

# DIVINITY

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Paper 9011/01  
Prophets of the Old Testament

## General Comments

The standard of responses was generally high, and the performance of some candidates was exceptional, demonstrating excellent knowledge. Time management was good, although some candidates either spent too much time on the gobbets or else too little. The time spent on **Question 10** should be the same as for any other question. Candidates covered a good spread of questions to demonstrate a wide knowledge of the syllabus, **Questions 1, 2, 6, 7 and 9** being the most popular.

As a general comment on the gobbets, some candidates spent much time stating that various passages were from J or E or D or P (together with a few as-yet-unheard-of sources). In many cases these were carried over into Amos, Isaiah and Jeremiah. In nearly all instances, candidates could have produced better answers by concentrating on the points of interest in the gobblet concerned.

## Comments on Specific Questions

### *Section A*

#### *Prophecy in general and Pre-canonical Prophets*

##### **Question 1**

Responses to this question were extremely detailed. On the one hand, that fact ensured that nearly all candidates who answered it achieved a reasonable level. On the other hand, responses became list-like, going mechanically through every labelled theory from the revolutionary to the evolutionary, without time to “examine” these theories. Some very astute candidates suggested that it makes a difference as to whether “Israel” here refers to Israel as a geographical entity or as ‘the tribes of Israel’, since the second definition includes (for example) the activities of Moses and the transfer of ecstasy to the seventy elders in the wilderness.

##### **Question 2**

The key word here was “development”, in so far as there were many essays which discussed the significance, or importance, or roles of Samuel and Elijah, but not so many that discussed how these influenced the development of Old Testament prophecy. As an example, it was common for candidates to talk about Elijah killing the Baal prophets on Carmel and thereby striking a blow against Baal worship, but only the better responses went on to say that Elijah’s actions developed prophecy by keeping it alive at a time when Yahwism as a whole might have been wiped out. It was important that candidates answered the comparative aspect of the question. The general conclusion was that Samuel developed prophecy alongside the monarchy, prophecy being the only institution capable of keeping a system of checks and balances on the monarchy. A few preferred the claims of Elijah, pointing out that without Elijah, there would have been no prophecy left to develop.

##### **Question 3**

Responses to this question varied considerably. Some had a very good knowledge of Lindblom’s discussion of ecstasy (in *Prophecy in Ancient Israel*), e.g. his distinction between orgiastic and passive (lethargic) ecstasy, and began their discussion with an analysis of the episode in 1 Samuel 10:5 ff. Some candidates had a commendably in-depth knowledge of the technical language, particularly of the term *ruach*. Weaker answers simply identified *everything* that prophets did as being ecstatic, and so ended up writing essays on the importance of the various things that the prophets did.

#### Question 4

Very few candidates seemed to be aware of the fact that doom oracles have a general structure and so answers were often generalised, with doom oracles being identified with any kind of destructive or doom-orientated comment that a prophet might make, including symbolic acts. Most were able, however, to show that doom oracles are especially prevalent in Amos and Jeremiah, for example, and that the style of doom oracles is intended to impress those who hear them with the severity of the judgement that is impending. The most popular analysis was that doom oracles were not particularly effective as a means of conveying the prophet's message since people refused to believe them, either (for example) because their economic prosperity assured them of God's approval (as in Amos) or because they trusted in Yahweh's willingness to defend his Temple (Jeremiah). Hence most candidates suggested that symbolic acts were more effective because they carried visual demonstration; or that assurances of salvation and of God's love were more effective because they gave comfort and reassurance.

#### Question 5

Most essays displayed a good knowledge of the disposition of the pre-canonical prophets to be involved with war and violence, referring particularly to Moses and the plagues, Samuel as a war leader, and Elijah's massacre of the Baal prophets. Further analysis was often very good. Some suggested that the statement was correct, but only in so far as violence and war were inevitable in the political circumstances in which the prophets acted: e.g. Samuel had no choice but to confront the Philistine threat, and Elijah's only alternative to eliminating the Baal prophets was to allow the elimination of Yahwism. In addition, candidates made some perceptive remarks, e.g. that Moses was not only involved in war and violence but he gave the Israelites law and grace and fed them in the desert. Several candidates remarked that the prophets wanted to avoid war and violence, but others brought war and violence to them.

#### Section B

#### Pre-exilic Prophets, with special reference to Amos, Hosea, Isaiah of Jerusalem and Jeremiah

#### Question 6

Answers to this were often in the same style as answers to **Question 1**, in so far as candidates had a list of theories: parabolic, symbolic, allegorical, typological, literal, cultic, and so on, and were determined to go through all of them. Weaker responses tended to assert that only one of these theories could be true, so, for example, if Hosea 1-3 are symbolic, then they cannot have any basis in fact, which is not necessarily the case. Some candidates wrote about feminist interpretations of the Book of Hosea, suggesting that Gomer's point of view is typically ignored by the male-dominated society of the time.

