

General Certificate of Education (International)
Advanced Level

DIVINITY 9011

For examination in November 2009

DIVINITY

GCE Advanced Level

Syllabus 9011

Available in the October/November examination only

Both the New International Version and the Revised Standard Version will be used for quotations included in question papers. There is, however, no wish or intention to dictate to schools which version should be used in the teaching of Divinity and schools are at liberty to use whichever they prefer. Examiners have been instructed not to set questions in which the answer depends on a rendering peculiar to a particular version of the Bible.

Syllabus 9011: Advanced Level

Three papers (Papers 9011/1-3) will be set as below. Candidates will offer any **two** papers, answering **four** questions from each.

9011/1 The Prophets of the Old Testament (3 hours)

9011/2 The Four Gospels (3 hours)

9011/3 The Apostolic Age (3 hours)

9011/1 The Prophets of the Old Testament

The aim of this paper is to help candidates to an understanding of one of the key factors in the maintenance of the religious faith of Ancient Israel, and to introduce them to the study of a significant part of the Jewish and Christian Bibles.

Candidates need to have a basic overall view of the history of Israel from the Conquest to circa 400 BCE. They should understand the context of the events and people they are studying, and how they relate to parallel accounts of the same periods in other parts of the biblical literature. Throughout, they should be aware of the views of modern scholars.

The paper will be divided into three sections.

Candidates will be required to answer **four** questions. One question will be the compulsory comment question in Section C, where four passages must be chosen out of a possible eleven. They must also choose one question from Section A, one question from Section B, and one further question from either Section A or Section B.

Section A. Pre-canonical prophets and general questions

Candidates will be expected to show knowledge of the earliest manifestations of prophecy in Israel, and to be aware of the views of modern scholars on its origins. They should also be able to show the significance of (pre-canonical) prophets of the 10th and 9th centuries BCE, including their rôles, functions and impact. General questions will also be asked on the characteristics of Israelite prophecy and prophetic literature; the rôles and activities of prophets and their relationship with the social and religious institutions of their day; methods of communicating their message; the collection and preservation of prophetic writings; the kind of issues addressed in prophecy; the significance of Moses for the prophecy of Israel, and also Samuel and Elijah.

Candidates may be asked to compare the prophecy of one period of Israel's history with another. There will be passages in Section C, prescribed with particular reference to Section A, which should be given detailed study.

Section B. Pre-exilic prophets, with special reference to Amos, Hosea, Isaiah of Jerusalem, and Jeremiah

Candidates should be familiar with the **main** contents of Amos; Hosea; Isaiah 1-12, 28-39; Jeremiah 1-45. They should also have detailed knowledge of the relevant passages prescribed in Section C. Questions will be set on the life and/or work and message of individual prophets, but comparative questions and general questions on pre-exile canonical prophets may also be included.

Section C

A compulsory question with passages for comment. These passages will be drawn from the following passages for detailed study, relating to the other sections of the Syllabus:

(A) Numbers 11:14-17, 11:24-29

Deuteronomy 18:9-22

1 Samuel 3, 9:1-10:13, 28:3-25

2 Samuel 7

1 Kings 19:1-18, 21:1-29, 22:1-38

(B) Amos 2-4, 7-9

Hosea 1-4, 6:1-6, 11, 14

Isaiah 1, 2, 5-9, 11, 31

Jeremiah 1-2:13, 7, 11-13, 15:10-16:15, 17-20, 23-24, 27-29, 31-32

9011/2 The Four Gospels

The aim of this paper is to encourage and develop a scholarly understanding of the life and teaching of Jesus as contained in the four gospels. A good, working knowledge of the gospel text is required. Candidates will be expected to know and comment upon differences between the gospels where these are plainly relevant to this understanding, but they will not otherwise be asked for detailed comparison of parallel narratives.

There will be **fourteen** optional questions on this paper, one of which will contain passages for comment. Candidates will be required to answer any **four** questions. The breakdown of the paper is as follows:

- The comment question will contain **eight** short texts (gobbets), two from each gospel. Candidates should state the context of any **four** gobbets (but not rewrite the story) and then comment on points of interest (religious, historical, political or social) or difficulties that arise *from that text*.
- There will be at least **two** questions on the paper directly concerned with each gospel.
- There will be **five** further questions on main gospel issues and themes.

Answers to all questions should demonstrate a thoughtful mixture of scholarly opinions, textual evidence and personal evaluation.

In preparing for this paper candidates should study the following:

- the relevant gospel texts
- the historical, social and religious background to the gospels
- the main questions and ideas raised by biblical criticism
- authorship, date, provenance and main themes of the gospels
- the main events in the gospels: birth narratives, John the Baptist and his relation to Jesus, baptism, temptations, confession of Peter, transfiguration, miracles and mighty works, entry into Jerusalem, last supper, trials, crucifixion and resurrection
- the teaching of Jesus (especially by means of parables and miracles) with special attention to: salvation, forgiveness, the kingdom of God, future judgement, discipleship and commitment, wealth and possessions, prayer, ethics, discussions with Jewish authorities and his self-understanding
- the main events and teaching peculiar to John's gospel (e.g. the Prologue, Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, the 'signs', the "I am" sayings)
- the christological titles (son of God, son of man, son of David, etc.)
- the views of contemporary scholars.

9011/3 The Apostolic Age

The subject should be studied with reference to the following books: Acts 1-21:15; Romans; 1 Corinthians; Galatians; Colossians; 1 Thessalonians; Hebrews and James. There is a rotation of books prescribed for detailed study:

- (a) 2008: Colossians and Hebrews
- (b) 2009: Romans and James
- (c) 2010: 1 Corinthians and 1 Thessalonians
- (d) 2011: Acts 1-21:15 and Galatians.

Candidates will be expected to have made a study of the history and development of the early Christian Church during the Apostolic Age which should include the following:

- the main features of the apostolic teaching and preaching to both Jews and Gentiles
- the progress and problems of the Christian mission, including opposition and persecution from both Jews and Gentiles as evidenced in Acts 1-21:15 and the relevant passages in the epistles included in the syllabus
- the economic, social and political factors which aided or hindered the Christian mission
- the instruction and guidance given to converts, especially those from Gentile backgrounds
- the problems which arose concerning the admission of Gentiles into the membership of the Church
- the doctrinal, pastoral and ethical teaching given by Paul, James and the author of Hebrews and the problems dealt with in their letters
- the relation of the Christian Church to Judaism, including the use of the Jewish scriptures, and the Church's growing independence
- the patterns of worship in the early Church, including both its debt to Judaism and distinctively Christian features
- the contribution to the life and mission of the early Church, including the development of its doctrine, by leading figures such as Peter, Stephen, Philip, Barnabas and Paul
- the relations of the Apostolic Church with the Jewish and Roman authorities, and teaching on the rôle of the state.

In addition, candidates should study the authorship, date, circumstances of composition, purposes of Acts and the epistles included in the syllabus. While very detailed questions concerning critical problems will not be set, candidates should nevertheless be familiar with the more important problems relating to particular books including the question of the historical value of Acts in the light of the evidence of Paul's letters, the date and destination of Galatians, the authorship and destination of Hebrews, and the notably Jewish character of James.

The paper will consist of two sections. Candidates must attempt **four** questions, choosing **at least one** from each section.

Section A will consist of four questions on the books prescribed each year for detailed study. These will include an optional question containing passages for comment selected from the prescribed books.

Section B will consist of not fewer than five questions covering the rest of the syllabus.

In both sections some questions may be set as alternatives.