R. Abbahu) said to them: "When I told you that (I meant) in rabbinic law. Who said anything to you about the Bible?" They replied: "What is the difference? You know (the Bible)." He said to them: "We, who are always in your proximity, have taken it upon ourselves to study (the Bible), but they (i.e., people like R. Safra from Babylonia) do not study it."

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