#### Question 7

With the question set here on Amos, many candidates saw the key word 'destruction', and went straight in to a pre-prepared answer to a question asking whether Amos prophesied nothing but doom and destruction, ignoring the key words: "so there was no point to his prophecy". Some answers tended to make simple claims, e.g. that there was a point to Amos' prophecies that Israel could not escape total destruction, because he went on to give words of salvation at the end of the book. The best responses were more subtle. Some suggested that Amos' intercessions were his attempt to persuade God to change his mind; some pointed out that all true prophets spoke God's word, so there *must* have been a point to what he prophesied; some argued that even if destruction was unavoidable, the Israelites needed to be told *why* they were to be destroyed; some agreed that on one level prophecies of destruction were indeed pointless, because history shows that the North was in fact invaded and destroyed. Knowledge of the text of Amos was very good.

#### Question 8

It was important to show knowledge of Isaiah's call narrative, and the historical situation of his day, to make a judgement concerning the relative influence of call and history. Most candidates who were able to attempt this judgement concluded that the call and the history were of equal importance, because each affected the other in Isaiah's mind: the call led him to view historical events in the light of Yahweh's universal power and holiness, and the historical events allowed him to think back to the meaning of his call and to shape his understanding of the Royal Davidic theology.

## Question 9

Responses here were generally very detailed, showing good text knowledge. Occasionally this was a hindrance rather than a help, since weaker responses ended up as lists of what was hopeful in Jeremiah's life and message on the one hand and what was doom-laden on the other. Some candidates exercised great ingenuity in finding hope in the middle of doom, although sometimes that ingenuity stretched credulity too far. The favoured conclusion was that Jeremiah could certainly be described as a prophet of hope, but that there is a bigger emphasis on doom, since doom was what actually transpired.

## Section C

### Question 10

- (a) This was a popular gobbet, although a few confused it with Moses' response to God during his call. Candidates commented well on the nature of Moses' "burden", the similarity with the burden of Elijah, the episode with the seventy elders and the transfer of prophetic ecstasy, and the issue concerning Eldad and Medad. Very few discussed whether or not the passage is anachronistic, despite having referred to that possibility in answering **Question 1**.
- (b) There was much intelligent comment on this gobbet, particularly on Yahweh's attitude to Eli, and the severity of the punishment of Eli's house. One or two referred to the Deuteronomic theme of the sins of the fathers (Eli and his sons) being visited on the children, which was used to justify the exclusion of Abiathar and his family from the priesthood. Most commented well on this being Samuel's call experience, its visionary nature, and Samuel's reluctance to give the details to Eli.
- (c) This was very popular. If candidates discuss the different terminology for prophets and seers they need to show how the discussion affects the gobbet. Quite a few referred to the description of Gad and Amos as seers, the latter in connection with Amaziah's implication that a seer was a paid functionary. Most described the bracketed section as an editorial comment, and suggested that Samuel was, therefore, the first real prophet. Candidates commented on several related details, e.g. the significance of the title, "Man of God"; the appearance of Saul in connection with the lost asses; the meeting with Samuel on the road to the sanctuary, and so on.
- (d) Just about all candidates who answered this question had an in-depth knowledge of the setting. There was much sensitive comment about the personality of Ahab, and the psychological traits he displayed which justified Samuel's earlier concern about Israel adopting a monarchical system. Equally, candidates were perceptive about Jezebel's character balanced against that of Ahab, with the driving force of her personality leading her to attempt the elimination of Yahwism, and compelling Ahab to add the sin of murder to those of covetousness and ignoring the law concerning inheritance.
- (e) Where much of the comment (as with the preceding gobbet) was sensitive and in-depth, some of it became over-generalised, particularly where candidates used it to give an introduction to the Book of Amos as a whole rather than an analysis of these verses in particular. Some candidates commented on the Nazirites and who they were, but not many understood that the reference becomes part of Amos' invective against Israel's social misconduct in inciting the Nazirites to drink wine, together with muffling the voice of prophecy in the land.
- (f) This was a very popular question. It was important to be clear about the identity of Amaziah and about whether Amos was in the north or south of the country. Most were able to comment in detail about whether or not Amos was claiming to be a prophet. Some were aware of the nuances of Amaziah's implication that as a seer, Amos was a paid functionary who had been touting for business where he had no business to be. Only a few were aware of the debate about the tense of Amos' words, e.g. the possibility of translating them in the past tense. Most commented usefully on Amos' background as a dresser of sycamore trees, and what that might imply about his social and economic status.
- (g) This was by no means unpopular, but many answers displayed only a general acquaintance with the extract. Only a few suggested that its background was in the period of the Syro-Ephraimite War (735-733) and its aftermath. There was good discussion of the language of 'revival', with some referring to healing the sick, others to resurrection theology, and others to images of exile and restoration, although none suggested that Hosea might have appropriated the imagery from that of the dying and rising God Baal.

