

DIVINITY

<p>Paper 9011/12 Prophets of the Old Testament</p>
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Key messages

The key message this year concerns conclusions to essays. Less successful responses tended to give two viewpoints about the question concerned but without making any attempt to judge between them. This was particularly evident in some of the responses to Question 1. However, it would be legitimate for candidates to say that 'the evidence does not allow a conclusion to be reached,' and then to give reasons why this is the case. To access the higher grades, candidates need to show that they have reasoned their way to whatever conclusion they reach.

General comments

Time management this year was exceptionally good, with nearly all candidates giving four good-length answers. The most popular optional questions were 1, 2, 3, and 6, with 1 and 3 being the most popular questions overall.

Knowledge of the viewpoints and arguments of various scholars was well demonstrated. Background knowledge to the prophecies of Isaiah of Jerusalem and Jeremiah was exceptionally good.

With the 'gobbet' questions, answers were often superb. As with previous years, however, ascription of different gobbets to sources such as J, E, D and P was often not done well, with many candidates assuming that Pentateuchal sources somehow found their way into the works of the writing prophets. The most popular gobbets were: (b), (d) and (e), followed closely by (a), (f) and (g).

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

The best answers to this question were those that attempted to make a judgement based on the evidence provided. Most concluded that although there is plenty of evidence to support the different views, no firm conclusion is possible, since (1) the internal/biblical evidence is unclear and sometimes contradictory, and (2) the evidence for borrowing from elsewhere in the Ancient Near East can be interpreted in different ways. Some answers were over-long, listing the evidence instead of analysing it. That said, there were very few weak answers to this question.

Question 2

On the whole, most did well to pick up on the importance of the phrase, 'nothing more than', and most suggested that Moses and Samuel were a great deal more than clever politicians. The question clearly required candidates to answer with respect to either Moses or Samuel, and some ignored this requirement, writing extensively about both. Most did well in identifying political roles for the prophets (for example, with Moses, in seeing the Ten Commandments as a political constitution and the appointment of the 70 elders as meeting a need to have assistants). One interesting comment was that if Moses had not been a prophet, none of his other roles, political or otherwise, could have existed.

Question 3

The evidence for Elijah's greatness was well-researched. Some wrote a well-argued case for the alternative claims of Moses, Samuel, Amos and others, but then ignored their case in the conclusion, seemingly being unable to abandon the idea that Elijah was the greatest even where they had shown that he was not. Some of the most successful answers were, for the most part, those which argued that 'greatest' is an inappropriate description, because all prophets were called for a particular situation and purpose, so each prophet was 'the greatest' in that specific setting. Some could have gained more marks by resisting the temptation to write two or three pages of detail about the contest on Mount Carmel.

Question 4

Knowledge of symbolic acts and miracles was generally encyclopaedic. This knowledge was put to best use by those who answered the question, which was to assess the view that symbolic acts were more important than miracles, etc. Answers which simply listed symbolic acts and miracles done by various prophets tended to ignore the question. Some concluded that symbolic acts were longer-lasting in their effects and were more important in the long term. Some argued that miracles were more important where a dramatic effect was needed in order to restore confidence in God or a prophet. Others argued that symbolic acts and miracles were complimentary in the sense that they could appear separately or combined.

Question 5

This question produced some of the best answers. Most began with a description of the ecstatic state (religious exaltation, frenzy, inspiration by the Spirit, etc.). Important uses and examples of ecstasy generally referred to: Elijah being supposedly in an ecstatic state in order to kill lots of Baal prophets on Carmel and to outrun Ahab's chariot; also Elijah in receiving a new form of revelation in the form of the 'still, small voice'; the ecstatic behaviour of prophetic bands, particularly the contagion by which Saul prophesied with one of these bands. Some argued that any prophetic utterance from God was by definition given in an ecstatic state by virtue of contact with the deity.

Section B

Question 6

This was a popular question, and was generally done well. Most began by discussing Amos' background as a shepherd and a fig-farmer, concluding that he would have been comparatively poor and so took an instant dislike to anybody rich; further that some of his language thereby becomes intelligible, such as his reference to the 'fat cows of Bashan'. Most did an extensive write-up on the Hosea/God – Gomer/Israel parallel. The key word in the question was 'everything', and most managed to think of some things in the words of Amos and Hosea that did not stem from their personal experience, such as the social and political situation and, in particular, their direct inspiration from God.

