



Cambridge O Level

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (BIBLE KNOWLEDGE)

2048/22

Paper 2 The Portrayal of the Birth of the Early Church

October/November 2023

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 80

Published

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

Cambridge International will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

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This document consists of **16** printed pages.

Generic Marking Principles

These general marking principles must be applied by all examiners when marking candidate answers. They should be applied alongside the specific content of the mark scheme or generic level descriptors for a question. Each question paper and mark scheme will also comply with these marking principles.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 1:

Marks must be awarded in line with:

- the specific content of the mark scheme or the generic level descriptors for the question
- the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the generic level descriptors for the question
- the standard of response required by a candidate as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 2:

Marks awarded are always **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 3:

Marks must be awarded **positively**:

- marks are awarded for correct/valid answers, as defined in the mark scheme. However, credit is given for valid answers which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme, referring to your Team Leader as appropriate
- marks are awarded when candidates clearly demonstrate what they know and can do
- marks are not deducted for errors
- marks are not deducted for omissions
- answers should only be judged on the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar when these features are specifically assessed by the question as indicated by the mark scheme. The meaning, however, should be unambiguous.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 4:

Rules must be applied consistently, e.g. in situations where candidates have not followed instructions or in the application of generic level descriptors.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 5:

Marks should be awarded using the full range of marks defined in the mark scheme for the question (however; the use of the full mark range may be limited according to the quality of the candidate responses seen).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 6:

Marks awarded are based solely on the requirements as defined in the mark scheme. Marks should not be awarded with grade thresholds or grade descriptors in mind.

Question	Answer		Marks
Level descriptors for 2048 AO1 (Knowledge and Understanding)			
Level	Mark	Level Descriptor	
4	6	A thorough, well-developed and substantial response. A comprehensive account of the range and depth of relevant material demonstrating an extensive and highly accurate knowledge and understanding of the subject. There is detailed explanation. The answer is well structured.	
3	4–5	Demonstrates a clear understanding of the question. The information is quite detailed. Generally accurate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter. Covers the main points accurately. The information is in a structured format.	
2	2–3	Demonstrates some understanding of the question. A fair, mainly relevant but generally undeveloped response. The candidate demonstrates some factual knowledge and understanding, which is fairly accurate but may lack specific detail. Some of the main points are covered but lack substance. The information will be presented for the most part in a structured format.	
1	1	An attempt to answer the question, but demonstrates little understanding of the question. Very limited knowledge of the subject. Response includes only a small amount of relevant material. Information is reported in basic outline only or as a list, with little or no explanation. Mainly inaccurate, though some credible points may be made.	
0	0	No attempt whatsoever to answer the set question, or the candidate provides a wholly irrelevant response.	

Question	Answer		Marks
AO2 (Evaluation)			
Level	Mark	Level Descriptor	
4	7–8	Recognises and explains the significance of the issue(s). A personal response is fully supported. A range of points of view supported by justified arguments/discussion. The information is presented in a clear and organised way. Evidence of informed insights.	
3	5–6	Understands the significance of the question. Seeks to move clearly beyond a purely descriptive approach. Justified arguments/different points of view supported by some discussion. Evidence of appropriate personal response. Some evidence of informed insights.	
2	3–4	Understands the question but the response is mainly descriptive. Only one view offered with limited support or discussion. Limited or no evidence of informed insights.	
1	1–2	The candidate's response is descriptive with no attempt to discuss or evaluate the material at all. Viewpoints are unsupported.	
0	0	No response submitted, or clearly lacks any understanding whatsoever of the subject matter.	

Question	Answer	Marks
1(a)	<p>Describe community life in the early church.</p> <p>Examiners should mark according to the AO1 levels of response.</p> <p>Candidates might focus on Acts 2:42–47; 4:32–35 or make more general comments.</p> <p>Acts describes community life as one of things being in common. Possessions and money are shared – property and possessions are sold and given to those in need or laid at the feet of the apostles.</p> <p>Times of prayer and the breaking of bread are done in community and there is a sense of real harmony and worship of God.</p> <p>The apostles oversee this community with the help of other leaders (e.g. the Seven). They also are responsible for discipline (e.g. Ananias and Sapphira).</p>	6
1(b)	<p>Explain what Christians today might learn from the lives of the early Christians.</p> <p>Examiners should mark according to the AO1 levels of response.</p> <p>The early church was structured in a way very different to most communities today. Modern Christians might be drawn to the faithful focus on prayer and the breaking of bread (Communion) and communal worship and life. They might suggest that a true community should be modelled on greater sharing.</p> <p>They might also feel that some Christians today should submit more to the authority of church leaders. Relevant examples could be given.</p> <p>Some candidates might suggest that Christians can be inspired by the charitable work of the early church. Christians only lived off the basics and the rest was used to give to people in need.</p>	6

