

# DIVINITY

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<p><b>Paper 9011/12</b> <b>Prophets of the Old Testament</b></p>
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## Key messages

There are two key messages this year. The first is that the subject knowledge of many candidates is very detailed. For most of the questions, answers displayed a detailed knowledge of the relevant texts of the Old Testament and showed an equally impressive knowledge of the views of various scholars on the passages and themes set for study. In this respect, achievement is developing year on year.

Second, time-management is an issue for many candidates, in that answers to the first three questions attempted were often so detailed that not enough time was left to give full attention to a fourth question. This applied mainly, but by no means exclusively, to those who answered **Question 10** last. Where writing detailed answers is a good thing, over-lengthy essays can include material that is irrelevant and/or not thought through clearly. In other words, candidates should make every effort to spread their time evenly over the four questions selected.

## General comments

With gobblet questions, many candidates identify passages (particularly the 'gobbets') as having been the work of the editors/redactors of J, E, D & P; however, the 4-source theory was developed in connection with the Pentateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers & Deuteronomy), whereas some candidates apply it to all or most of the prophetic books they refer to. For example, every use of the divine name Yhwh must refer to the J (Yahwistic) source, which is simply not true. Most candidates could gain more marks by concentrating on the context and meaning of each passage.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

This was a very popular question, but raises an issue of some importance, since some candidates saw the names 'Moses' and 'Samuel' and simply wrote everything they knew about both prophets. The key words in the question were '*greater influence*', which was often taken to mean 'who was the most important?', which is a different question. Some of the best answers argued that Moses' 'influence' on Israelite prophecy centred around Moses receiving the Law on Sinai, then becoming the model for all future prophets, particularly those who took their stand on Israel's obedience to the Mosaic covenant. Further, Samuel's claim to a greater influence on Israelite prophecy was argued to rest on the thesis that the story of Moses is an anachronistic invention, and that Samuel was actually the first prophet, whose prime function was to anoint the first two kings of Israel, thus empowering future prophets to act as advisers to kings.

#### **Question 2**

This was also a popular question. Most referred to: Elijah's ability to do the miraculous, such as raising the widow's son from death; Elijah's attack on the worship of Baal and Asherah and the contest on Mount Carmel; his defence of social justice in the case of Ahab, Jezebel and Naboth concerning Naboth's vineyard; and his general stance as a prophet taking his stand on the Law of Moses. Some could have achieved more marks by showing what Elijah 'achieved' through his various actions rather than merely listing what Elijah did; for example he achieved the status of a miracle-worker/he re-established Yahweh-worship in place of the worship of Baal and Asherah/he became an iconic figure representing prophecy in Judaism.

### Question 3

This was answered by a relatively small number of candidates. Again, some could have gained more marks by carefully considering the wording of the question, since one common issue with answers to it was that symbolic acts were simply described, without reference to their 'effectiveness.' Most referred to the symbolic acts of Jeremiah and to the marriage of Hosea. Some of the best answers wrote effectively on the symbolic nature of that marriage, pointing out that there is still no agreement on the nature of the symbolism, unless it is simply that any such story can have deep meaning for different people in different circumstances.

### Question 4

This was the least popular question, although answers to it were generally reasonable. Some insisted that prophets were always under God's control, although it was pointed out by some that it could hardly be the case with Jeremiah when he was cursing the day of his birth. One of the strongest approaches to the question was to limit the answer to the phenomenon of false prophecy, arguing that false prophets inevitably did what the question entails – they invented their 'prophecies'. Again, this argument was set in the context of Jeremiah's view of false prophets (ch. 23), where the prophet argues that had these prophets stood in Yahweh's council, they would have proclaimed God's words to the people rather than their own.

### Question 5

Most candidates took the line that it is impossible to be sure of the origin of prophetic ecstasy. The general starting point was with instances of ecstatic-type behaviour among prophets elsewhere in the Ancient Near East. Most referred to the story of Wen-Amon (c. 1100 BCE) and the court official who appears to have gone into a prophetic seizure. Some suggested that this implies an origin for the phenomenon in the Ancient Near East in general, with the implication that prophetic ecstasy in Israel was one brand of this phenomenon. The role of ecstasy was seen by most candidates as being a mode of mental activity by which Yahweh inspired his prophets to give prophetic oracles. Most discussed the narrative in Numbers 11, which is often seen as describing the origins of prophetic ecstasy through Moses.

