

DIVINITY

Paper 9011/12
Prophets of the Old Testament

Key messages

The key message this year concerns opposing or different points of view. Where a question asks candidates to assess a particular point of view, it is expected that candidates will compare *different* points of view and make a judgement concerning which might be the most appropriate answer.

General comments

Most candidates answered four questions and managed their time well. The most popular questions were **2,3,4,6** and **7**, with **2** being the most popular question overall. Some candidates could have improved their marks by not repeating the wording of the question like a mantra. For example, with **Question 1** ('We know nothing about the real character and personality of Moses – all we know is what God told him to say and do.' How far do you agree?) – some candidates repeated the question after every single point, saying: 'This proves that we know nothing about the real character and personality of Moses – all we know is what God told him to say and do'. This kind of repetition sometimes accounted for a third or more of some candidates' essays. Many displayed a superb knowledge of the texts concerned, together with an equally impressive knowledge of the views of different scholars.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Some could have gained more marks by not retelling the story of Moses' life. Stronger answers discussed a range of personality traits in Moses: for example his humility, leadership qualities, susceptibility to anger, sympathy, etc., pointing out that these are *perhaps* visible behind the Moses narratives.

Question 2

On the whole, this was well answered. Key words in the question were: 'in Israel', and in this respect some candidates could have gained more marks by avoiding masses of detail about the origins of prophecy being elsewhere in the Ancient Near East. Stronger responses often used the words, 'in Israel', to discount the claims of Abraham and Moses. Alternatively, some argued that since the term 'Israelite' includes those in the earlier periods, Moses in particular qualifies as a prophet 'in Israel'.

Question 3

The evidence for Elijah's 'difference' generally included his sudden appearance on the scene, his willingness to use violence on a grand scale, the issue of whether or not he experienced a prophetic call, his miracle-working ability, the election of Elisha as his successor, the nature of his transfer to heaven, and in particular his status in later Judaism (as in the New Testament) as being synonymous with 'Prophecy' in the same way that Moses was synonymous with 'Law'. Some candidates made clever use of all these themes to paint a vivid impression of Elijah as being both similar to, and different from, other prophets.

Question 4

Some candidates could have scored more highly by answering the whole question, in so far as they described many different methods but did not give any view concerning which was the most effective and why. High-scoring answers were particularly explicit about the effectiveness of each method: for example, many claimed that miracles left an indelible impression of the power of Yahweh, as in those miracles done by God through the agency of Moses. Others rated symbolic acts equally highly, pointing out that symbolism added a dramatic quality to what the prophet said, this being particularly the case with Jeremiah.

Question 5

The strongest answers unpacked the term, 'necessary evil', taking it to mean that (for example) kings saw prophets as evil, yet necessary, because prophets authenticated their rule. From the standpoint of prophets, many pointed out that from the start they saw kings as being unnecessary, hence (for example) Samuel was quick to find a reason to de-throne Saul. Some could have gained more marks by paying attention to the wording of the question instead of simply writing a history of the relationships between various kings and prophets.

Section B

Question 6

This was a popular question, and was generally done well, with candidates thinking 'on their feet' intelligently. Most began with the theme of God's universal power, as seen in the condemnation of the surrounding nations. To this was added: the power shown by Amos' visions of destruction; the completeness of the destruction being threatened in retaliation for social injustice; God's ability to restore as well as to destroy; Israel's greater destruction through ignoring the added responsibilities of election; and the annihilation forecast for the Day of the Lord. The best answers were those which focused on God's absolute power as opposed to God's destruction. A few candidates made excellent use of the theme of the Day of the Lord, pointing out that in bringing darkness instead of light, Yahweh would in fact be demonstrating the awesome power of being able to reverse the light of creation.

Question 7

Most candidates found little trouble in illustrating the link between Hosea's prophecy and Gomer's sexual immorality, although this was brought out in different ways. Some candidates could have gained more marks by not simply telling the story of Hosea and Gomer, and by avoiding unnecessary detail about the naming and renaming of the three children. The best answers were those which put forward strong arguments to show that Hosea's prophecy in fact derived also from a number of other sources, such as the social decadence of the kingdom, the unrest caused by the succession of rulers, and the pressure on Israel from Assyrian expansionist policies. Some said, very neatly, that Hosea used his own thinking on Israel's situation to bring out God's conditional hope, advised repentance and encouraged submission.

