

Cambridge O Level

BIBLICAL STUDIES**2035/12**

Paper 1 The Portrayal of God in the Bible

October/November 2025

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 60

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.

Cambridge International is publishing the mark schemes for the October/November 2025 series for most Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge International A and AS Level components, and some Cambridge O Level components.

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 descriptions 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.












Annotations guidance for centres

Examiners use a system of annotations as a shorthand for communicating their marking decisions to one another. Examiners are trained during the standardisation process on how and when to use annotations. The purpose of annotations is to inform the standardisation and monitoring processes and guide the supervising examiners when they are checking the work of examiners within their team. The meaning of annotations and how they are used is specific to each component and is understood by all examiners who mark the component.

We publish annotations in our mark schemes to help centres understand the annotations they may see on copies of scripts. Note that there may not be a direct correlation between the number of annotations on a script and the mark awarded. Similarly, the use of an annotation may not be an indication of the quality of the response.

The annotations listed below were available to examiners marking this component in this series.

Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
	Correct point
	Incorrect point
	Benefit of the doubt
Highlighter	Highlighting areas of text
Off-page comment	Allows comments to be entered at the bottom of the RM marking window and then displayed when the associated question item is navigated to.
	No benefit of doubt given
	Omission mark
	Unclear
	Not answered question
	Example / reference
	Development
	Indicates that the point has been noted, but no credit has been given.
	Evaluation

Guidance on using levels-based mark schemes

Marking of work should be positive, rewarding achievement where possible, but clearly differentiating across the whole range of marks, where appropriate.

The marker should look at the work and then make a judgement about which level statement is the best fit. In practice, work does not always match one level statement precisely so a judgement may need to be made between two or more level statements.

Once a best-fit level statement has been identified, use the following guidance to decide on a specific mark:

- If the candidate's work **convincingly** meets the level statement, award the highest mark.
- If the candidate's work **adequately** meets the level statement, award the most appropriate mark in the middle of the range (where middle marks are available).
- If the candidate's work **just** meets the level statement, award the lowest mark.

Annotation:

Ticks have no defined meaning for levels of response marking.

Other annotations will be used by examiners as agreed during standardisation, and the meaning will be understood by all examiners who marked that paper.

Level descriptions for AO1 Knowledge and understanding

- Demonstrate knowledge of specified texts and corresponding Christian teachings, beliefs and practices.
- Demonstrate understanding of these texts, teachings, beliefs and practices in both biblical and modern contexts, including areas where there are different views within Christianity.

These level descriptions are used for **part (a)** questions in **Questions 3, 4 and 5** and all **part (b)** questions.

Level	Description	Marks
3	Accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answers the question, using detailed, accurate and relevant knowledge. • Demonstrates clear understanding through a well-developed and substantial response. • A well-structured format. 	5–6
2	Some accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partially answers the question, using some accurate and relevant knowledge. • Demonstrates some understanding through a partially developed response, covering some of the points. • Responds in a mostly structured format. 	3–4
1	Limited accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts to answer the question, using limited accurate and relevant knowledge. • Demonstrates limited understanding through an underdeveloped response through limited coverage of the points or a response in general terms. • Attempts to present the information in a structured format. 	1–2
0	No relevant material to credit.	0

Level descriptions for AO2 Evaluation

Use evidence and reasoned discussion of a range of points of view to make judgements about issues within Christianity arising from the texts.

These level descriptions are used for all **part (c)** questions.

Level	Description	Marks
Level 4	<p>Clear and well-reasoned evaluation in response to the question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers more than one point of view in detail. • Fully answers the question, using relevant evidence to support a well-structured discussion. • Concludes with a clear and well-reasoned judgement. 	7–8
Level 3	<p>Clear evaluation in response to the question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers more than one point of view. • Answers the question, using some relevant evidence to support a well-structured discussion. • Concludes with a clear judgement. 	5–6
Level 2	<p>An evaluation in response to the question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers one point of view; any other attempts to state a point of view are descriptive. • Partially answers the question, using partially relevant evidence to support a structured discussion. • Concludes with a judgement. 	3–4
Level 1	<p>Limited evaluation in response to the question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptive response with an attempt to state a point of view, describing material linked to the question or topic. • Attempts to answer the question, using limited relevant evidence to support a discussion. • Limited or no judgement present. 	1–2
Level 0	No relevant material to credit	0

