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RELIGIOUS STUDIES (BIBLE KNOWLEDGE)

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Paper 2 The Portrayal of the Birth of the Early Church

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MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 80

Published

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AO1: Describe and explain using knowledge and understanding.

These level descriptors should be used for all part (a) and (b) questions.

Level 4	6 marks	A thorough, well-developed and substantial response. A comprehensive account of the range and depth of relevant material, demonstrating an extensive and highly accurate knowledge and understanding of the subject. There is detailed explanation. The answer is well structured.
Level 3	4–5 marks	Demonstrates a clear understanding of the question. The information is quite detailed. Generally accurate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter. Covers the main points accurately. The information is in a structured format.
Level 2	2–3 marks	Demonstrates some understanding of the question. A fair, mainly relevant but generally undeveloped response. The candidate demonstrates some factual knowledge and understanding, which is fairly accurate but may lack specific detail. Some of the main points are covered but lack substance. The information will be presented for the most part in a structured format.
Level 1	1 mark	An attempt to answer the question, but demonstrates little understanding of the question. Very limited knowledge of the subject. Response includes only a small amount of relevant material. Information is reported in basic outline only or as a list, with little or no explanation. Mainly inaccurate, though some credible points may be made.
Level 0	0 marks	No attempt whatsoever to answer the set question, or the candidate provides a wholly irrelevant response.

AO2: Use evidence and reasoned argument to express and evaluate personal responses, informed insights and differing viewpoints.

These level descriptors should be used for all part (c) questions.

Level 4	7–8 marks	Recognises and explains the significance of the issue(s). A personal response is fully supported. A range of points of view, supported by justified arguments/discussion. The information is presented in a clear and organised way. Evidence of informed insights.
Level 3	5–6 marks	Understands the significance of the question. Seeks to move clearly beyond a purely descriptive approach. Justified arguments/different points of view, supported by some discussion. Evidence of appropriate personal response. Some evidence of informed insights.
Level 2	3–4 marks	Understands the question but the response is mainly descriptive. Only one view offered with limited support or discussion. Limited or no evidence of informed insights.
Level 1	1–2 mark	The candidate's response is descriptive with no attempt to discuss or evaluate the material at all. Viewpoints are unsupported.
Level 0	0 marks	No response submitted, or clearly lacks any understanding whatsoever of the subject matter.

