

Biblical Hebrew

ADVANCED GCE **H417**

ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY GCE **H017**

Report on the Units

June 2009

H017/H417/MS/R/09

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This report on the Examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the syllabus content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

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F191 Translation; comprehension and literature

Although the majority of candidates translated at least competently the result often needed polishing.

The following specific points listed by question number might prove useful:

SECTION A: Unprepared translation and comprehension

- 1ai) Few candidates understood that the proposition על, in the context of lines 1 and 2, meant 'against'.
- 1aii) Many candidates failed to realise that the *piel* verb ברך (as used in lines 7 and 11) was to be understood privatively and therefore to be translated as 'curse' (and not 'bless').
- 1c) Many candidates could not fathom Job's wife's attitude.
- 1e) Candidates often could not account for the changed pointing of a *Lamed -Alef* verb (חטא) (line 12) in the perfect tense.
- 1fi,ii) Most candidates realized that ויועדו (line 14) was a verb in the *nifal* conjugation, but few understood its interactive use, i.e. 'they made an appointment', 'they arranged [amongst themselves]', 'they met [together]'.
- 1g) Although candidates found suggesting meanings for עור בעד עור (line 6) difficult, any intelligent response was accepted.
- 1i) Surprisingly, some candidates did not understand what was meant by 'parallelism'.

SECTION B: Literature (Questions 2- 4)

Question 2

This was the least popular question, although those who attempted it answered well.

- 2a) About half the candidates choosing this question did not answer simply that the man's mother was an Israelite woman.
- 2b) Candidates dropped a mark by not explaining the use of the *niphal* in וינצו (line 2)
- 2h) Although the translation of נפש (line 11) was well tackled, not enough candidates supported the argument or offered exegesis.
- 2i) Candidates struggled initially to find how to start their answers about the importance of dates and times in Levitical legislation but, once they had hit upon an answer plan, they managed to gain most of the marks available.

Question 3

All candidates chose this question and generally did well with it, although the following points would have helped them to do better:

- 3bi) Candidates ignored or forgot to translate בלט .
- 3bii) Candidates were expected to point out that לבלתי not merely negates but is used together with the Infinitive Construct
- 3c) The meaning of וישטע (line 10), as 'rending a strip' off those of David's men who would have had him use his opportunity to kill Saul, eluded a good number of candidates.
- 3d) It should be noted that the regular construction of the verb קרא governing its indirect object is קרא אחרי : ל , אל , על and not the construction used here .
- 3g) The form of the word דין (line 21) was not appreciated . Candidates could have gained the mark by noting that its pattern indicated a person engaged in a professional activity on the lines of ציד (hunter) or סבל (porter). Observing that the dagesh helped to preserve the short vowel under the initial letter would also have given the mark.
- 3h) Most candidates could not adequately demonstrate what poetic language was used in this prose passage. Examples that would have gained marks include 'your eyes have seen' (line 14), 'see the hem of your robe...that I cut off the corner of your robe...' (lines 15 and 16), and 'out of the wicked comes wickedness' (lines 19 and 20).

Question 4

This was well-answered.

Questions where many candidates lost marks were:

- bi) where they ignored or forgot (לנפשמ), in line 14 in their set passage
- bii) where they had to point out that לבלתי (line 5) not merely negates but is used with the Infinitive Construct and
- eii) explaining why Judeans were then called both Yehudi and 'Ivri (line3)
- 4h) Some candidates did not fully understand the implication of this question. Candidates should be encouraged to plan their responses, otherwise they tend to ramble and answer in an incoherent manner.

Candidates need to realise that, in all sections requiring comment or discussion, it is not the length of their answers, but well-reasoned, and occasionally ingenious, responses supported by citation and argument which will earn them the highest marks. If they give evidence of having understood and given thought to the material, rather than having simply memorised translation by rote, this will be reflected in the grade attained.

Grade Thresholds

Advanced GCE Biblical Hebrew (H017 H417)
June 2009 Examination Series

Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
F191	Raw	100	75	66	57	48	39	0
	UMS	200	160	140	120	100	80	0

Specification Aggregation Results

Overall threshold marks in UMS (ie after conversion of raw marks to uniform marks)

	Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
H017	200	160	140	120	100	80	0

The cumulative percentage of candidates awarded each grade was as follows:

	A	B	C	D	E	U	Total Number of Candidates
H017	50.0	83,3	100	100	100	100	6

6 candidates aggregated this series

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see:
http://www.ocr.org.uk/learners/ums_results.html

Statistics are correct at the time of publication.

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