Question 7

Candidates made particularly good use of the call narrative in chapter 6, and the Trisagion call of, 'Holy, holy, holy ...,' together with the purification of Isaiah's lips and God's presence in the Temple as the seat of his universal power. Most referred effectively to Isaiah's frequent use of the title, 'The Holy One of Israel', and of his belief that God was in control of the worldly powers such as Assyria and Egypt, and would use them in whatever way was appropriate, including the punishment of Judah.

Question 8

Some responses demonstrated little or no knowledge of Jeremiah's call, relying instead on a detailed catalogue of symbolic acts by which Jeremiah foreshadowed doom or renewal. Conversely, those who knew the call narrative for the most part wrote excellent and thoughtful essays linking each part of it to Jeremiah's prophetic life. The antithesis of 'pluck up and break down, destroy and overthrow, build and plant' was picked up very well, with candidates referring forward to Jeremiah's disastrous family life, his denunciation of the cult, his actions during the siege of Jerusalem, and in particular his parable of the good and bad figs.

Question 9

Most argued that the statement in the question was incorrect, and pointed out a number of other differences between the pre-exilic writing prophets and those who came before them, for example that the pre-exilic prophets made heavy use of miracles, and the focus on national doom which characterised much of what was said by the writing prophets. Otherwise, most candidates agreed that pre-exilic prophets and those who came before them had few major differences: both criticised kings, used ecstasy, were ill-treated by the authorities, used oracular formulae, and were chosen to do a specific job.

Section C

Question 10

- (a) This was a fairly popular gobbet. Some remembered the preceding context of the prohibition against pagan superstition and magic. Most talked about the character and identity of the 'prophet like Moses', some identifying this as a specific individual such as Elijah or Samuel; most seeing the reference as being to Mosaic-type prophets in general. A few assumed that the text refers to Jesus, but Christianising a Hebrew text is hardly a helpful idea. Most referred to that part of the passage where the criterion of true prophecy is where a prophet's word comes true, and some candidates made interesting reference to 1 Kings 22 and the 'spirit of lying prophecy'.
- (b) This was very popular, although some candidates chose to answer it simply by paraphrasing the text. Most of the comment focused on: Samuel's youth, comparable with Jesus at 12 years old teaching in the Temple; the nature of Samuel's call, and how it foreshadowed his future importance; and the failings of Eli and his sons. Some linked the call to the 'failure of priesthood', the need for monarchy, and the position of Samuel (in relation to Question 1) as possibly the first prophet in Israel.
- (c) The main point of interest was with the status of Nathan as a court prophet, and his attempt to keep David happy by agreeing with David's proposal to house the Ark of the Covenant in a more permanent structure, followed by his change of approach apparently in response to a command from Yahweh. There was some comment on the different meanings of 'house' to include 'dynasty', together with comment on the failure of the Davidic dynasty following the Babylonian invasion of Judah.

- (d) Along with (b) and (f), this extract attracted a huge range of comment. Some were dismissive of Elijah's fear of Jezebel's counter-measures, asserting that he could easily have dealt with the wicked queen. Others were more sympathetic, suggesting that Elijah's flight came about because he was 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, or as the inauguration of a different kind of revelation. Much of the comment was very thoughtful and insightful.
- (e) Most of the comment was as far-ranging and well-informed as for the previous gobbet, particularly concerning the ways in which Naboth had no option other than to reject Ahab's offer because of the requirements of the Law, together with Ahab's grudging acknowledgement of the legal situation. Some candidates were concerned about the possible loss of Jezebel's conjugal rights and her fury at being scorned. One or two suggested that Naboth was ill-treated because he was very poor, but the owner of a vineyard who also had the moral courage to reject a flattering monetary offer from a king could hardly have been poor.
- (f) Some candidates answered both this gobbet and gobbet (g) without any reference to their context in Amos' prophecy, with the result that a lot of comment boiled down to generalised statements about poverty, doom and destruction. The general context here is Amos' indictment of the foreign nations, and verses 2–16 are directed against Israel for crimes against God and humanity. Most pointed out that the indictment was covenant-specific: such crimes break the covenant obligation, and as an elected nation, Israel (like Judah) should have a specific knowledge of what God commands both religiously and morally. It is in this context that Amos rails against people's sins against God through a lack of social justice.
- (g) Very few knew the general context of the fourth vision of a basket of ripe summer fruit symbolising Israel's ripeness for destruction. There was intelligent comment on the Day of the Lord: of what the people expected would happen on that day, and what was in fact going to happen, particularly the reversal of Yahweh's creation through darkness and eclipse, and the stark contrast between the expectation of rejoicing and celebration and the reality of mourning and songs of lamentation. Some contrasted the passage with the prophecies of restoration and hope at the end of the book, although these were generally judged to be editorial additions.
- (h) Some could have gained more marks by not writing a general essay concerned solely with the parallelism between Hosea/Yahweh and Gomer/Israel. This parallelism is of course relevant, but forms only part of the explanation of this extract, which envisages Gomer/Israel as being hedged in with thorns so as to have no access to her lovers/the Baals. The point of isolation is to bring about a realisation of sin and an understanding that faithfulness to the covenant is the only way to ensure the continuation of good things.
- (i) Very few candidates answered this gobbet, and much of the comment was generalised rather than specific to the Song of the Vineyard. There was some reasonable reference to Israel being able to be a judge of her own sins.
- (j) Comment on this passage was on the whole as generalised as that for gobbet (i), being confined largely to descriptions of God fighting on behalf of Jerusalem. Some expanded usefully on the Zion tradition. Very few linked the passage with the preceding oracle on Assyria, or with Isaiah's subsequent warning against accepting help from less powerful sources, i.e. Egypt.
- (k) Most were aware of the link between this passage and Jeremiah's second Lament/Confession (15:10–21), which sets the scene for the complete isolation from normal life that is implied by his call narrative. In the ancient world, to live alone without children was to have no future, because a future was assured by continuation through children. There was some thoughtful comment about Jeremiah's isolation being a living symbol of Judah's impending destruction by Babylon: there was no point in having a wife and a family in face of the impending chaos. 'Deadly diseases' were correctly interpreted as signs of invasion and destruction, in the face of which the voices of bridegroom and bride would be silenced.