Question 8

Some of the candidates who answered this question did so with little or no knowledge of Isaiah's symbolic acts, which defeated the point of the requested comparison between Isaiah and Jeremiah. Some gave great detail of Jeremiah's symbolic acts but gave no opinion as to why they were important within the broader scheme of Jeremiah's prophecy as a whole. Some asserted that Jeremiah's symbolic acts were more important than those of Isaiah, but made little or no attempt to say why. Those who answered the whole of the question wrote particularly well on Jeremiah's call *to pluck up and pull down, to build and to plant*, where the command both to destroy and to build up can be seen in the total picture of Jeremiah's symbolic acts – in other words, through those acts Jeremiah lived that command. Some wrote with equal conviction about the importance of Isaiah's symbolic acts within the historical setting of his dealings with different kings. A

common and useful conclusion was that all symbolic acts were appropriate to the particular setting of a particular prophet, so to label those of one prophet as more important than those of another is inappropriate.

Question 9

Just about all candidates who answered this question distinguished correctly between pre-canonical and pre-exilic prophets. In terms of adding new things, most referred to the fact that the pre-exilic prophets were 'writing' prophets; that they preached a startling message of unavoidable doom, and were very fond of symbolism. There was some disagreement as to what was inherited and what was new, but most of these disagreements were justified by acceptable reasons, which was the important thing. Some reached the interesting conclusion that each prophet was called to address a particular situation, so matters of continuity and difference were not matters for a prophet's personal choice so much as the result of historical circumstances and the commands of God.

Section C

Question 10

- (a) This was the most popular gobblet, and most knew it very well, explaining the different possibilities and different interpretations in useful detail. In particular, there was useful discussion of the nature of prophetic ecstasy, and the possibility of its appearance here being anachronistic and intended to support the claim that ecstatic prophecy originated through Moses during the wilderness period.
- (b) This was also popular, although some candidates chose to answer it simply by paraphrasing the text. Most provided a variety of interesting comment, such as the identity of those spokesmen who would have a share of the qualities that made Moses the archetypal prophet. Much good work was done on cross-referencing this episode with the band of prophets at Gibeah and the court-prophets who challenged Micaiah ben Imlah.
- (c) One useful point to take away from studying this particular gobblet is to be wary of the temptation to go into too much detail about the story of Samuel and Saul in general. The main focus should always be (as far as possible) on the particular extract given. Some candidates wrote an excellent history of the election of Saul to be king, Samuel's reaction to that, and the eventual removal of Saul; whereas the focus of the extract is on the immediate background narrative of Saul's characteristics, the meeting of Saul and Samuel through the loss of Saul's father's asses, the meeting with the band of prophets, the ecstatic prophecy, and the meaning of the saying, 'Is Saul also among the prophets?' The best answers dealt precisely with these items.