Question	Answer	Marks
1(a)(i)	<p><u>Genesis 1:27, NRSVA</u></p> <p>So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.</p> <p>State the day of creation on which God created humanity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sixth day / day 6 / Friday <p>Award one mark for a correct response.</p>	1
1(a)(ii)	<p>Describe what God said to humanity when he first blessed them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be fruitful and multiply • Fill the earth and subdue it • Have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth. <p>Award one mark for each response.</p>	3
1(a)(iii)	<p>State what God then gave humanity for food.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every plant yielding seed • Every tree with seed in its fruit <p>Award one mark for each response up to a maximum of two marks.</p>	2

Question	Answer	Marks
1(b)	<p>Contrast the creation of humanity in the two creation narratives.</p> <p>Use the level descriptions for AO1 Knowledge and understanding to mark candidates' response to this question.</p> <p>Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited.</p> <p>Candidates are likely to describe the creation of humanity in the second creation narrative but should ensure that they answer the question and contrast the two creation narratives.</p> <p>In the first narrative, humanity is created together, rather than man first. They are seen as the pinnacle of God's creation: made in God's image and likeness and immediately blessed; whereas in the second narrative, man is created first (perhaps showing he is special) and seems to have been made to work the earth. Man and woman are created as equals in Genesis 1 but there is a debate about the status of man and woman in Genesis 2.</p> <p>In the first narrative, humanity is given plants and trees to eat from anywhere on earth and in the second, it is only the trees in the garden (except for the forbidden tree).</p> <p>In the second narrative, the creation of humanity is very carefully done and clearly very different to the creation of the rest of life but in the first, God creates humanity in much the same way as he creates the rest of creation. The second narrative also seems to focus on what happened after creation, whereas the first focuses on creation itself.</p>	6

Question	Answer	Marks
1(c)	<p>Assess the view that the creation narratives show that humanity must care for the environment.</p> <p>Use the level descriptions for AO2 Evaluation to mark candidates' response to this question.</p> <p>Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited.</p> <p>Candidates might propose the argument that the creation narratives show humanity as having a special place in God's creation and a direct charge to look after it. They might point to evidence from either of the creation narratives to suggest that God's instructions to the first people was to preserve the earth for future generations. Candidates might argue that all of creation is a gift from God and humanity must treat it as such.</p> <p>Candidates might point to words such as 'subdue' and 'dominion' as well as to the historic practice of many Christians to suggest that God has given the earth to humanity and so they can do what they wish with it. All animals and plants have been given to humanity as ways of survival and no more.</p> <p>Some candidates might explore the subtleties of what counts as aspects of the environment - for example, distinguishing between animals and plants.</p> <p>Some candidates might go beyond the Genesis text to explore the wonder of creation elsewhere in the Bible and demonstrate how environmental concerns have become central to the life of Christians today. Other candidates might explore the impact of the Fall on humanity's responsibilities.</p>	8

Question	Answer	Marks
2(a)(i)	<p><u>Isaiah 9:2, NRSVA</u></p> <p>The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined.</p> <p>State <u>three</u> names given to the child that Isaiah describes.</p> <p>Any three from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wonderful Counsellor • Mighty God • Everlasting Father • Prince of Peace <p>Award one mark for each correct answer, up to a total of three marks.</p>	3
2(a)(ii)	<p>Describe what Isaiah says will happen after the birth of the child.</p> <p>Any three from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His authority shall grow continually / authority (government) rests upon his shoulders • There will be endless peace (for the throne of David and his kingdom) • He will establish and uphold it (with justice and righteousness) • It will continue from this time onwards and for evermore • This will be done by the zeal of the Lord of hosts. <p>Award one mark for each correct answer up to a maximum of three marks.</p> <p>Accept any other valid answers.</p>	3

Question	Answer	Marks
2(b)	<p>Explain what this passage might teach about the Messiah.</p> <p>Use the level descriptions for AO1 Knowledge and understanding to mark candidates' response to this question.</p> <p>Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited.</p> <p>For Christians, this passage is a foretaste of the coming of Jesus but the passage was understood to be speaking about a Messianic age before Christianity. The passage speaks of the Messiah being a great light – a great positive event in the history of Israel, bringing people out of a time of darkness: the Messiah comes to deliver God's people.</p> <p>It speaks of the Messiah coming to the nation – the people of Israel specifically – and talks about the burden being relieved for them through the work of the Messiah.</p> <p>It promises that the Messiah will come as a child (a son) who will have great authority. The names given to the child give an understanding of the nature of the Messiah: a counsellor, God himself, everlasting and the bringer and prince of peace.</p> <p>The Messiah is said to come from the house of David and will continue the Jewish throne of the great king David for ever.</p>	6
2(c)	<p>Assess the view that Christians can fully understand that Jesus is the Messiah from this passage.</p> <p>Use the level descriptions for AO2 Evaluation to mark candidates' response to this question.</p> <p>Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited.</p> <p>Candidates might argue that the prophecy in Isaiah gives a clear understanding of Jesus' Messiahship: the bringer of peace, a descendent of David, one who delivers the people. They might observe that this passage is a rare prophecy of the special relationship that Jesus has with God through being divine. Candidates are likely to illustrate these points with examples from the life of Jesus.</p> <p>Some candidates might suggest that the prophecy needs to be combined with other evidence about what the Messiah would be like, perhaps especially in terms of being one who will bring about social justice.</p> <p>However, some might qualify this by observing that it is not always clear how aspects of the Old Testament should be interpreted.</p> <p>Some candidates might point to aspects of the life and mission of Jesus that cannot really be foretold in this passage and reject the suggestion. In particular, they might observe that Jesus the suffering servant who then is raised from the dead is not really evident from this passage.</p>	8