Question	Answer	Marks
1(c)	<p>‘Knowing how the early church lived is more important than knowing what they taught.’</p> <p>To what extent do you agree? Show in your answer that you have considered more than one point of view.</p> <p>Examiners should mark according to the AO2 levels of response.</p> <p>Responses might include some of the following points:</p> <p>To agree: candidates might say that modern Christians can learn a lot more from the lifestyle of the early church than from preaching in a context that is not relevant to today. They might say that the early church is likely to model themselves on the sort of community that Jesus wanted, and it is important to try to return to this.</p> <p>To disagree: candidates could argue that the church today is on a far greater scale and so community life is bound to be different. However, what is not different are the fundamental teachings found in Acts about the resurrection and the nature of Jesus.</p> <p>Some candidates might argue that we need to know every aspect of the early church in order to understand modern Christianity and its context.</p>	8

Question	Answer	Marks
2(a)	<p>Outline <u>one</u> occasion in the Acts of the Apostles where an apostle was arrested.</p> <p>Examiners should mark according to the AO1 levels of response, referring to the full Biblical account where required.</p> <p>Candidates should outline one of the following passages:</p> <p>4:1–22 – Peter and John are arrested for their actions in the temple and for proclaiming the resurrection. They are brought to the Sanhedrin and are questioned. Peter’s speech questions whether they are objecting to an act of kindness and explains that this comes from God. The Jewish leaders were astounded and eventually set them free.</p> <p>5:17–24 – following a number of healings and their popularity growing, the apostles were arrested and released by an angel of the Lord who instructed them to stand in the temple courts and to teach.</p> <p>12:1–11 – Peter is arrested by Herod and an angel frees him. The chains fall off his wrists and the angel instructs him to put on his clothes and sandals and then leads him away from the prison.</p> <p>16:16–34 – Paul is arrested (with Silas) after an exorcism. They are carefully locked up by the jailer but released by an earthquake. The jailer is saved from suicide and comes to believe; his whole household is converted.</p>	6
2(b)	<p>Explain why the message of the early church often brought trouble to those who delivered it.</p> <p>Examiners should mark according to the AO1 levels of response.</p> <p>Candidates might talk in general terms about how the bringing of a new set of beliefs is always likely to challenge audiences and where threat is perceived, they are likely to end up in conflict.</p> <p>They might observe that the message of Jesus was perhaps particularly threatening to the Jews because it was a continuation of their own beliefs and also threatened to uproot their political and social structures.</p> <p>Candidates might discuss how the mission to the gentiles caused unrest where the ethical beliefs and actions of the apostles was perceived as threatening (e.g. the exorcism of the slave girl).</p> <p>When the apostles were preaching, the reaction of the crowd often led to civil unrest due to the excitement they brought, and this would have led to reactions from the authorities.</p>	6

Question	Answer	Marks
2(c)	<p>‘Christians today need to be willing to suffer for their beliefs.’</p> <p>To what extent do you agree? Show in your answer that you have considered more than one point of view.</p> <p>Examiners should mark according to the AO2 levels of response.</p> <p>Candidates might include some of the following points:</p> <p>To agree: some candidates might suggest that it is important for every Christian to have faith strong enough to be prepared to pay a price, especially given the example set by Jesus, in order to show the courage of conviction their faith brings. Candidates might point to specific areas of the world where there is still the possibility of punishment for holding beliefs that are Christian.</p> <p>To disagree: the situation in the church today is so different that there is no need for imprisonment or martyrdom in the same way. Society in the twenty-first century also does not have so much of a culture of death. A fundamental human right now is the freedom of belief and expression. Also, as most people have heard the basics of the Christian message, there is no need for such public displays of preaching that might lead to suffering.</p> <p>Some candidates might focus on the difference between having to defend faith robustly and suffering. Others may explore the idea that self-denial is a common practice in Christianity and comes from core Christian beliefs.</p>	8