- (d) This was also a popular gobbet, and knowledge of it was encyclopaedic. Some were dismissive of Elijah's fear of Jezebel's counter-measures, although others were more sympathetic, suggesting that it stemmed from Elijah's coming down from an ecstatic state to one of depressing normality. Much of the comment was on the revelation of God at Horeb, and the parallels with the experiences of Moses. Some identified Elijah's experience of the 'still, small voice' as his call narrative, although others put the emphasis here on a contrast between Elijah's intense form of ecstasy on Mount Carmel and the calming voice of Yahweh providing reassurance and hope.
- (e) Some candidates could have gained more marks by giving more than a simple paraphrase of the text, although to be fair, the background narrative was very well known. Most identified the main point of interest as the spirit of lying prophecy who volunteers to entice Ahab, in so far as the lying spirit is one of Yahweh's heavenly council, which implies in turn that false prophecy can come from Yahweh, which then implies further that this is meant to be one explanation of why God allows false prophecy. There was some excellent comment on prophetic and royal psychology.
- (f) Some candidates answered this gobbet without any knowledge of its context, despite the fact that the extract is one of the focal points in Amos' prophecy. Some assumed that Amos was talking to the king, and some assumed that the first part of the extract was Yahweh telling Jeremiah not to prophesy against Israel, which produced some colourful although very odd answers. Those who knew the passage made a number of very good analytical comments, although oddly, there was little comment on Amos' assertion that he was neither a *nabi* nor one of the *bene hanebi'im*, by which he appears to mean that he was neither a professional prophet nor a member of a prophetic guild, but was taken from his normal occupation to deliver Yahweh's message.
- (g) Some simply assumed that the woman concerned was Gomer, although this is one of the particular issues raised about this passage. Most explained it well as an allegory of Yahweh's continuing love for Israel, which will end in Israel's restoration from exile after a period of isolation like that in the wilderness before the entry into Canaan.
- (h) Very few were aware that this passage uses a specific 'covenant lawsuit' form, so the terminology is taken from that of a court of law. Many candidates could have improved their marks by choosing to answer extracts where they are sure of the background and nature of the material, since doing so without that knowledge can lead candidates into making comments that are so generalised that they could be referring to virtually anywhere in the prophetic literature. Where the complaint is that people have a 'lack of knowledge', 'knowledge' here is a technical term meaning knowledge of the proper observance of the cult; so the complaint is that neither priest nor prophet has the required knowledge of how to approach God to offer sacrifices in the proper way. The general context of the lawsuit uses traditional terminology, such as: *faithfulness*, *kindness (hesed)*, *knowledge of God*, and stronger responses did pick up on these.
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- (j) Most commented usefully on the meaning and message of the good and bad figs, although very few referred to the historical situation and the involvement of Jeconiah. Having said that, most referred accurately to Zedekiah's revolt against Babylon and the resulting second siege and destruction. Some could have gained more marks by being sure in their minds about the identity and nature of the 'good and bad figs'.
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DIVINITY

<p>Paper 9011/22 The Four Gospels</p>

General comments

The overall performance of candidates was good with very little evidence of time mismanagement. The majority of candidates answered four questions.

It is imperative for candidates to confine their essays to answer the specific question. Very few candidates included evidence of essay planning but their concise answers, for those who did, evidenced this time was well spent. It might be helpful for candidates to highlight the specific command within the question e.g. assess, evaluate, explain, critically examine etc. and focus their responses to address this command.

Access to wider reading and scholarly opinion were evident within some candidates' work, this helped identify better responses and thus achieve higher marks.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

This question was very popular and was generally answered very well. Most candidates showed knowledge of the context of the gobbet and commented on points of interest.

- (a) A popular choice with candidates correctly identifying its context as part of the Sermon on the Mount. Good written answers with a lot of relevant comment on prayer and the Jewishness of Matthew's audience.
- (b) Again a popular choice of gobbet which brought good comments on the parable of the kingdom of heaven and Jesus' use of parables and His references to the kingdom of heaven.
- (c) This drew a lot of comment around Jesus and His family – for those who chose it, they demonstrated enough knowledge to recognise the context and comment upon the main points of interest.
- (d) Several candidates were confused with the request made by the disciples, James and John, and the one which the disciples' mother made on their behalf, which is from a different gospel. The points of interest were credited with marks if they were specific to the Markan gobbet as asked. A lot of good comment regarding discipleship and misunderstanding of Jesus' mission.
- (e) This gobbet was a less popular choice but for those who chose it there were some very good answers. Good commentary was seen on the material wealth and Luke's focus on the poor.
- (f) Part of the trial of Jesus was correctly identified and commented upon. Much could be said about who Pontius Pilate was and who Herod was. Candidates tended to answer this very well. A popular choice.
- (g) This was the least well answered gobbet with candidates mistaking the context.
- (h) Correctly identified as one of the 'I am' sayings, comments on this gobbet were well developed and sound.