- (h) Comment here was very poetic, reflecting perhaps the power and intensity of Hosea's own language and imagery. Most referred to the deliverance from Egypt, to the father/son motif, to the concept of discipline being part of a father's love for his child, and to the denunciation of Baal worship. Weaker responses simply paraphrased the entire story of Hosea, Gomer and their children.
- (i) Very few candidates attempted this gobbet, so comment would be inappropriate.
- (j) Discussion of this extract was neither detailed nor specific. Some candidates confined their answers to paraphrasing Jeremiah's complaint against the wicked. Very few identified the passage as the first of Jeremiah's personal laments/'confessions', and nobody referred to the form of the material, which is that of the *rib* ('covenant lawsuit') brought by Jeremiah against Yahweh. Discussion of the problem of evil was the focus of most responses, although few explained the theology current in Jeremiah's time, which assumed that the wicked always suffer and the righteous always prosper, which is at the root of Jeremiah's problem. A few commented on the similarity between this kind of material in Jeremiah and the complaints by Job to God in the Book of Job, where both Job and Jeremiah assert their integrity despite the fact of their own suffering.
- (k) As with responses to the previous extract, very few candidates identified this as another of Jeremiah's laments/confessions. The commonest interpretation was for candidates to assume that Yahweh is speaking to the nation, whereas it seems probable that God is replying to Jeremiah's complaints by suggesting that if he utters what is precious rather than what is worthless, then once more Jeremiah will be protected by God. The language of the gobbet emphasizes this assurance: "save ... deliver ... deliver ... redeem". Verse 19 uses a technical phrase about return from exile ("return ... restore"), found also in Job, who does "return" (i.e. he repents his intemperate accusations against God) and who is therefore "restored" with a double restoration (Job 42). God gives Jeremiah no promise of respite from isolation, opposition and other kinds of bad treatment, but there is a promise of constant support. These would be the sort of ideas that could form the basis for a discussion of this passage.

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<p><b>Paper 9011/02</b> <b>The Four Gospels</b></p>
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**Questions 1-7** were the most popular choices but questions on John's Gospel were well covered by those candidates who answered them. **Questions 10-14** were less popular.

Overall performance was down on the previous year. There was less evidence of the appropriate use of scholarly material within the written answers.

## Specific Questions

### Question 1

- (a) A popular question. Candidates recognised the context and made sensible comment about the treatment of Gentiles within the Gospel.
- (b) A popular question with good comment about the Kingdom of Heaven. Candidates recognised that it was found in Matthew's Gospel only and made appropriate comment surrounding it. Some candidates included comment on the theme of giving up everything for the kingdom. Good answers linked this with the parable of the dragnet.
- (c) Good candidates made comment on its inclusion in all three gospels but identified the slight differences. All made some comment on Jesus' relationship with his mother and family and the wider family of those who followed him.
- (d) A very popular question which was well answered. Candidates identified the story with the woman with the flow of blood and set it within the context of the story of Jairus' daughter. A lot of good comment was made about the attitude of the woman and her faith. The awareness by Jesus of his power going from him was expanded upon in many candidates' answers.
- (e) Many candidates used this as an opportunity to recount the story of the temptations and some extended it to a telling of the baptism story also. Some candidates retold the events omitting the necessary comment on the key ideas included in the specific quotation.
- (f) Recognised to be part of the trials narrative, comment was made about Jesus being taken before Herod but there was confusion concerning the appearances before Pilate and Herod. Answers lacked specific comment instead retelling what happened.
- (g) Many candidates talked about the connection between this and the Last Supper. Some included comment about the similarities between Jesus and the story of Moses and the manna. This was not as popular as some of the other gobbets.
- (h) A less popular choice which. Some candidates made no link with the 'I am' discourses therefore relevant comment was restricted. This question needed greater relevance in the answers.