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DIVINITY

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

Key messages

Candidates must stick closely to the content of questions and identify what the main thrust is. A question will never be about merely retelling information and there will always be a need make an assessment, analysis, evaluation or comparison etc. Whilst access to further reading material may vary according to different centres it is necessary for candidates to show that they have a good grasp of any relevant scholarly trends and developments available to them and that they know how to use this information within their answers.

General comments

Candidate responses clearly reflected their level of understanding, research, scholarly reading and individual access to resources within their own centres.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This question was a popular choice. There were a small minority of candidates who did not follow the instructions and only selected two or three gobbets to write about. Also a few candidates mistook **Question 1**, with its four parts, as being an alternative to answering four essays from the entire paper.

- (a) A very popular gobbet to comment on: candidates wrote clear answers which identified this passage and the key points contained within it. There were some good comments on the work of John the Baptist, but a few candidates did not identify the context and comment on John being in prison which is an important part to this gobbet.
- (b) A lot of candidates attempted this gobbet but not all managed to identify its context. Some candidates placed this within the setting of a resurrection appearance rather than identifying it correctly as being said following the Last Supper. There were good comments on the prophecy regarding the shepherd and the sheep imagery.
- (c) This was a very popular choice of gobbet and most candidates answered this very well. Most recognised the setting as Jesus calming the storm while the disciples were amazed. There was a lot of relevant and detailed commentary. Candidates seemed to resist the temptation to merely retell the incident but comments were confined to the significance of this passage for showing Jesus' humanity and divinity as well as the disciples' lack of understanding.
- (d) This was clearly identified by most as a passage from the Garden of Gethsemane. Many correctly identified this and the comments that followed were relevant to the gobbet. Candidates wrote about the inner struggle Jesus displayed and about his surrender to the will of God. Very good answers were produced for this question.
- (e) Again, this was a gobbet which, if clearly identified by the candidate, brought with it a very relevant and detailed explanation. Most candidates resisted the temptation to retell this miracle story and they concentrated on the nature of authority displayed and the role of a centurion within society.

- (f) Some candidates mistook this for an incident which they thought occurred in the Garden of Gethsemane. If the candidate was unable to identify the parable then their comments were limited to who these religious groups were and why they sought to lay hands on Jesus. Less popular as a choice but nevertheless, for those who were able to recognise the context, their answers were detailed and relevant.
- (g) Many responses wrote about the use of the 'I Am' phrase and correctly linked it back to the time of Moses. A lot of very good comments were made.
- (h) This was a popular gobbet with a lot of very good comments about the role of Peter and the significance of the question being asked three times. A few candidates mistook it for taking place at the last supper rather than identifying this as a resurrection encounter.