### Question 6

This was the most popular question. Consensus of opinion was that Amos' concern for social justice was indeed the most important part of his message. Other major themes are present in the book, including concerns about Israel's religious sins, the oracles against the surrounding nations, and the oracles of doom; but most argued that these other themes are still based on the need for social justice. Knowledge of social sins was very detailed, although quite a few got tangled up in the identity and punishment of the 'cows of Bashan'. Some could have gained more marks by writing less, thereby taking time to develop an argument.

### Question 7

As with **Question 6**, answers to **Question 7** brought out a range of different theories about the nature of the material. Opinion was divided as to whether Hosea's experiences with Gomer in the first three chapters of the book are merely an imaginary story with a point to it, or else reflect some real facts about Hosea and Gomer. The consensus was that unless the text is rooted in the experiences of real people, the story loses much of its force. Most argued that Hosea was a real person, not least because the start of the book lists him as the 'son of Beeri', which seems to suggest that Hosea and Gomer, and therefore Beeri also, were real people, and that the experiences described in the book are real.

### Question 8

Answers to this varied in quality depending on the material selected from the Book of Jeremiah. Some of the strongest answers looked at Jeremiah's call narrative and at his 'confessions'. In the call, Jeremiah was asked to pluck up/break down/destroy and overthrow. On the other hand, he is told that God will make him an iron pillar/a fortified city, so that whatever evils happen to him, God will give him strength to overcome them. The 'confessions' are difficult to interpret, but some referred to Jeremiah 15:10, where the prophet wishes he had never been born, and verse 18, where he asks why his pain is unceasing and his wound incurable, all of which suggest a weakening of his prophetic character. Some chose to refer mainly to Jeremiah's symbolic acts, although this material was effective only where candidates were able to use them to answer the question set.

### Question 9

Some could have gained more marks by direct reference to the details of Isaiah's call, whereas some wrote simply on Isaiah's prophetic message, without linking the two. Some did the reverse, describing the call in great detail without reference to its effect on the message. Where these issues were not present, answers were good, and in some cases excellent. The bulk of the comment was on the menace of Assyrian power and the specific circumstances of the Syro-Ephraimite War; also, on Isaiah's portrayal of God's holiness, reinforcing the Jerusalem theology linked to the Davidic dynasty.

### Question 10

#### (a) (Moses on the proper worship of God)

This was a popular choice, and most identified it as part of Moses' warnings against adopting the improper practices of the nations surrounding Israel in the promised land. Many commented well on forbidden practices, for example associating the reference to making a son or daughter pass through the fire with one aspect of Ammonite worship of Molech. In connection with necromancy, many commented further on 1 Samuel 28, where Saul communicated with the spirit of Samuel through the Witch of Endor.

#### (b) (The call of Samuel)

Comment on this was prolific, with comment being made on every part of the goblet. Good detail was given on the punishment of the house of Eli and on the importance of Shiloh as a place for God's revelation. Some could have gained more marks by avoiding a word-for-word repetition of each stage of the call, since this tended to leave less time available for comment.

#### (c) (David's desire to build the Temple)

Some seem to have seen the word 'sheep' in the text and used it as a reason for giving graphic detail about David's experiences as a shepherd. Most identified the passage as a late piece of theology designed to show why David was not chosen to build the Temple. Some missed the opportunity to comment on the wordplay on different meanings of 'house', e.g. as *palace*, *dynasty*, *temple*. Most commented on Nathan as a court prophet, suggesting that he wished to exercise some control over the king.

#### (d) (The revelation to Elijah on Mount Horeb)

Most identified the background as following on from the contest on Mount Carmel, Jezebel's counter-attack and Elijah's flight to Horeb. Most commented on the similarities between Elijah's experiences at Horeb and those of Moses, suggesting that this was intended to present Elijah as another Moses. Most commented also on the significance of Elijah in anointing kings and anointing Elisha as his successor. A few commented well on Elijah's psychology, in that having slaughtered Jezebel's prophets during the Carmel contest, Elijah was nevertheless running for his life to escape Jezebel's retribution.

#### (e) (The continuation of the Syrian wars)

Candidates knew the background to this very well indeed, commenting in detail on Ahab's wish to recapture Ramoth-gilead, and on the tension between the king's four-hundred court prophets and Zedekiah ben Chenaanah. More so than in previous papers, many candidates were aware of the sub-narrative concerning the 'lying spirit of prophecy' who stands in God's heavenly council and volunteers to mislead Ahab and bring about his death. The explanation of this appears to be that even false prophecy is controlled by God. Very few commented on the implications of that.