Question 2

This was a popular question with candidates taking two key passages from Matthew and commenting at length on them. It produced some very pleasing essays which gave balanced answers covering both incidents. Better candidates gave a good background to the person and call of Peter as a disciple, including other stories in reference to his significance.

Question 3

This produced some surprising answers as candidates did not naturally respond by writing about the obvious ethical teaching of Jesus in the sermon but widened it out and included a lot of material which was equally as relevant. There was much to choose from and therefore essays varied and were very individual in their answers. It was well done with a lot of material on adultery, divorce, wealth and possessions etc. being used. The better answers were those which covered a variety of topics and were specific in reference to what Jesus said about them. Lesser answers were too general in their approach without reference to biblical content.

Question 4

Some candidates did not keep their answers specifically referring to parables in Mark's Gospel but tended to put down parables as they thought of them regardless of their gospel context. It was a popular question and a lot of essays were well structured and relevant. There was a lot of material referred to, the most popular parable being The Sower. Good answers grouped parables into different related topics e.g. parables of the kingdom, parables of warning. The danger was for some candidates to retell parables without providing adequate comment to explain their purpose and message. This was a popular question.

Question 5

This was another popular question and the standard of answers was very good. A lot was written about the emotions Jesus displayed throughout Mark and good candidates debated the humanity of Jesus with reference to His divine nature. Many wrote about Mark reflecting his audience of that time and the persecutions they were going through therefore the reason why there was a need to depict Jesus as displaying human qualities. This question generally achieved high marks when fully answered.

Question 6

For those who chose to answer this question there was a lot of scope for discussing the authorship and purpose of Luke. Many candidates learn the arguments and reasoning behind the individual gospel writers therefore these questions are generally well answered and this was no exception. This question brought some good references to scholar's opinions and encouraged candidates to show their wider reading. The best answers were more than just a list of Lukan themes but went with some depth into the purposes of Luke's writings.

Question 7

This question needed answers which displayed a good structured response which went through each parable carefully. It needed to be more than a mere retelling of the three stories but the recurring themes needed to be highlighted. Some candidates gave very involved and confused answers because they did not tackle the question in an organised manner. Most candidates were able to write about the joy of finding 'the lost' but this needed to be likened to the joy of heaven on a person's repentance. Better essays dealt with all major themes of forgiveness, repentance, joy, love, patience etc. and made the link with the teachings of Jesus about the kingdom of God.

Question 8

This was the least popular question on the paper but, for those who were confident enough to tackle it, the answers were interesting. Some candidates made good reference to the promise of the Spirit by Jesus when He departs and the role of the Spirit as a comforter and a counsellor. Links were made with Jesus being baptised in water and the promise of the giving and receiving of the Spirit. There was a lot of material in John which could have been drawn upon but those who did answer this were limited in their knowledge about the topic.

Question 9

The danger with this question was that some candidates just wrote everything they knew about the role of John the Baptist regardless of whether the material was from John or any of the other gospels. This produced a lot of muddled answers because of the lack of identification of Johannine material. Some candidates were well prepared from a detailed study of John's Gospel therefore their essays stood out and received high marks. It is important that the question is thoroughly adhered to when answered.

Question 10

The key word here was 'model'. Few candidates wrote their essays in answer to this question in a way that made reference to Jesus providing a 'model' of prayer for others to use. A lot was written about teaching on prayer and its importance but the link was missing which would have demonstrated a good answer to this question. Again this was a less popular question and the essays were of a mixed quality.

Question 11

This question demanded a knowledge and understanding of the role of Judas and the need for Jesus to follow His destined path. It appeared attractive to some candidates who saw an opportunity to write about Judas, the disciple. There needed to be an understanding of the religious background at that time and the power of religious pressure which the public were aware of. Some good answers but the majority needed further development.

Question 12

This allowed candidates who had prepared this topic to flourish in their essay as there is a lot of material to choose from and several centres had adequately prepared their candidates for this topic. There were some excellent detailed answers which balanced realised eschatology with future eschatology. High marks were achieved and there was a good opportunity for those to demonstrate wider reading around the topic.