Question 2

This was a popular choice with many full and detailed answers. It gave candidates the opportunity to present their knowledge of the teaching (didache) material in the gospel within the context of Jesus as Messiah who came as the fulfilment of prophecy. Many candidates showed their knowledge of the frequent Old Testament citations which Matthew used to make the link between Old Testament prophecy and Jesus. The birth narratives provided a lot of information but, for good answers, it was important that candidates continued to show evidence from further parts of the gospel.

Question 3

Some answers displayed sound understanding of the term 'ethics' and used the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount to evidence their answers. It was important to refer to Matthew's material only, but a few candidates selected parables which were from Luke and this was not credited. Many candidates were able to show that Jesus' actions were underpinned by love, but fewer candidates managed to make comment on the key passages surrounding love found in Matthew.

Question 4

This question was a popular choice. Candidates wrote about the pace of Mark and the sense of immediacy which it contains as well as choosing relevant parables to back up their arguments. It was important to show the flip side of the argument and therefore candidates needed to discuss other reasons for Mark writing in the style he did.

Question 5

This was a popular question and many responses were able to back up their views with reference to scholarly ideas.

Question 6

This was a popular question. Only a few candidates referred to the names and dates contained in Luke's Gospel and the background information which evidences its historicity. There was a lot of material to draw from, but this was not used. Candidates also needed to look at both sides of the discussion to show they understood the main issues.

Question 7

There were several very knowledgeable answers with good references made to relevant passages regarding discipleship. There was a lot of material in the gospel and most of responses were able to select the relevant passages.

Question 8

It was evident that candidates were prepared to answer questions on the 'I Am' sayings and the 'signs' in John. This was a popular question. Most candidates stuck to the material requested in the question and concentrated the bulk of their essays on the wedding in Cana and the feeding of the 5000. Stronger responses went a little further, referring to other signs to show their general nature and why the author chose to use them in his gospel.

Question 9

Candidates needed to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the passion narrative in John's Gospel and how it is or is not based on historical fact. Few candidates chose this question and, although they wrote at length about the passion of Jesus, it needed to be handled in a way which clearly attempted to answer the question.

Question 10

Candidates were able to show their wide knowledge and understanding around the society at the time of Jesus. This was a popular question with a lot of material to draw from. Most candidates handled it very well and discussed whether Jesus' actions can be described as revolutionary or not. Many included the use of parables, miracles and the general encounters Jesus had with different individuals.

Question 11

Some responses were a mere retelling of the gospel accounts with no clear identification as to which gospel the material came from. This type of comparison question demands that the response demonstrates a very clear knowledge of the similarities and differences of specific accounts.

Question 12

This was a popular question. Many candidates wrote about the other incidents in Jesus' life which may be described as important such as the transfiguration, the resurrection and the Sermon on the Mount etc. This question brought about a variety of very well-constructed answers which addressed the main thrust of the question.

Question 13

This was a general question on the nature of forgiveness through the teaching of Jesus in the different gospels. It allowed candidates to show their knowledge and grasp of the different teaching material in the gospels. Although this was not as popular as expected, those who did answer it did so very competently.

Question 14

Some candidates mainly centred on the Temptations of Christ and did not apply their answers to other parts of Jesus' life. Stronger responses were produced with many showing their understanding of the nature of temptations.

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General comments

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Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This question was a popular choice.

- (a) A popular gobbet to comment on. It was easily identifiable and therefore candidates were able to set this in the correct context, after the Sermon on the Mount, and make significant comment.
- (b) This was answered well with relevant comments made about the Pharisees in Jewish society. This was a popular choice of gobbet and was well answered. Not every answer identified the correct context within the gospel setting, but it was clear to most that it was part of the conflict stories in Matthew.
- (c) A popular choice of gobbet with a lot written about the ministry of John the Baptist. More could have been said about the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy through John's work.
- (d) Candidates clearly identified this as Jesus healing a leper and wrote answers accordingly. Many candidates concentrated solely on the words within the gobbet and did not stray into long writings about the miracle itself.
- (e) This was not as popular as other passages but those candidates who identified the gobbet correctly gave good relevant answers putting plenty of information about the widow of Nain and the compassion Jesus showed for her plight.
- (f) This was not a popular gobbet and some candidates were not sure of the thrust of the parable to which this refers therefore commentary was irrelevant in some cases.
- (g) Few candidates chose this gobbet but those who did were well acquainted with the incident to which this is referring, and comments were relevant.
- (h) Another popular gobbet. Answers were detailed, and a lot was written about Jesus' ministry to women as well as the objection made by Judas at the waste of money. Very good comments were made about the role of the poor in society at that time.