Question	Answer	Marks
3(a)	<p>Outline the encounter between Philip and the Ethiopian.</p> <p>Examiners should mark according to the AO1 levels of response.</p> <p>Acts 8:26–40</p> <p>Philip was led by an angel to the road from Jerusalem to Gaza and there met an important Ethiopian eunuch who was in charge of the Queen’s treasures. He was on his way to Jerusalem to worship and was reading from Isaiah.</p> <p>Philip asked the Ethiopian if he understood what he was reading, and the eunuch replied that he needed someone to explain it. So, Philip explained to him about the prophecy of the lamb led to slaughter and how it related to the good news of Jesus.</p> <p>They travelled together and the eunuch said, ‘Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptised?’ So, Philip baptised him and as he came out of the waters, he was taken to another place.</p>	6
3(b)	<p>Explain the importance of the Scriptures in the Acts of the Apostles.</p> <p>Examiners should mark according to the AO1 levels of response.</p> <p>Throughout Acts, the importance of understanding Jesus as the fulfilment of the Scriptures is seen. Philip’s encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch is an example of one place where Jesus is shown to be the fulfilment of Scripture. The centrality of this message is demonstrated as, even from the choosing of Matthias in chapter 1, the Scriptures are central to the story.</p> <p>In a number of speeches, the speaker (e.g. Peter or Stephen or Paul) explains how Jesus is the natural continuation from the events of the Old Testament. This is of particular importance for Jewish audiences who needed to see how Jesus was the promised Jewish Messiah.</p> <p>It is only with reference to the Scriptures that decisions were made to broaden the mission to the gentiles and so the authority of the Scriptures is also clearly seen in Acts.</p>	6

Question	Answer	Marks
3(c)	<p>‘Stories about supernatural happenings should not have been included in the Acts of the Apostles.’</p> <p>To what extent do you agree? Show in your answer that you have considered more than one point of view.</p> <p>Examiners should mark according to the AO2 levels of response.</p> <p>Response might include some of the following points:</p> <p>To agree: Supernatural happenings are rare in life for ordinary people and so for them to be included in Acts suggests that they are more frequent and more relevant to everyday Christians than they actually are.</p> <p>To disagree: Acts is meant to be an historical record of what happened in the early church. It also shows the power of God and the influence of the Holy Spirit at work in the church. There is no reason only for Acts to have given part of the message.</p> <p>Some candidates might observe that the supernatural happenings in Acts are reflective of a first-century view of science and so we should not read Acts with twenty-first century eyes.</p>	8

Question	Answer	Marks
4(a)	<p>Outline the debate between the believers at the Council of Jerusalem.</p> <p>Examiners should mark according to the AO1 levels of response.</p> <p>Acts 15:5–21</p> <p>On one side, the Pharisees were teaching ‘The gentiles must be circumcised and required to keep the law of Moses’.</p> <p>Peter reminded everyone that God had spoken through him to the gentiles and that God had given the Holy Spirit to the gentiles without discrimination. Peter argued that forcing the law of Moses onto them was an unnecessary yoke: salvation comes by the grace of the Lord Jesus.</p> <p>Paul and Barnabas also talked about their work among the gentiles.</p> <p>James referred to the Scriptures and came to the final judgment that it should not be made difficult for the gentiles to turn to God and they should be able to abstain from certain customs.</p>	6
4(b)	<p>Explain the significance of the Council of Jerusalem in the Acts of the Apostles.</p> <p>Examiners should mark according to the AO1 levels of response.</p> <p>The Council sits at a key turning point in Acts and signifies a change of emphasis from a mainly Jewish focus to a broad focus. From here on, the missionary work of Paul will be central to the narrative.</p> <p>Theologically, it clarifies that the gentiles do not need to be circumcised – thus, Christianity is not seen as a part of Judaism but as a separate faith.</p> <p>It sets out key guidelines for gentile Christians to follow – not eating food polluted by idols etc. but also shows that the focus is on the work of the Holy Spirit and grace.</p> <p>It demonstrates key leaders of different aspects of the church: the Pharisaic group, Peter, Paul and Barnabas and ultimately James.</p>	6

Question	Answer	Marks
4(c)	<p>‘After the Council of Jerusalem, Paul became the leader of the early church.’</p> <p>To what extent do you agree? Show in your answer that you have considered more than one point of view.</p> <p>Examiners should mark according to the AO2 levels of response.</p> <p>Response may include some of the following points:</p> <p>To agree: we see the book of Acts focusing almost entirely on Paul after this point. The message of Acts is clear: Paul is the reason for the church spreading in the way that it does. Due to Paul’s mission to the gentiles and the Council’s emphasis that the gentiles are welcome, Paul becomes the obvious leader of the church.</p> <p>To disagree: there is nothing to suggest that Paul becomes a leader of the church. He does not base himself in Jerusalem and an event that made Paul the leader would have been recorded in Acts. Indeed, Paul is sent to Antioch, rather than deciding for himself to go.</p> <p>Some candidates might suggest that Paul is a symbolic leader in some way but James remains the ultimate leader in Jerusalem.</p>	8