Question 13

Essays to this question covered the whole spectrum of marks. For those who had prepared this topic there was excellent material used which gave reference to scholarly information and opinions. This type of question tends to appeal to those who feel that they cannot attempt any Gospel specific essay. As a result some attempted to write everything they knew about Palestine at that time. This resulted in flimsy essays which were far too general to show that the candidate had a good understanding of the topic. This question needs clear planning so the candidate can approach it from a social, religious, economic and political perspective.

Question 14

This was a popular question. A good candidate clearly identified the two gospels they were making reference to and did a detailed analysis of the similarities and the differences between the two accounts. The danger with this question was that those who felt they knew about the resurrection chose this to answer, but they were unable to compare two accounts as they tended to infuse the material from all the gospel accounts into one story. It is important that if a candidate chooses to do a comparison of two gospel accounts on any topic that they keep the two accounts distinct within their essay.

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General comments

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Access to wider reading and scholarly opinion were evident within some candidates' work, this helped identify better responses and thus achieve higher marks.

Comments on specific questions

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Question 1

This question was very popular and was generally answered very well. Most candidates showed knowledge of the context of the gobbet and commented on points of interest.

- (a) This brought a good response with candidates correctly identifying the context and able to give adequate comment on the Jewishness of Matthew's Gospel.
- (b) Another popular gobbet which was generally correctly identified and well discussed.
- (c) Any gobbet referring to John the Baptist is popular. A lot of points made about the person and work of John.
- (d) Correctly identified with a lot of good comment on the uniqueness of this event and its wider significance.
- (e) Another popular choice but the danger was for candidates to comment on something other than what is written in the gobbet. Some candidates strayed away from the question asked.
- (f) Not such a popular choice as the context was not easily recognisable without knowing the passage in Luke. For those who did correctly identify it they were able to give clear, relevant comment about the Galilean ministry of Jesus.
- (g) This was a popular choice and it was well answered. A lot of material was written about the visit of Nicodemus to Jesus by night.
- (h) Not such a popular choice but those who did attempt it clearly knew a little about its context and significance. Few wrote about the significance of 'the day of Preparation' and its part played in setting the timing of the crucifixion in John. Good comments made about the person and authority of Pilate.

Question 2

Although this essay question was attractive to a number of candidates it was not answered as well as anticipated. Many candidates did not assess the importance of forgiveness and compassion but merely wrote about them. Not all the material selected was from Matthew. Material was drawn from both the Sermon on the Mount and the parable stories in the best answers.

Question 3

In Matthew, Jesus' life is depicted as the fulfilment of the Law and the Prophets and this was at the heart of the question. Although several candidates did attempt this question, their answers did not fully reflect the use of fulfilled prophecy as hoped. Some candidates touched on Matthew's use of Old Testament passages but they failed to show their significance in relation to the question. There needs to be an explanation given when referring to the different Old Testament passages quoted.

Question 4

Mark's Gospel is often seen as the Gospel of the Passion with a large portion of the gospel given over to recording Jesus' last week of His life. Again candidates did not fully make this connection but wrote more about what happened at the crucifixion. A lot of marks were missed because of the lack of assessment in the written answers. It is important to address the question asked and fully attempt to answer it.

Question 5

There was a lot of scope for answers to this question. Those who did it well covered the two main views of the kingdom: the present reality of the kingdom as shown by Jesus' miracles and ministry, and the future kingdom as referred to through the parables. There were some very good answers to this question. A popular choice with a good use of parable material.

Question 6

This question gave candidates the opportunity to look at the main themes of Luke as revealed in these songs. Very few candidates chose this question which suggests that many failed to identify what it was actually about or they were not familiar enough with the material. A good answer would have included the themes of women, the poor, the rich, joy, universalism and salvation.

Question 7

This was a popular choice of question and it brought about some very good answers. The best answers clearly identified Lukan material and did not get muddled with other gospel accounts. A lot was included about Jesus' post resurrection visits which provided the basis for a well-balanced answer. It was necessary to be specific when referring to the resurrection story and not over generalise.