Question 2

This question was well answered and allowed candidates to show clear knowledge of the role of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel. Many candidates showed a good knowledge of the significance of 'righteousness' and 'the Law' in this gospel. Candidates showed that they had a good grasp of why Matthew wrote his gospel and who his audience was.

Question 3

This question gave candidates the opportunity to select the relevant information which shows Jesus' humanity. It allowed subjectivity of answer and therefore there were a lot of very individual responses. It was well done by those who chose it. Weaker responses did not restrict their use of material to the Gospel of Matthew and therefore some answers contained irrelevant material.

Question 4

This question was less popular. Candidates who attempted this question needed to discuss how Mark's main thrust of his Gospel is the passion narrative. Some candidates picked up on the speed of the Gospel and commented on its sense of 'immediacy'. It was well done by those who attempted it.

Question 5

This question was less popular. Stronger responses demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the role of Peter in the ministry on Jesus.

Question 6

Few candidates chose this question which focused on the universalism of Luke's Gospel.

Question 7

This was a popular question which was well answered. Candidates drew relevant diagrams depicting the synoptic problem and responses demonstrated in-depth knowledge and understanding.

Question 8

This was a popular question. Candidates identified a lot of the main themes found in the first chapter and they were able to draw out relevant gospel material to confirm this theme throughout the gospel.

Question 9

This was a less popular question. The general gospel story is similar within all the gospels but John's aim and reason for writing needed to be addressed in depth. Weaker answers needed to show more understanding of the issues.

Question 10

Many candidates answered this question with detail and understanding, but a few wrote mainly about different parables without tackling this issue of the why they were designed to be misunderstood by some.

Question 11

A few stronger responses were able to get behind the miracle and unpack what it tells about society at that time.

Question 12

This was a popular choice which allowed candidates the opportunity to show their knowledge and understanding of the religious and political tensions of the time. Stronger responses were able to recount a lot of relevant material.

Question 13

Responses demonstrated confidence in discussing the audiences of Mark and John. There was some good evidence showing that this had been covered by a few centres.

Question 14

This was a popular question which covered the birth narratives found in Matthew and Luke. There were clearly centres which covered this in detail and many students did well on this topic. It was necessary for candidates to identify material belonging to each of the gospels without getting confused. Some very good answers were given.

DIVINITY

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Key messages

Candidates should be aware that they do not need to write out the question. This is particularly appropriate to those who attempted **Question 1**, as a number of candidates spent a significant amount of time copying some fairly long gobbets, that of itself gained them no additional marks.

General comments

The general standard of responses was high, with many candidates displaying a sound knowledge of the events and teachings of the Apostolic Age. Some candidates could have gained higher marks by focusing on critical analysis of the question set, as opposed to the narrative approach some candidates took. The most popular questions were **1**, **4** and **10**, whilst **Questions 7** and **8** were attempted by few candidates, and rubric errors were very rarely encountered.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) Most candidates gave a reasonable discussion of Paul's idea of justification by faith, and then delved into what is meant by the term righteousness. Some candidates argued for a contrast with James, and that Paul's focus on faith over works or law was linked to conflict with Judaisers, as seen through reference to later elements of Romans. A number of candidates correctly recognised that the gobbet contains a reference to Habakkuk, and some attempted to link the context of Romans with the context of Habakkuk.
- (b) Most responses showed a reasonably good understanding of Paul's ideas on the Early Church's relationship with the Jewish law, and contrasted the Law with life in the spirit and the nature of salvation. Some commented on Paul's own background and conversion quite effectively. Some candidates successfully tied this quote into teachings and beliefs about baptism.
- (c) Whilst there were some good responses to this question, there were also a number of rather generic responses, where it was clear that the candidate didn't know the significance of the quote, and instead referred to more general Pauline teachings. Not all responses picked up on the reference to the Jews and were therefore unsure of to whom 'them' referred. Some candidates did pick up on the reference, and were able to suggest that the idea of unenlightened zealots may have been Paul alluding to his former life as Saul.
- (d) The least well answered of the gobbets, but candidates were still generally successful in their responses. Responses on this gobbet tended to either focus on the idea of debt, love or fulfilling the law, and few managed to encompass an understanding of the passage as whole. It was also clear from some responses that they didn't know the specific significance of the passage, and instead talked about more general themes in Romans.