#### (f) (Amos' indictment of the neighbouring nations and of both Judah and Israel)

Most candidates did well with this extract, explaining the oracular formula ('Thus says the Lord') and the stylistic formula ('For three transgressions and for four'). There was also good comment on the fact that the transgressions of the kings of Judah and Israel come in parallel with those Moab and Edom, so that the shocking truth is that the 'election' of God's chosen nation is now revoked, and brings about massive punishment. Some commented well on the particular charges levelled against Israel, which are rooted in social injustice.

**(g) (God's cancellation of the elect status of Israel)**

Most commented well on the apparent discord between the last part of Amos' oracle and what goes before. In verses 7 – 8, the prophet relays a message from God that Israel can have no claim to special treatment morally. The somewhat astounding claim is that Yahweh is as much concerned with people such as the Ethiopians, the Philistines and the Syrians as he is with his chosen people, Israel. This is followed, however, by an assurance that God will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob. This apparent contradiction leads some to assume that this is an editorial addition designed to leave some hope to the nation, although this raises the question of whether or not salvation oracles are alien to the message of Amos.

**(h) (God portrayed as a loving father having to discipline his disobedient son Israel)**

Some commented that the phrase, 'out of Egypt I called my son' recalls the passage in Exodus 4.22, where Moses begins an oracle to the Pharaoh with the words, 'Let my son go that he may serve me ...'. The passage in Hosea suggests that the people/children now appear to prefer Baal to Yahweh, so God is described as a loving father having to discipline a disobedient son. The text goes on to talk of God's healing, compassion and love, and is in contrast with the kind of imagery shown at the start of the book. Most responses summarised these ideas clearly.

**(i) (An oracle by Isaiah referring to the messianic king)**

This was not a popular choice, although some referred to it in connection with Isaiah's Temple vision. Most identified the language as referring to the Davidic monarchy, relating it specifically to the accession of Hezekiah, of whom much was expected. A few compared the language with that of the Psalms of Yahweh's enthronement (Psalms 95 – 100). The language refers to a vision of the ideal king who will rule justly and with the qualities usually attributed to David.

**(j) (The story of Jeremiah and the waistcloth)**

Few answered this question. Those who were aware of the episode answered well, usually with an introductory comment on the use of symbolic acts in the Book of Jeremiah generally. Most described the act itself accurately, although explanations of it were not so clear. Only a few commented on the distance between Judah and the Euphrates (something like four-hundred miles), which might suggest that the story is describing a vision, although others thought that Jeremiah did travel four-hundred miles in order to make his point. Some confused the story of the waistcloth with the conflict between Jeremiah and Hananiah concerning Jeremiah's yoke.

**(k) (Jeremiah's second lament)**

This was not a popular gobbet and answers tended to be a paraphrase of the text. This was Jeremiah's second lament (the laments being known otherwise as 'confessions'). The most notable thing about the laments/confessions is the nature of the complaints addressed to God. To compare God with 'a deceitful brook', or 'waters that fail', is almost unthinkable language to address to God, so candidates explained it in terms of Jeremiah's unhappy life generally. Some used this extract well in answering **Question 8**.

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**Paper 9011/22**  
**The Four Gospels**

## General comments

The range of answers was like last year overall, if a little higher, with many candidates writing at considerable length and in more detail, although some were over-descriptive and short on discussion, evaluation, or analysis.

There were several good responses and a few outstanding ones. Language used in the wording of the questions was appropriate and accessible, although a number of candidates who attempted **Question 3** did not know or fully understand the meaning of 'righteousness' in its Jewish/Matthean context.

The paper allowed candidates to choose four questions out of fourteen and write essays which clearly reflected their level of understanding, their research, their level of scholarly reading and their individual access to resources within their own centre. No scripts were illegible.

