



General Certificate of Education

Religious Studies 5061

**Unit RS02 An introduction to the Old
Testament**

Report on the Examination

2007 examination – January series

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RS02 An introduction to the Old Testament

General comments

There was a small entry for this unit, but a full range of marks was seen. There was generally appropriate use of the Biblical text.

Question 1

The two parts of this question focussed on the differing views of the future held by the people at the time of Amos, and Amos himself. This focus was clearly indicated in the stimulus, as well as in the questions. There were some good answers to both parts, although some answers tended to be rather general, for instance, stating in part (a) that the people thought that the future would be good because it was a time of prosperity without any reference to the idea of 'election'. In both parts, some candidates made good reference to the 'Day of the Lord', but there was a lack of clear reference to this in some answers. In part (b), the best answers were able to comment on positive, as well as negative views of the future.

Question 2 (a)

Generally, this question was answered well, with candidates able to comment on the characteristics of prophets and illustrate them with reference to both Samuel and Amos. A small number of candidates appeared not to have studied Samuel. These candidates referred to the text on the 'call' of Samuel, and attempted to extrapolate relevant material. A few gave prepared answers on 'types of prophet' which lacked specific reference to the particular prophets, and such responses could gain limited marks. Equally, for the few who did not deal with both prophets, there was a ceiling on the number of marks that could be awarded.

Question 2 (b)

The AO1 element here was generally well done. The question asked for the characteristics of a prophet which the stories showed, and some did this very well, although a few ventured into unnecessary narrative about Elijah, rather than focussing on the demands of the question. The AO2 part of the question required assessment of the appropriateness of the broad term 'prophet' to the three prophets who had been discussed. There were some good answers, although many tended to be rather one-sided, failing to look at both sides of the argument. Marks were thus limited.

Question 3 (a)

This question involved the concept of Covenant as found in the material on Abraham. When questions are worded in this way, it is important that candidates look at both the concept under discussion, and the context demanded by the question. A number of candidates here gave some good accounts of Covenant material in the Abraham traditions but failed to 'examine the concept of covenant' by giving basic definitions and explanations, and thus lost themselves valuable marks. There were, however, some good responses to this part.

Question 3 (b)(i)

This was generally quite well done, although there were some candidates who gave unnecessary narrative about the Sinai events and either failed to address the main points, or wrote at too great a length and thus penalised themselves by not leaving time to address b(ii).

Question 3 (b)(ii)

There were some good ideas here, some candidates arguing, for example, that the personal nature of the Covenant with Abraham provided a better illustration of Covenant, or that the 'legalistic' nature of the Covenant with Moses provided the better illustration. As with the AO2 element of Question 2, however, too many of these answers really failed to weigh up both sides to produce a balanced argument. This was disappointing, especially when it was clear that the candidates had the capacity to do so. A small but significant number of candidates seemed not to understand the phrase 'traditions about' and read this as 'customs/rituals associated with'. At this level, such language should be understood by candidates.