Question	Answer	Marks
3(a)	<p>Describe what happened after the test of Abraham, from when the angel first spoke.</p> <p>Use the level descriptions for AO1 knowledge and understanding to mark candidates' response to this question.</p> <p>Responses might include some of the following in quotation or paraphrase, but all valid material must be credited.</p> <p><u>Genesis 22:11–19</u></p> <p>Abraham said, 'Here I am' to the angel and the angel told him not to lay his hand on the boy or to do anything to him because now he knows that he fears God, since he had not withheld his only son. Abraham looked up, saw a ram caught in a thicket by its horns, took it and offered it as a burnt offering instead of his son. Abraham named the place: 'The Lord will provide'.</p> <p>The angel called again and said, 'By myself I have sworn, says the Lord: Because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will indeed bless you and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies and by your offspring shall all nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice. So, Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beersheba, where Abraham then lived.</p>	6

Question	Answer	Marks
3(b)	<p>Explain the importance of the angel's words for Christians today.</p> <p>Use the level descriptions for AO1 Knowledge and understanding to mark candidates' response to this question.</p> <p>Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited.</p> <p>The initial words of the angel - not to sacrifice Isaac – shows Christians that God can speak/intervene through angels. Christians should not necessarily expect God to speak directly. Through God's message, good will come to the world.</p> <p>In the second message of the angel, Christians learn that the Jewish people, who were God's first chosen race, are blessed and come from Abraham. This is important for Christians who want to understand the origins of their faith and to understand more about the background of Jesus.</p> <p>The message also tells Christians that God's chosen race can overcome enemies. As they believe that they are now those who accept God's message, this might give them strength that they too can overcome all adversity, whether material or spiritual.</p> <p>The angel's message talks about God's blessing coming on his people and Christians might reflect on the idea that God's blessing is not remote or reserved just for important people: it is available to all God's people.</p> <p>The blessing comes from obeying God's voice and so Christians might reflect on where they hear God.</p>	6
3(c)	<p>To what extent does God test Christians today?</p> <p>Use the level descriptions for AO2 Evaluation to mark candidates' response to this question.</p> <p>Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited.</p> <p>Candidates might suggest that that God's test on Christians is a general one: that he tests them to use their free will for the good of society or to follow and worship him or to follow Jesus' commands. The test is rewarded by heaven or hell and is the human side of the new covenant. Some candidates might suggest that God sends specific situations – sometimes ones that include suffering – and that Christian responses to these situations lead to either a person's salvation or to the strengthening of virtues.</p> <p>Candidates might say that the idea of a God who tests is not in line with the Christian God. Through Jesus, God has offered himself freely to humans and his grace means that Christians can achieve salvation through their faith.</p> <p>Candidates might make reference to specific situations from their own communities to illustrate their answers and may explore the idea of what it might mean to describe God as one who tests.</p>	8