Question 8

This presupposes an awareness of the 'I am' sayings and signs in John and the best answers to this question made this connection. Some answers merely retold the incident of the raising of Lazarus and therefore did not achieve the higher marks. It was necessary for the answer to address the idea of why this story is central to John's Gospel. This question was a popular choice.

Question 9

This question was only attempted by a few of candidates, but those who did choose it made good use of all three 'I am' sayings. The answers were well balanced and contained a lot of relevant material giving a detailed discussion of each saying.

Question 10

Material for answers was drawn from all of the different gospels. The best answers clearly identified the gospel source of the material used and linked it to specific themes displayed by the gospels. Answers included discussions of the cost of discipleship and of their mission and obedience in following Jesus. This was a popular choice and brought about some high scoring answers.

Question 11

This is a classic question asking candidates to write about the Synoptic Problem. Those who had prepared the material and who chose to answer this scored highly. A lot was written about the four source theory and evidence of scholarly knowledge was displayed. This was very well answered in the main.

Question 12

This was a popular question which allowed candidates to write about the teaching on wealth and possessions from all the different Gospels. The better answers knew what material came from each gospel and again they linked this in to the individual writers' themes. A lot of material was given and answers tended to be well organised and clearly structured.

Question 13

This was not a popular question. It was necessary to be able to identify material which covers different ethical issues. Some candidates were unclear in their understanding of what 'ethical' means therefore their answers were not fully relevant. For those who were clear on the understanding of Jesus' ethical teaching there was a lot of material to draw from in the accounts of the sermons on the mount and the plain as well as the parables Jesus told. Best answers also considered Jesus' teaching and the Jewish Law.

Question 14

To answer this question it was necessary to know the trial story in some detail and be aware of the different gospel accounts. Best answers included information surrounding who Pilate was and his relationship with the Jewish authorities. It was important that candidates made a genuine attempt to write about the areas of similarities between the gospels and to comment upon them. It was also important to comment upon the differences as well. There were some very well balanced responses to the question which achieved good marks. Those candidates who merely retold the story of Jesus' trial achieved lower marks.

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Key messages

In answering **Question 1**, candidates must focus on the precise words in the text set for comment.

It is important to name scholars in essay answers to identify different arguments and understandings of the texts.

In answering essay questions candidates should write precisely to the question. This year, they should not ignore 'ethical teachings' when comparing Colossians and Hebrews, or 'worship' in **Question 10**.

General comments

The overall standard of scripts was very high, with a number of excellent sets of answers. Very few candidates appeared to experience difficulties with timing.

There was a very pleasing increase in references to scholars in essay answers. In many cases candidates were aware of a range of different views and could use them accurately and effectively in their arguments. Compared with previous sessions, many candidates surveyed alternative views and evaluated them academically in answering questions with the stimulus commands 'To what extent', 'Compare and contrast', 'How important'. This made answers much more successful in matching the assessment criteria for higher marks.

Many candidates showed a good range of knowledge across the syllabus which allowed them appropriate illustrations in support and their analyses and extensions to their arguments.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

There were some outstanding commentaries on the texts set. These showed close attention to the exact wording of the text and could comment in an informed fashion on the importance and significance of precise ideas.

Some of the brief references to the general context of texts were too brief, though again there were some good examples of how to do this successfully.

- (a) This was a very popular choice. Candidates did not always successfully locate it in the opening hymn for Colossians, and so did not always reflect the possibility that Paul is quoting a liturgical source. The concepts in the text were well-known and clearly explained in most cases.
- (b) This was also attempted by a majority of candidates. The best knew about the importance of the ethical teaching in the later chapters of Colossians. The idea of Christians as a 'chosen people' and therefore a New Israel was widely recognised. The final quintet of attributes tended to be passed over without exploration.