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
1(a)	Describe one occasion in the Acts of the Apostles when someone received the Holy Spirit. Examiners should mark according to the AO1 level descriptors. Responses might include: Candidates are likely to describe the day of Pentecost in chapter 2 when the Holy Spirit came to the apostles. They may describe how there was a sound like the blowing of a violent wind which came from heaven and filled the whole house. They saw tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. Filled with the Holy Spirit, they spoke in tongues. Candidates may consider 10:45, following the conversion of Cornelius: “The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God”. Candidates may also refer to people receiving the Holy Spirit in a way that directs events (e.g. Philip’s meeting with the Ethiopian), enables visions and dreams which reveal God’s purpose (7:55; “But Stephen full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.”) Any relevant and accurate description of an occasion when someone received the Holy Spirit should be credited.	6	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
1(b)	Explain one way that the Holy Spirit empowered the early church. You should include examples in your response. Examiners should mark according to the AO1 level descriptors. Responses might include: The Holy Spirit empowers the early church by directing events, leading Philip to the Ethiopian, Barnabas and Paul being sent out by the Holy Spirit (13:1–3), preventing Paul from speaking the word in Asia (16:6), and helping the members of the church to make decisions (15:28). Candidates may consider the Holy Spirit as empowering members of the early church to preach, for example following Pentecost, Peter is filled with the Spirit when he delivers a powerful message highlighting that the coming of the Holy Spirit fulfilled prophecy, that Jesus is Lord, giving witness to the resurrection and demonstrating that it is Israel's responsibility to respond. The response is powerful as those who received Peter's words were baptised, nearly three thousand people committing themselves to the disciples' teaching and the 'Way'. Candidates may consider the empowering influence of the Holy Spirit whilst enduring suffering; Peter and John suggest that the Spirit testifies with them, and are beaten for their trouble and respond with joy. Stephen is filled with the Spirit and sees Jesus exalted, and is then stoned to death. Ananias is told that Saul will suffer for Jesus, and then is to lay hands on him to be filled with the Spirit. Paul goes on to suffer in Jerusalem as a 'captive to the Spirit'. Candidates may consider the Holy Spirit empowering the church through healings and miracles. Having been filled with the Spirit, Peter healed many from various cities (3:12–16), Stephen performed great wonders and signs (6:8) as did Philip in Samaria (8:6, 7, 13) and Paul in Ephesus (19:11, 12). There are a range of creditable responses; examiners should credit those which are accurate and relevant to the question.	6	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
1(c)	‘It is difficult to believe in the Holy Spirit today.’ Do you agree? Show in your answer that you have considered more than one point of view. Examiners should mark according to the AO2 level descriptors. Candidates in support of the statement might respond: That Christians in many churches cannot relate to the idea of speaking in tongues, and may see the activity of the Holy Spirit as being present within Christians but not demonstrable in this way. Many Christians do not feel empowered by the Holy Spirit to speak, or guide their paths. In many churches the practice of speaking in tongues is not common. Candidates may give a secular response and argue that the Holy Spirit can be likened to a ghost and as such, there is no scientific evidence to support its existence. Candidates arguing against the statement might respond: That for many Christians, speaking in tongues, being guided by the Holy Spirit to speak or to act in a certain way is a common element of their belief and practice. Speaking in tongues is evidence of the Holy Spirit’s presence. In many Pentecostal and Evangelical churches, the Spirit’s presence is active throughout church services and in the lives of worshippers. In many churches, spiritual healings are common. All valid comments should be credited. Better candidates will be balanced in their responses, giving a range of informed views, a supported personal view point and providing a well-organised answer.	8	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2(a)	Describe community life in the early church. Examiners should mark according to the AO1 level descriptors. Responses might include: The early church was a group who assembled together, either in each other's homes or in the Temple. Community life in the early church was one focused on prayer; they would pray together, before important decisions, they would petition and prepare for the activity of God and would share prayers of joy, thanksgiving and praise. The early church was a place where teaching was common practice. The breaking of bread and eating of meals together is also frequently mentioned. Communal sharing – all goods, property etc. is given over to the church for the common good, so that no one is in need. No one has personal possessions, and all is shared amongst them, very much like the disciples of Jesus. The early church community was very much a spirit inspired group. The Holy Spirit is seen to be present in all of the early church's activities and daily life.	6	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2(b)	Explain why the whole church was frightened by what happened to Ananias and Sapphira. Examiners should mark according to the AO1 level descriptors. Responses might include: 5:1–12 Ananias and Sapphira sold some ground and kept back some of the price rather than sharing it with the community. Ananias was responsible for the sale but Sapphira was fully aware of what had been done. Ananias only brought some of the price to the Apostles, Peter accused him of deceiving the Holy Spirit and lying to God and he died. Following this Sapphira was accused of tempting the spirit of the Lord and died for her crime also. The whole church was afraid as Peter said: ‘how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit’ (5:3). Members of the church may have been fearful that Satan could also fill their hearts in this way. Candidates may explain that the whole church may have feared that Ananias’ and Sapphira’s deaths were a direct punishment from God and that the same fate could befall them.	6	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2(c)	‘Living in the ways of the early church is not realistic for Christians today.’ Do you agree? Show in your answer that you have considered more than one point of view. Examiners should mark according to the AO2 level descriptors. Arguments in support of this statement might include: That it is hard for Christians today to give up possessions and share them. We live in a materialistic and self-driven society, the idea of communal sharing goes against the cultural norm. People find it hard to find time in their lives to pray, particularly with others. Many people struggle to find time to sit down and have a meal with those around them. Many who identify themselves as Christians do not go to church on Sunday to take communion, pray and praise God, etc. Christians may find it hard to dedicate their lives to their faith as the early Christians did, particularly if this meant giving up a job or risking persecution in whatever form. Arguments against this statement might include: Many Christians try to emulate the principles of the early church in a contemporary way. For example, although they might not give up all of their wealth and possessions, they may give a large proportion of their income to charity and may use their free time to volunteer for a charity. There are monastic communities who successfully live a life similar to that of the early church. There is a sense of community, and common sharing of property; it is a life of prayer and a spirit filled community.	8	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
2(c)	Like members of the early church, many Christians are prepared to risk their lives for their faith, and continue to evangelise in the face of persecution. Breaking bread (communion) and prayer are common elements of Christian worship which many Christians take part in at least once a week on a Sunday. All valid comments should be credited. Better candidates will be balanced in their responses, giving a range of informed views, a supported personal view point and providing a well-organised answer.		