## Key messages

To do well when answering these questions candidates must stick closely to the content of the question and identify what the main thrust of the question is. A question will never be about merely retelling information but there will always be a need to either make an assessment, an analysis, an evaluation, a comparison etc. Candidates need to identify this and then arrange their answer around this task, so the question is clearly addressed. Whilst access to further reading material may vary, it is necessary to show that candidates have a good grasp of any relevant scholarly trends and developments available to them and that they know how to use this information within their answers.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Question 1**

This question remains a popular choice amongst the candidates and those who did attempt this generally scored high marks. There were a small minority of candidates who did not follow the instructions and so did not fully answer the question and select four gobbets to write about but only two or three instead. (Some candidates commented on all fourteen gobbets and failed to answer three other essay questions which significantly impacted on their final mark.) Each gobbet is marked out of 6, this meant that candidates could not gain the higher level if they did not answer the correct amount.

- (a) A popular gobbet to comment on. It was easily identifiable and therefore candidates were able to set this in the correct context and make significant comment.
- (b) This was answered well with relevant comments made about the suffering of Jesus.
- (c) A popular choice of gobbet with a lot written about this miracle account.
- (d) Candidates clearly identified this as Jesus' cleansing of the Temple and wrote answers accordingly. Many candidates concentrated solely on the words within the gobbet, avoiding long answers about the incident itself.
- (e) This was not as popular as other passages but those candidates who identified the gobbet correctly gave good relevant answers with plenty of information.

- (f) This was a popular gobbet easily recognisable. Particularly good comments were made on the parable.
- (g) Extremely popular with a lot of comment about the baptism account of Jesus.
- (h) Another popular gobbet which attracted a lot of candidates. Answers were detailed about Jesus' departure and the gift of the spirit to remain.

### Question 2

A popular question. Some responses made extensive reference to the historical and political context in which Matthew's Gospel is thought to have been written. Some discussed, with textual references, the development of ecclesiology in Matthew, although some responses made only passing reference to this. The Jewish background to Matthew and its focus on apologetics – Jesus as the promised Messiah – was prominent. Better responses addressed the wording of the question concerning 'the main purpose' of Matthew, coming to different conclusions on the matter. Some responses just wrote about a list of purposes, without attempting to single out a main purpose.

### Question 3

There were some good responses to this question, but many did not seem to understand or explain the specific root of the term 'righteousness' in legal terminology, as justice or 'right-standing before God'. Many responses tended to give this term the general meaning of being a good person or one who does the right thing, without grounding it in its legal background. A few candidates made close textual references to illustrate their answers and achieved the higher levels.

### Question 4

A popular and generally well-answered question. Many responses kept the focus reasonably well on Mark and were able to outline the Jewish expectations of the Messiah and how the birth, person, words, and actions of Jesus seemed to contradict many of these. Some responses made extensive textual references to support their answer. A few strong responses offered a sophisticated argument that many of Jesus' actions should not have been seen as a contradiction to, so much as a fulfilment of, Jewish expectations, if correctly understood, citing examples of the legalism and hypocrisy of the Pharisees as evidence.

### Question 5

This was one of the most popular questions. Well-answered overall, with many responses displaying considerable knowledge of the theories of Markan priority, the Synoptic problem, and the relationship between the Synoptic Gospels and other sources – Q, L, M etc. Some responses also addressed the theory of Matthean priority, citing scholarly sources going back to Augustine. Specific theories and scholars were used by many candidates. Some responses were knowledge-heavy with a conclusion that was not supported by the evidence or without a conclusion.

### Question 6

Quite a popular question, often answered in conjunction with **Question 7**. Many responses managed to link themes of joy and rejoicing in a systematic but straightforward way with different themes in Luke's Gospel – birth narratives, discipleship being worth its cost, parables of the lost and found, Jesus as the Saviour. Some also referred to the meaning of the word 'gospel' as good news and to the dedication of Luke to Theophilus.

### Question 7

This question was reasonably well-answered overall, although some responses described the stories and parables from Luke's Gospel that teach that wealth should be given away and not accumulated rather than discussed them. Some responses explored the idea that the Kingdom of God is gained through spiritual qualities and not material possessions.

### Question 8

A few candidates attempted this question. There were some excellent responses which clearly understood the nature and use of 'signs' within John's Gospel and the relationship with the 'I am' sayings and were able

to illustrate this from the text. Some responses were too descriptive and did not tackle the question of how the signs are used to reveal Jesus.

### Question 9

There were some strong responses to this question which clearly understood the stories unique to John and their significance and could illustrate this with accurate textual references. Some responses commented on the idea that it is often Luke's Gospel that is associated with stories about women, but that John's teachings are arguably the more radical or counter cultural.