### Question 2

This was a very popular question with candidates giving a lot of relevant comment. Some candidates gave a detailed retelling of the birth of Jesus but failed to then comment upon its significance in later parts of the Gospel. There needs to be a clear understanding of how and where the main themes in the birth story then impact and reoccur throughout the whole Gospel. A lot of the candidates wrote good comments around the inclusion of the genealogy. Little was made of Jesus' title 'Emmanuel' and the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy which are of significance to the understanding of this question.

### Question 3

Answers to this question did not necessarily develop all the specific points which could have been included. There is a lot of material which highlights Matthew's purpose and setting in Christian history which could have been drawn upon. There needed to be mention of the special responsibility and leadership given to Peter, the role played by the Church in the preparation of the eternal kingdom and the authority given to the disciples.

### Question 4

This is always a popular topic which allows candidates to show their knowledge and understanding of the authorship of Mark's Gospel. The majority of answers covered the 'who, where and when' of Mark and made reference to the most popular views.

### Question 5

This was a popular question and brought varying standards of answers. For many it was the opportunity to retell the accounts of the two incidents and some did this in detail. For those who attempted to comment on the significance of these two occurrences the higher levels became available. Good answers attempted to place the confession and the transfiguration within the context of Mark's Gospel.

### Question 6

This question was answered by many candidates but it was important to **examine** and **assess** the way Luke used sources in his Gospel. Some candidates commented upon the themes of Luke rather than the sources. Good essays showed some knowledge of how Luke built up his Gospel as well as attempt to examine the material. A popular question which allowed the more widely read candidates to excel.

### Question 7

This question was very popular and a lot of material around the miracles of Jesus was recounted. The important discussion lay around distinguishing some inconsistency in Luke's theology; wanting to show the miracles as evidence of the kingdom but trying not to have them as revelations of Jesus' power. Few candidates managed to make this point.

### Question 8

The role of John the Baptist was an opportunity for candidates to show their knowledge of his significance. It was important to identify the material specific to John's Gospel. Some took it as an opportunity to write all they knew about the Baptist and his mention in the Gospels. For those who achieved the higher levels the comment rested on the significance of the material found in John. Generally the answers were of a good standard.

### Question 9

Although this question was not widely selected by candidates, for those who did attempt an answer, it was evident that they had good knowledge of this topic and covered much of the material expected.

### Question 10

Discipleship is usually a popular question to answer but this year it did not appear to be so appealing. For those who did attempt it the standard was good and their answers included much of the relevant material.

### Question 11

This question gave candidates the opportunity to discuss the relevant texts and examples around the issue of Jesus being accused of breaking the Sabbath laws. This was generally well answered but it was important that the candidate did not resort to merely telling the stories but made necessary and relevant comment upon the incident and the relationship with the Pharisees.

**Question 12**

This was not a widely selected question. The question presupposes knowledge of the suffering servant material from Isaiah.

**Question 13**

This question caused some confusion. The question demanded a comparison between the various Gospel accounts, not necessarily a reference to all the Gospels. Good candidates made an attempt to discuss the difficulties of the differences the accounts display. It demands a detailed knowledge of various resurrection accounts and not all rolled into one.

**Question 14**

This was not a popular question to answer. Those who did attempt it did so in a very general fashion. For a good response candidates needed to deal with the assessment of the title itself. There is plenty of material to use but much of it has to be unpacked from the varying stories and situations.

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Paper 9011/03  
The Apostolic Age

## General comments

There were some excellent answers to all the questions from candidates who showed a clear understanding of the content and demands of the syllabus. They focused accurately on the question, and some wrote with a remarkable fluency. Answers of this quality require the candidate to show a comprehensive knowledge of the relevant material and also the ability to present it in the form of a well-reasoned and coherent argument.

In the case of the texts set for particular study, which this year were *Acts* and *Galatians*, candidates need to cover the critical questions which arise in their study, and not simply know their general or main themes.

In **Section A Question 1**, the gobbets question, was the most popular, with **Question 3** second. In the case of **Question 1**, (f) was the most popular, whilst the least popular was (c). In **Section B Question 5** was the most popular, closely followed by **Question 7**.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

- (a) One of the more popular gobbets and generally well answered, though a few candidates thought it related to the death of Judas and the appointment of his successor.
- (b) There were several outstanding answers to this gobblet. It was important that candidates referred to the context and to Philip's ministry in Samaria. Some confused the incident with that recorded in Acts 13:5ff involving Paul and Elymas. It was acceptable to comment on Luke's interest in the Holy Spirit and the three Pentecosts he records.
- (c) Most candidates were aware of the context and were able to make some relevant comments. There were also some excellent answers which covered accurately all the points in the mark scheme. Some candidates attributed this statement to James' speech 15:13-21 rather than identifying it as part of the letter recording the decision of the Council.
- (d) While there were some very good answers, this was probably the most challenging of the gobbets with some candidates not recognising the context at all.
- (e) A popular gobblet and generally quite well answered, most candidates showing some knowledge of the problems facing the church(es) in Galatia.
- (f) The most popular of the gobbets. Most of the candidates, who answered it, had some knowledge of Paul's teaching on justification by faith and the superseding of the Mosaic law and circumcision, with the coming of Christ.