Question	Answer	Marks
4(a)	<p>Give an account of Peter's speech after he and John had been arrested.</p> <p>Use the level descriptions for AO1 Knowledge and understanding to mark candidates' response to this question.</p> <p>Responses might include some of the following in quotation or paraphrase, but all valid material must be credited.</p> <p><u>Acts 4:8–12</u></p> <p>Filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter said to the rulers, elders and scribes: 'If we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead.</p> <p>'This Jesus is "the stone that was rejected by you, the builders – it has become the cornerstone".'</p> <p>Peter concluded by saying that salvation comes from nobody else because there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.</p>	6
4(b)	<p>Explain why this speech was relevant to Peter's audience.</p> <p>Use the level descriptions for AO1 Knowledge and understanding to mark candidates' response to this question.</p> <p>Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited.</p> <p>Peter and John had been arrested following a healing and a public speech made that included teaching about the resurrection of Jesus. They might have been threatened by the sheer number of people who believed as a result of the speech. The speech was therefore relevant because these, the leaders of these people, needed to understand what was going on.</p> <p>The speech was also relevant because it was important for them to understand that the miracle had taken place in the name of Jesus: they only would have believed miracles could take place in the name of the God of Israel.</p> <p>Peter's audience needed to understand that the old ways of their religion had been replaced. They also needed to understand the part that they had played in the death of Jesus and how this actually fulfilled Scripture. Peter's use of Scripture could also have made the speech more relevant to his audience.</p> <p>Peter's audience also needed to demonstrate that the good deed was more important than how the miracle happened. This was a debate that Jesus also often had.</p>	6

Question	Answer	Marks
4(c)	<p>'Peter could only have made this speech with the help of the Holy Spirit.' Discuss.</p> <p>Use the level descriptions for AO2 Evaluation to mark candidates' response to this question.</p> <p>Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited.</p> <p>Some candidates may agree with the statement because the transformation that took place at Pentecost was the only thing that could have enabled the terrified fishermen to speak in public and so eloquently. Candidates may make reference to the wind and fire that came and entered the disciples, and they might observe that Peter's speech on the Day of Pentecost showed a similar transformation.</p> <p>Candidates might disagree with the statement on the basis that the real transforming power came through the resurrection. They might also observe that Peter would have observed Jesus speaking to the authorities in a similar way over the course of Jesus' ministry and so he had learned from Jesus. Some might suggest that Peter's natural qualities are what made him able to make this speech.</p>	8

Question	Answer	Marks
5(a)	<p>Outline Philip's encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch.</p> <p>Use the level descriptions for AO1 Knowledge and understanding to mark candidates' response to this question.</p> <p>Responses might include some of the following in quotation or paraphrase, but all valid material must be credited.</p> <p><u>Acts 8:27–39</u></p> <p>An angel guided Philip to encounter the Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the queen of the Ethiopians. He was returning home from Jerusalem, where he had worshipped and was in his chariot, reading Isaiah. The Spirit guided Philip to the eunuch's chariot. Philip heard him reading out Isaiah and asked if he understood it. The eunuch said he did not without guidance and invited Philip into the chariot.</p> <p>He was reading: 'Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter...' and the eunuch asked about whom this passage was written. Philip began to speak, and he proclaimed to the eunuch, starting with this passage, the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptised?' He commanded the chariot to stop and both of them went into the water and Philip baptised him. Philip was taken away by the Spirit and the eunuch went on his way, rejoicing.</p>	6
5(b)	<p>Explain what this passage might teach about Christian life.</p> <p>Use the level descriptions for AO1 Knowledge and understanding to mark candidates' response to this question.</p> <p>Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited.</p> <p>The passage shows baptism to be the entry point for the Christian community and that this baptism is given through coming to faith in the good news of Jesus. It shows that at whatever age we become a Christian, it is right to be baptised. Some candidates might suggest it indicates the need for adult baptism.</p> <p>The nature of the person being a rich eunuch reminds people that Christians must welcome everyone into their community. The eunuch already worshipped God (he had been to Jerusalem) and this shows the importance of prayer to God being at the heart of the Christian life. Candidates may also make comments about God guiding and communicating with his people.</p> <p>The role of the Scripture as the way to find out about Jesus shows the importance of Scripture in the life of the Christian community and that the Old Testament is important because it contains those prophecies fulfilled by Jesus.</p>	6

Question	Answer	Marks
5(c)	<p>To what extent is this passage a model for modern-day Christian evangelism?</p> <p>Use the level descriptions for AO2 Evaluation to mark candidates' response to this question.</p> <p>Answers may include some of the following ideas, but all valid material must be credited.</p> <p>Candidates might entirely reject this passage as a model for Christian evangelism today. They might argue that the entire context is unable to be replicated today and therefore Christians should seek models that are more realistic. They might also observe that the work of the angel and the Spirit perhaps reflects the special time that Acts took place in and God does not intervene as directly.</p> <p>Candidates are likely to draw from the passage aspects that make the passage a model for evangelism. They might explore the relevance of using Scripture or preaching to God-fearers. They might explore the role of baptism as a sign of coming to believe or the idea that as an evangelist, one must be guided to go where God sends you, however unlikely. Some may qualify some of these points by observing that the structures of the church now are very different than they were at the time of this encounter.</p>	8