### Question 10

Some responses focused largely on Matthew's Gospel, in some cases repeating much of the material used in **Question 2**. A few stronger responses were able to illustrate the dependency of all the Gospels on their Jewish context to some extent, particularly of Mark and John, whilst also discussing the theme of the universal message.

### Question 11

This was a popular question. Some responses were quite general in scope, though many were able to draw on textual examples from across the Gospels to illustrate the significance of prayer throughout Jesus' ministry. For example, as evidenced in his teaching on how to pray, the prevalence of prayer accompanying miracles, examples within the parables, and Jesus praying as he faced arrest and when he was on the cross.

### Question 12

Some candidates attempted this question and there were a few good responses. Many responses ignored the word 'four' and used material from **Question 5** about the Synoptic relationship. Only one or two were able to assess both the relationship between the Synoptics themselves and with John and attempted to discuss areas of similarity and difference.

### Question 13

Quite a popular question, with some detailed responses. These explored both how the events of the last week revealed the true relationship between Jesus and the Jewish and Roman authorities, but also referred to how that relationship was reached, for example through the conflict stories with the Pharisees. In many cases however, the Roman and Jewish authorities were conflated, with candidates tending to focus on the Jewish authorities without giving sufficient detail to the role of the Roman authorities or the complex relationship between the two.

### Question 14

Not many candidates attempted this question. Of those that did, there were a few good responses. Some answers made clear reference to a definition of, or distinction between, theology and history – as understood either in the 1st Century or the present day. Better responses did attempt this and were able to use distinguishing features of each of the Gospels, for example, the often-used description of John as the theological Gospel, to illustrate this. There were responses that argued for theology and answers that argued for history. Both cited textual evidence to support their argument quite effectively.

### Rubric Errors

Rubrics were mostly understood and followed correctly by candidates. A couple of candidates answered only **Question 1**; they did so by writing about all the parts and not just choosing four.

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**Paper 9011/23**  
**The Four Gospels**

There were too few candidates for a meaningful report to be produced.



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**Paper 9011/32**  
**The Apostolic Age**

## Key messages

Candidates should be aware that they do not need to write out the question. This is particularly appropriate to those who attempted **Question 1**, as a number of candidates spent a significant amount of time copying out the gobbets, that of itself gained them no additional marks.

## General comments

The general standard of responses was of a similar standard to previous series, with many candidates displaying a sound knowledge of the events and teachings of the Apostolic Age. Some candidates could have gained higher marks by focusing on critical analysis of the question set, as opposed to the narrative approach some candidates took. The most popular questions were **1, 2 and 3**, whilst **Questions 6 and 9** were attempted by few candidates. Rubric errors were very rarely encountered.

## Comments on specific questions

### *Section A*

#### **Question 1**

Most candidates chose to attempt the gobbet question and tended to do well.

- (a) Most responses gave a reasonable discussion of Paul's teachings on unity, and how the gobbet was part of a wider discourse on the issue. A number of responses used this gobbet to talk about Apollos and his role in the Corinthian church; most did so successfully, but some did so without meaningfully linking to the gobbet, which limited the answer.
- (b) Most responses showed a reasonably good understanding of Paul's ideas on the nature of Christian personal relationships. Some responses made valid discussion of whether this is best seen as a principled or pragmatic teaching by Paul. Some saw the teachings of this passage as being a direct contrast to Hellenic hedonism.
- (c) Most responses were able to correctly place this gobbet as being part of Paul's discussion of the mal-observance of the Lord's Supper amongst the Corinthian church and discussed the implications of this. Some responses discussed the contrast between the Agapē and Lord's Supper and whether the distinction between the two existed at the time 1 Corinthians was written. Some responses focused on the significance of 1 Corinthians on the developing worship practices of the Early Church. Some responses tied it in to a wider discussion on the nature of orderly worship.
- (d) Most responses contextualized it as part of the introductory salutation to 1 Thessalonians and linked it to how the Thessalonian congregation is mostly praised by Paul in the epistle. Some responses discussed whether Paul and his companions were suitable examples to become imitators of. A few responses focused on the geographical incidentals of the gobbet, sometimes successfully.
- (e) Reasonably well answered by most candidates, identifying the gobbet as part of a wider call to perseverance, and linking to the general theme of persevering joyfully in faith of Thessalonians. Some responses discussed the nature of the authority by which Paul spoke. Whether the instruction had the authority of Jesus because of Paul's apostleship, or whether Paul had been

directly quoting Jesus when he had given those in Thessalonica the instructions Paul refers to here.