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
3(a)	Describe what happened when Philip met the Ethiopian Eunuch. Examiners should mark according to the AO1 level descriptors. Responses might use quotation or paraphrase to explain the following: 8: 26–40 An angel of the Lord spoke to Philip and said, “Go south to the road – the desert road – that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza”. The road would have had a great deal of traffic on it and this is the setting for the meeting with the Ethiopian. The Ethiopian was the chancellor of the exchequer of Candace. At that time, there were many who were fed up with the many gods and with the loose morals of the nations, and for these people Judaism was attractive as there is belief in one God and clear moral standards. The Ethiopian was likely to be a proselyte (accepted Judaism and was circumcised) or a God fearer (not gone quite that far but attended the Synagogue and read the scriptures). The spirit told Philip to join the Ethiopian in his chariot and he finds him reading Isaiah. Philip asks if he understands Isaiah and he replies that it needs to be explained to him. Philip shows him, through Isaiah, the good news about Jesus. Following this explanation, he sees water and asks to be baptised. Philip baptises him and he goes away rejoicing.	6	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
3(b)	Explain why the conversion of the Ethiopian was different from that of Saul. Examiners should mark according to the AO1 level descriptors. Responses might include the following: Candidates are likely to point out that the Ethiopian was ready for conversion as he was reading the scriptures and looking for an explanation, whereas Saul is considered an enemy of the early Christians as he was persecuting them, and so it was a surprise that he was converted. The Eunuch was probably not Jewish, unlike Saul who was a Jew. The Eunuch, having had the scriptures explained to him seeks baptism and is actively seeking conversion, whereas Saul is converted because of the voice of Jesus who spoke to him and blinded him. Saul is chosen by the Lord to proclaim his name to the Gentiles. Through Ananias and the power of the Holy Spirit Saul's blindness was removed and he was baptised.	6	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
3(c)	‘Those who convert to a religion make better believers.’ To what extent do you agree? Show in your answer that you have considered more than one point of view. Examiners should mark according to the AO2 level descriptors. Candidates are likely to use examples in their answer, either from the book of Acts or from their own personal experiences. All relevant comments should be credited. Answers in agreement with the statement may include: Those who convert are often more active in trying to convert others. Those who convert are often more zealous in their belief. Those who convert can be more concerned with following religious rules and teachings carefully. A good example from Acts would be Saul, who is responsible for the mission to the Gentiles and was instrumental in bringing Christianity to many nations. Candidates may also look at Lydia, the Samaritans, the Jews at Pentecost, and Cornelius, etc. Answers disagreeing with the statement might include: Those who convert may not have the roots for a deep faith and their belief may tail off. Conversion can lead to a change in belief but not a change in people’s lives, as they don’t act on it. A true belief is one where your whole life is transformed by Jesus.	8	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
3(c)	In order for some to convert, it can mean watering down or diluting the message. Candidates could use examples of shallow conversion, for example Simon who subsequently continued his sinful ways. All valid comments should be credited. Better candidates will be balanced in their responses, giving a range of informed views, a supported personal view point and providing a well-organised answer.		