#### **Question 2**

This was the least popular of the questions in **Section A**. It is important that candidates read the question. Candidates for this question wrote about the more serious problems which faced the early church, drawing material from both Acts and the Pauline letters but this was not relevant to the question. Most of the relevant material is found in Acts and Galatians, but there is also significant material in other epistles. Among the issues candidates were expected to discuss were the following: The Council of Jerusalem, Paul's visits to Jerusalem, and his attitude to the Law (also Romans).



### Question 3

This was the second most popular question in **Section A**, and most candidates who attempted it showed some knowledge of the issues involved. Several candidates produced answers which were outstanding and showed complete mastery of the relevant facts, supported by clear and cogent arguments in relation to the various theories of modern scholars concerning the date and destination of this letter. The best answers referred accurately to the views of particular scholars. (Reference to modern scholarship was most noticeable in response to this question, and occurred only sporadically elsewhere.)

### Question 4

There were some very good answers to this question. Candidates needed to offer an explanation of the teaching about the Holy Spirit in both texts, attempting to make comparisons between the two. There is a significant amount of teaching that Paul gives in Galatians on the role and work of the Holy Spirit, and this needed to be included in answers to achieve the higher levels. In view of the considerable amount of relevant material candidates were not expected to cover all of it in detail for the higher levels.

### Section B

### Question 5

This was the most popular question in **Section B**, and many candidates were able to explain the centrality of Peter in the early Christian mission. It was important to look at alternative claimants, and to come to a conclusion in relation to the question.

Full discussion was expected of Peter's ministry as recounted by Luke in Acts 1-12 and 15. The question required some comparison between the role and importance of Peter in the early Church and that of other prominent figures such as Paul and James the brother of Jesus. Peter, perhaps mysteriously, disappears from the scene after Acts 15, while Paul takes centre stage, but it is clear from his first letter that he continued to exercise a significant ministry in parts of the Mediterranean world, though Acts is silent about this.

### Question 6

This was a popular question with candidates, and was generally quite well answered, with candidates showing knowledge of the text and understanding of the various problems which threatened the unity of the Church in Corinth.

The higher levels were given to any well argued case, though it would appear that almost the whole of Paul's teaching on the unity of the Church in 1 Corinthians reflects particular problems the Church faced largely as a result of its pagan environment.

### Question 7

Most candidates knew why Paul's standing and authority were questioned especially in relation to his past life, and the fact that he was not one of the original disciples of Jesus. More able candidates were able to identify other reasons why Paul's authority as an apostle was challenged, and comment fully on how Paul defended himself against all these charges.

### Question 8

This was the least popular question in the paper. While there were one or two good answers, not many candidates tackled it in any depth, and some of those who did displayed a general and vague understanding of what was being asked. Some were under the impression that Paul was the author of this letter. It was important that candidates looked at images and ideas from both the Old Testament and other sources such as Philo and Platonism.

### Question 9

This was a fairly popular question, with several excellent answers from candidates, who showed a good understanding of the balance of the argument about the nature of the Epistle of James. Most candidates seemed to understand what was being asked. It was important to have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the text to be able to answer the question in depth. Credit was given for the discussion of the authorship, purpose, position or identity of James, his possible conflict with Paul, etc., provided the material was handled in a manner relevant to the question.

### Question 10

This was another fairly popular question, which produced several good answers. Generally the main problems which followed the conversion of Gentiles were well understood. It was important, for the higher levels, to explain how the leaders of the early Church sought to resolve them as well as what the problems were. Candidates need to read the question carefully, this was not a general question about the problems which the leaders of the early Church faced, and so material from the early chapters of Acts such as the arrest of Peter and John following the healing of the crippled beggar in Acts 3, and Peter's confrontation with Ananias and Sapphira was irrelevant.

For the higher levels candidates were expected to answer both parts of the question and cover the following points: the entry requirements for admission to the Church; the acceptance of Gentiles provoked furious opposition from conservative Jews; moral and ethical problems as a result of their pagan background; the influence of ideas from Greek philosophy; the Council of Jerusalem and the development of Paul's theological foundation for the admission of Gentiles. Credit was given to those who referred to the problem of the historicity of the account of the Council of Jerusalem in Acts.