- (e) Reasonably well answered by most candidates, but some responses strayed into questioning the authorship of James, without linking their arguments on Authorship to the points of interest or difficulty in the gobbet in question. Some responses discussed the nature of what it meant to be pure and undefiled, and linked it to the rare occurrence of the word religion in the New Testament. Most referred briefly to the context of wealth and poverty in the church, though the best responses developed this idea.
- (f) A quotation where the translation (RSV or NIV) makes a significant difference to the interpretations encountered, due to the alternative punctuation and phrasing of the two versions. Some responses explored whether 'killing' was literal or metaphorical, or based on a limited incident or a widespread problem for the church. Most responses explained something of the context of the letter and the importance of the theme of prayer in James.

Question 2

Candidates on the whole answered the question successfully. Most candidates were able to pick up the significance of 'all' in the question, and were able to develop and explore the idea that it can be used to describe humanity in general, but also had significance in ignoring any distinction between Jews and Gentiles, and the inability to be made righteous by the law. Some candidates struggled to sufficiently direct their response towards answering how convincing Paul's argument was.

Question 3

Most candidates displayed a detailed knowledge of the reference to the Old Testament in Romans, with most choosing to focus on some or all of Adam, Abraham, Moses and David. Unfortunately, a small number of candidates gave detailed biographies of individuals mentioned in the Old Testament, without examining Paul's use of them in Romans. Some of the more able responses took a thematic approach to Paul's use of the Old Testament, focusing on how he developed his arguments that the Law didn't bring salvation or righteousness.

Question 4

A very popular question. Many responses were able to discuss and present the case for the letter being Christian and/or Jewish, and cited numerous arguments in support of each, but some ignored the third part of the question completely and many just mentioned that the letter was written in Greek with little discussion of the significance of this, which inhibited their ability to present a well-rounded argument. Many strayed into a detailed discussion of the authorship of James, presenting and evaluating various candidates, without linking it sufficiently to the question.

Section B

Question 5

Some responses answered this question very well, with close textual references to justify both views – that Paul did replace Peter, or that the two worked separately with different missions, and that Act 9–21 is not showing Peter being replaced, but instead just switching its focus to Paul's missionary journeys, as Peter's mission had largely been covered in the preceding eight chapters. The best responses also discussed the issue of the authorship of Acts and what influence this might have had on the prominence of Paul. Some instead presented a narrative summary of the life of Paul and Peter, without due attention to the question asked.

Question 6

Candidates who attempted this question were largely successful in identifying the arguments around the role of circumcision in the early church, normally through referring to Acts and Pauline epistles, though some referenced scholarly sources in their arguments. What the best candidates did was to focus on whether the acceptance of uncircumcised Gentiles was inevitable, through presenting social, scriptural and physical concerns. Some weaker responses referenced arguments about circumcision, but didn't link them back to the question about its inevitability.

Question 7

Few candidates attempted this question, and it was the least successfully answered question. The question required detailed knowledge of both the contents and contexts of the two letters. Only one or two responses picked up on the question mark over Pauline authorship in Colossians or the presumed dating-gap between the two letters, which may have affected the ethical teachings development. Candidates, who successfully compared the two letters, often didn't sufficiently contrast, and those who successfully contrasted often didn't give sufficient attention to how the two compare.

Question 8

Very few candidates attempted this question. Responses encountered contained some discussion of the background of the recipients and whether they had resorted/reverted back to the Jewish Law. Some mentioned contrasting ideas of Christ in the New Testament with the priesthood in the Old Testament. Others focused on comparing the idea of Christ as perfect fulfilment of the law, with the idea that he replaced the law.

Question 9

Quite a popular question. Most responses could write quite well on Paul's teachings on the Holy Spirit, with a number of textual references, but many ignored the last phrase of the question and did not address the 'in the life of the Church' part at all, or tacked it on hurriedly at the end. This prevented a number of candidates from fulfilling their obvious potential. The number of different textual references encountered in detail across the responses indicates both a deep and broad understanding of this area of the course.

Question 10

A popular question, attempted by the majority of candidates. Some responses answered very well, arguing that there were other threats – Judaising, infighting, heresy, etc., and some did wrestle with whether it was the 'greatest' threat or not, with varying levels of success. Some argued that it actually helped spread the gospel further and quicker and was thus beneficial to the preaching of the gospel as whole, whilst acknowledging that it was a threat to the individuals preaching. A number of weaker responses just listed biblical examples of persecution of Christians from Stephen onwards, and whilst some lists were quite comprehensive, they didn't attempt to discuss the question sufficiently. Some candidates had clearly only tacked on an attempt to address the question in their conclusion, after a long list of different forms of persecution.