- (c) Again, this was a popular choice. There was very good comment of the contextual importance of angel worship, with some fine references to Jewish models from the inter-testamental period. There were good comments on the death of Jesus as effecting universal salvation, and as leading to his crowning by the Father.
- (d) Comments on this text were not always as clear as they should be about 'elementary teachings' and 'foundation of repentance'. This meant that the significance of this verse in the development of the thought of Hebrews was not fully explored. Faith was usefully commented on.
- (e) This verse comes from the end of the great exploration of faith in Hebrews 11. This context was not always fully acknowledged. This meant that many candidates missed 'such opposition from sinful men' as referring to Jesus' ministry and passion. There were some useful references to the Neronian persecution in commenting on 'not yet resisted to ... shedding your blood'.
- (f) There was much good and well-informed comment on the idea of the two cities in this verse, with appropriate references back to Hebrews 11, and insightful discussion of the role and significance of Jerusalem in Jewish thought. 'Sacrifice of praise' tended to be missed, though it is an interesting use of liturgical language which again picks up on earlier passages in Hebrews.

Question 2

This was a very popular question, attempted by the vast majority of candidates. The overall standard of answers was excellent. Nearly all of them cited a range of scholars as taking a position on the question of authorship, from 19th century German commentators to contemporary scholars. These were accurately described, and generally deployed to allow a consideration of the main points of the debate. Interestingly candidates were almost equally divided for and against Pauline authorship, which was a further reflection of the overall state of scholarly play. There was an interesting range in the numbers of hapax legomena identified.

Question 3

This question produced a range of answers. The best examined the role of faith in Hebrews 11, and contrasted it with the status of Jesus and the reflections on priesthood earlier in the letter. Weaker answers did not engage as widely with the text of the letter and consequently yielded a more limited analysis. That said, all candidates showed a clear understanding of the concept of faith, with Hebrews 11:1 often quoted, and the discussions of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob and Moses explored.

Question 4

This allowed candidates to explore the similarities and differences between the two set texts. Weaker essays tended to do this very generally, with only very brief and limited references to ethical teachings. Some other candidates who did focus on ethics fell into confusion between the two writings and ascribed material from one to the other, sometimes without correction or modification. In some cases material from I Corinthians 5 and 6 was cited as occurring in the set texts. There were answers which responded accurately and successfully, but they were rarer than on other questions.

Section B

Question 5

This was another very popular question, to which the standard of answers was very high overall. The best not only analysed Paul's conversion as a paradigm, and discussed the significance of his missionary activity and role at the Council of Jerusalem, but also contrasted this with the impact of the death of Stephen as a catalyst for expanding the Church's missionary activity, and with the outreach of Philip and Peter to Samaritan and Gentile communities before Paul got started. There were good and well-supported conclusions at the end of many essays.

Question 6

This attracted few answers. The best were thorough examinations of material largely from Romans, Galatians and I Thessalonians, with some skillful use of I Thessalonians 4 in establishing Paul's value of the resurrection as an essential part of salvation. There could perhaps have been more on Romans 6 and the believers' experience of the Christ event in baptism. Evaluation was even-handed and fair.

Question 7

This was a popular question, and again one which elicited some thoroughly informed and evaluative answers. Candidates knew the careers of both men thoroughly, including Philip's reappearance at the end of Paul's 3rd Missionary Journey. The only slight omission was Barnabas' quarrel with Paul about the role of John Mark and subsequent independent career evangelising Asia Minor. Not only did nearly all candidates evaluate the contributions of Philip and Barnabas, but there were also brief but useful comparisons with other figures.

Question 8

This attracted a fair number of answers, which showed a sound awareness of those sections of Jesus' teaching which run in parallel with that in James. Indeed many references were precise and quoted Jesus' words accurately and relevantly. Analysis of James was generally sound, though less confident candidates would benefit from trying to shape their answer chronologically through the letter. This would clarify and refine their treatment of the material.

Question 9

This attracted very few candidates. The best knew the material in Romans 9-11 and could analyse it sensibly. Weaker performances tended to describe Paul's thought rather generally, though accurately. Very few candidates were prepared to criticise the apostle for hostility or unfairness towards the Jews in his thinking.

Question 10

Successful candidates looked at such texts as I Corinthians on the Eucharist and the use of spiritual gifts in community meetings, and at James' use of the term synagogue and comments on the evil of discriminating between rich and poor in the meeting. There were no references to James' treatment of prayer and anointing the sick in chapter 5.

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