Question	Answer	Marks
5(a)	<p>Give an account of Paul’s visit to Berea (<u>RSV</u> Beroea).</p> <p>Examiners should mark according to the AO1 levels of response.</p> <p>Acts 17:10–15</p> <p>Paul and Silas were sent to Berea from Thessalonica by night. On arriving, they went to the Jewish synagogue. The Jews there were more noble than those in Thessalonica: they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said might be true.</p> <p>This led to a number of them believing along with a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.</p> <p>The Jews in Thessalonica found out that Paul was preaching there, and some went along, agitating the crowds and stirring them up. The believers sent Paul to the coast, leaving Silas and Timothy in Berea.</p>	6
5(b)	<p>Explain how Paul’s experiences in Berea (<u>RSV</u> Beroea) and Thessalonica were similar <u>and</u> how they were different.</p> <p>Examiners should mark according to the AO1 levels of response.</p> <p>It is clear from the passage that the Jews in Thessalonica opposed Paul from the way they tried to disrupt proceedings in Berea.</p> <p>Those that opposed him in Thessalonica were more prominent about it. They were jealous and took a violent approach. They blamed Jason for the trouble and accused him of defying Caesar’s decrees. Any that opposed him in Berea stayed quiet about it.</p> <p>The experiences were similar because Paul needed to be escorted out of the areas for his own protection. They are also similar because the message that Paul brought had good impact and persuaded a number of gentiles – both men and women. Jews were also persuaded in both places but there seems to be more eagerness in Berea.</p>	6

Question	Answer	Marks
5(c)	<p>‘Paul spent too much time preaching to the Jews.’</p> <p>To what extent do you agree? Show in your answer that you have considered more than one point of view.</p> <p>Examiners should mark according to the AO2 levels of response.</p> <p>Response might include some of the following:</p> <p>To agree: The Jews had many opportunities to hear the message, most notably from reading their own Scriptures. They did not need as much attention as the gentiles because they already believed the fundamentals and just needed to have the place of Jesus in their story explained to them. They also were often more unwelcoming than the gentiles and so in rejecting Paul or his message, they gave up the chance to be preached to.</p> <p>To disagree: Paul’s focus was clearly on the gentiles and the wider spread of the church. He worked with Jews wherever he went, usually starting in the synagogue before going wider. This was a good balance and ensured he had a basic welcome as well as remembering his own roots, not to mention Christianity’s roots.</p> <p>Some candidates might suggest that Paul did not spend enough time preaching to the Jews – had he preached to them more, they would not have been so violent in their opposition at times, and he would have been safer.</p>	8

Question	Answer	Marks
6(a)	<p>Outline the role of women in the Acts of the Apostles.</p> <p>Examiners should mark according to the AO1 levels of response.</p> <p>Some candidates might point to the role of women as key ‘behind the scenes’ supporters in many parts of Acts. Their supportive presence is always welcomed from the gathering in the upper room onwards.</p> <p>However, Acts seems to make an effort to demonstrate the particular importance of women in the story of the early church. Women are not just wives – they make the choice for themselves to become Christians and not just to follow their husbands (e.g. Lydia).</p> <p>Women also seem to be assumed as equals and often seem to have prominent positions, even as leaders of house churches in Acts.</p>	6
6(b)	<p>Explain why some people think the Acts of the Apostles is not an accurate history book.</p> <p>Examiners should mark according to the AO1 levels of response.</p> <p>Although Acts is presented as an accurate account, it is clear that some of the author’s special interests come through, such as the ministry to women, and so the stories included are skewed to include this. It is not necessary, for example, to go into the detail of Rhoda leaving Peter outside the door.</p> <p>It is also clear that some of Paul’s missionary journeys only have some key elements mentioned and with the focus on Paul, there is likely to be some bias.</p> <p>Some argue that the key aim of Luke was to show that salvation history has continued and that the church has spread from Jerusalem to the end of the earth. It is designed to be a theology book, not a history book.</p>	6

Question	Answer	Marks
6(c)	<p>‘Women in the Acts of the Apostles have much to teach Christians today.’</p> <p>To what extent do you agree? Show in your answer that you have considered more than one point of view.</p> <p>Examiners should mark according to the AO2 levels of response.</p> <p>Answers might include some of the following points:</p> <p>To agree: women as quiet leaders in the church can teach women who are members of churches that have a male leadership that there are roles for all in Christianity. The women in Acts also are excellent role models for any person, but especially women, who might think that the Gospels, for example, don’t have enough female figures in them.</p> <p>To disagree: we do not know enough about women in Acts to learn much about them. They appear in isolated incidents, very differently to the key characters, such as Paul or Peter.</p> <p>Some candidates might suggest that as women are treated as absolute equals to men in Acts, they have no more or less to teach than the male additional characters.</p>	8