

Religious Studies

Advanced GCE

Unit **G584**: New Testament

Mark Scheme for June 2011

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- 1 With reference to the texts you have studied, examine the theological significance of the healing miracles in Mark's gospel. [35]**

AO1. The prescribed texts are:

The Man with an Unclean Spirit, Jesus heals many at Simon's house, Jesus Cleanses a Leper, Jesus heals a Paralytic, Jesus and Beelzebul, the Gerasene Demoniac, A girl restored to life and a woman healed.

Candidates might outline first century Jewish concepts of illness and the links to sin and demon possession. Knowledge of some Old Testament miracles and the first century miracle workers such as Honi the Circle Drawer and Hanina Ben Dosa might be helpful in explaining the context of miracles at the time of Jesus.

Answers might explain the theological purpose of the healing miracles in Mark as indications of the power and presence of God in healings and exorcisms. Candidates might show awareness of scholarly discussions about Jesus' role as healer and exorcist, with reference to the set texts.

AO2 Analysis of the miracles in Mark might assess the ways in which they reveal the nature of Jesus' divinity and yet also continue Mark's theme of the messianic secret. There is secrecy in some healings, as in the cleansing of the Leper and then an open challenge to the Pharisees and a declaration about the Son of Man forgiving sins in the healing of the Paralytic etc.

Candidates might identify a number of theological themes from the evidence of the text e.g. the conflict between good and evil, demons, sin and sickness, The Kingdom, authentication of Jesus, universalism etc. and offer concluding views as to their significance.

- 2 Assess the view that the gospels do not present us with the historical Jesus. [35]**

AO1 Candidates might explain that within the genre of gospel writing and the church the person of Jesus has been predominantly presented as the Christ of faith but within modern scholarship there has been a quest to discover the historical Jesus and distinguish between the two.

Some candidates might quote Wrede and the messianic secret as a good example of this movement to discover what can be known about the historical Jesus and the criteria for establishing historical Jesus traditions in the text, multiple attestations etc. Also Schweitzer's views of Jesus as final prophet might be discussed.

Some candidates might explain some of the purposes and the agenda of the gospel writers in their presentation of Jesus.

AO2 Candidates might examine whether the purposes and agenda of the gospel writers distorted historical truth.

An assessment of the extent to which the Christ of faith in the gospels is an historical figure might make use of evidence from modern scholarship in its quest to prove Jesus to be both Jewish and yet distinctive from Judaism, as in the work of Sanders and Vermes.

Some candidates might examine the view that the historical Jesus became the revealed Christ of faith because of his distinctiveness from Judaism.

3 Critically examine Luke's theology of salvation history. [35]

AO1 Candidates are likely to begin by outlining some background to the authorship and purpose of Luke and his special interest in salvation history and the Gentiles.

Candidates might use evidence from some of the prescribed texts on Luke to explain the significance of the parables on inclusion/exclusion, repentance and forgiveness, wealth and responsibility. Also, the significant emphasis in the teachings on the Kingdom of God and the healing of the Centurion's Servant, in the light of Luke's special interest in sinners, outcasts and gentiles, might be discussed.

AO2 In evaluation, evidence from texts and commentators' views of the ways, in which Luke develops his theology throughout his gospel might be used to assess how controversial his themes of universalism and inclusivity would have been.

Some candidates might argue that his intended audience (Greeks/Gentiles) might have more readily embraced his theology than a Jewish audience and that universalism and inclusivity have a strong appeal today.

4 'The problem of the delay of the Parousia adds to the confusion about Jesus' teaching on the Kingdom of God.' Discuss. [35]

AO1 Candidates are likely to explain what is meant by Parousia and Kingdom of God in terms of apocalyptic and eschatological belief at the time of Jesus.

Candidates might explain that the Kingdom of God was central to Jesus' teaching and the focus of many of his parables. As well as direct teachings about the Christian apocalypse, the exorcism of demons were signs of the breaking in of the Kingdom.

Some responses might include scholars' views and interpretations of Jesus' teachings on the Kingdom and illustrate their answer with examples from the gospels where there appears to be confusion as to when the Kingdom might be realised. With interpretations of sayings such as 'the Kingdom of God is within you'/'the Kingdom of God is come upon you', or, evidence of a future Kingdom etc.

AO2 Some candidates might argue that the delay of the Parousia was only a concern of the early church and to a lesser extent the gospel writers themselves. This might have meant that what appear to be confused teachings are the product of redactors attempting to impose a time scale on the Kingdom or revise Jesus' sayings.

However, it might be argued that the confusion may lie with Jesus himself and the content of his teaching or with the purposes and agenda of the different gospel writers.

Some might argue that if Jesus taught a 'now but not yet' eschatology then there is no confusion but rather a different emphasis on two aspects of his teaching.

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