- (f) Most responses focused on how this is one of the passages in the New Testament talking about life after death, and the relative scarcity of the topic makes this a significant passage. Some drew links to the practice in some cultures of attempts to convert the deceased. Some candidates discussed the significance of the use of 'asleep' as a euphemism for death rather than simply saying the dead, and linking to the idea that those who have eternal life in Jesus died in baptism and live a new life, so should not be said to die a second time.

### Question 2

Candidates on the whole answered the question successfully. Most responses contextualized the situation of the Corinthian church to indicate why instructions for orderly worship would be so significant for the congregation there. Most then contrasted the significance of the instructions on orderly worship with other key teachings in 1 Corinthians, including unity and resurrection. Some candidates instead took a different approach and instead discussed the significance of 1 Corinthians in setting a pattern for Christian worship. Some responses listed different instructions, often in detail, without thoroughly addressing the significance of those teachings, which limited the response.

### Question 3

A very popular question. Many candidates chose a selection of passages from 1 Thessalonians and suggested how they could be said to have been written to encourage Christians. The poorer examples of this approach tended to little more than an expanded list, whereas the better responses linked the teachings to the context in Thessalonica and attempted to analyse the aforementioned teachings. A few very good responses discussed the extent to which the purpose of any epistle can be known, often successfully, though rarely this line of reasoning was simply asserted, rather than argued.

### Question 4

The least popular question in **Section A** though the candidates who attempted the question generally did well. They were able to show clear links between the teachings, and contrast the differences, in particular the theologically rich nature of the teachings in 1 Corinthians were contrasted with the more descriptive nature of the 1 Thessalonians discourse on the issue. The best response drew on contextual knowledge of the epistles to suggest why there was this different presentation on the issue by Paul.

### Section B

### Question 5

Candidates tended to answer this question by looking at the examples of what Jesus is said to be superior than in the epistle and then discussing why each of them in turn were significant; in doing so many displayed a good synoptic understanding of the course. Some candidates examined the theme, and in analysing it compared it to other themes in Hebrews, which was a valid approach. A few responses digressed into lengthy discussions on angels or Melchizedek without always successfully linking them to the question.

### Question 6

Few candidates attempted this question. Some candidates successfully responded to the question, usually by looking at examples of baptism in Acts and examining their significance, the Ethiopian Eunuch featuring in almost every response. Some of the less successful responses were narrative in nature about the examples, whereas the better responses drew out the significance of these incidents. A few low-level responses focused on baptism in the Gospels, which limited their ability to accurately address the question set.

### Question 7

Responses which did well in addressing this question were clear on what Paul and James said on faith and works and supported their comparisons with clear references which often included analysis of their place within a wider cultural context. Less successful responses were unclear on the distinction between Paul and James' teachings on faith and works, and instead talked generally about New Testament teachings on the issue, often misattributing teachings of Jesus to Paul or James.

### Question 8

Quite a popular question. Responses displayed a clear understanding of the biographical details of Phillip and Peter. Some responses retold them in a narrative fashion, with their comparison being mostly implicit. The more successful responses made clear comparisons between the two, for example contrasting their relative status within the Jerusalem church, or the number of events Acts records regarding the two.

### Question 9

Very few candidates attempted this question, though those that did so were generally very successful with their responses. The most frequently encountered teachings were those from James 2. Candidates tended to examine the significance of the teachings on wealth and poverty amongst other teachings on Christian living and assess their relative significance. A few candidates quoted heavily from the Gospels in their responses and did not focus sufficiently on responding to the question set.

### Question 10

This was the most popular question in **Section B**. Some responses answered very well, arguing that there were other threats – Judaizing, Roman persecution, heresy etc., and some did wrestle with whether it was the ‘greatest’ threat or not, with varying levels of success. Some argued that it actually helped clarify points of dispute, through Pauline epistles written to address the internal divisions, and was therefore not a barrier to growth at all, but rather a necessary part of growth. A number of weaker responses just listed examples of congregational disputes and whilst some lists were quite comprehensive, they did not attempt to discuss the question sufficiently. Some candidates had added an attempt to address the question in their conclusion, after a long list of the disputes that existed in different cities.



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**Paper 9011/33**  
**The Apostolic Age**

There were too few candidates for a meaningful report to be produced.