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
4(a)	Give an account of the healings at Lydda and Joppa. Examiners should mark according to the AO1 level descriptors. Responses might include: 9:32–43 In Lydda a man called Aeneas was bedridden for 8 years because he was paralysed. Peter heals him by saying, ‘Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and roll your mat’. The man stands up and all who lived there and at Sharon who saw him were amazed by what they saw. The result of Peter’s healing was that those who witnessed the event turned to the Lord. In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (Dorcas) who did good and helped the poor. She became ill and died. The disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda and so sent two men to bring him to her. The widows showed him clothing that she had made. Peter sent them all out and got on his knees to pray. He said to her, ‘Tabitha, get up’, he helped her to her feet and he presented her to the believers, alive. As a result of this healing many more people believed in the Lord.	6	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
4(b)	Explain why Peter's healings were significant in the spread of the early church. Examiners should mark according to the AO1 level descriptors. Responses might include: Peter's healings at Lydda and Joppa were significant in the spread of the early church, as he was able to show the source of his power, Jesus Christ. Due to Tabitha's healing many more were converted. At Lydda and Joppa, Peter was able to show the power of Jesus in action, which led to the conversion of many more believers. Candidates may also consider Peter healing the beggar at the beautiful gate in chapter 3. They may explain how he healed the beggar who praised God and that when people saw what had happened, they were filled with wonder and amazement. The beggar tells the people that his healing is because of faith in the name of Jesus. Following this, many more believers were brought to the Lord. It is through healing that Peter can show people the source of his power and in doing so help to spread the early church.	6	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
4(c)	‘Peter’s vision at Joppa was the turning point for Gentile inclusion in the early church.’ To what extent do you agree? Show in your answer that you have considered more than one point of view. Examiners should mark according to the AO2 level descriptors. Candidates arguing that it is a fair assessment may include: The vision prepared Peter for the visitors that would come (Cornelius) without the vision, he may not have been willing to accept him, although arguably the fact that Peter was staying with a tanner (unclean profession) may suggest that Peter was already open to the idea that the church was for everyone. It was the vision that first showed Peter that Gentiles are not unclean, which enabled him to extend the ministry of the church to the Gentiles. As a result of the vision, Peter is able to meet with Cornelius and as a result the Holy Spirit was poured on the Gentiles. They spoke with tongues and were baptised. As a result of the vision, Peter shared his new understanding of the role of the Gentiles with the church in Jerusalem. Luke devotes a great deal of space to the re-telling of the events that transpired. In this moment, Peter realises that, ‘God has given life-giving repentance to the Gentiles’. Following his vision, Peter defends Gentile inclusion to the Council of Jerusalem.	8	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
4(c)	Candidates arguing that it is not a fair assessment may include: It is not the vision, but the Council of Jerusalem that provides the turning-point. It is not Peter's vision, but the mission of Paul and his preaching to the Gentiles which was the turning point. Paul goes further than Peter, in that he preaches to those who know nothing of God, unlike Cornelius who was already a God-fearer. Peter's vision was not decisive even for Peter, who still struggled with table-fellowship with the Gentiles. Peter's vision did not convince the circumcision party that Gentiles should be part of the church without first submitting to Jewish customs and laws, e.g. circumcision. All valid comments should be credited. Better candidates will be balanced in their responses, giving a range of informed views, a supported personal view point and providing a well-organised answer.		

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
5(a)	Describe one healing performed by Paul. Examiners should mark according to the AO1 level descriptors. Candidates are likely to discuss Paul's healing at Lystra (ch.14). In Lystra we are told of a man who was lame. Paul believes that he can be healed: 'he saw that he had faith to be healed.' Paul tells the man to "stand up on your feet", and he was cured. The response to this healing is interesting as the people thought that Barnabas and Paul were gods and offered them sacrifices. Paul understood that these people had followed Greek and Roman gods, and so explains to them, by starting from nature to get to God, that it is God who is responsible for this healing, and not them. Candidates could consider the healing of the fortune teller in Philippi (16:16–18). Paul commanded the spirit to depart from the girl immediately in the name of Jesus Christ, and she was free. Candidates could consider the healing discussed in 19:11–12: 'God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to those who were ill, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them'. Candidates could possibly argue that the man in 20:7–12 who fell asleep and then was proclaimed dead after Paul's speeches, was healed by Paul, 'don't be alarmed ... he's alive'. Following this, Paul broke bread and ate.	6	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
5(b)	Explain the relationship between Paul and the early church in Jerusalem. Examiners should mark according to the AO1 level descriptors. Responses might include: The members of the church in Jerusalem initially were fearful of him from his earlier days of persecution. After preaching in Jerusalem he was forced by the apostles, for his own safety, to leave and so he went to Tarsus. Although the early church recognised the need for the message of Christ to be taken to the Gentiles, the leaders in Jerusalem initially thought that any Gentiles who wished to become Christians should be circumcised. Furthermore, Paul was to convert those who had no contact with Judaism (not God-fearers like Cornelius), and this caused problems. The Council of Jerusalem highlights differences concerning dietary observances and circumcision. Paul was aloof from those close to Jesus, for example, James the brother of Jesus and the disciples who were the leaders of the Jerusalem Council. Acts perhaps contrary to other texts, does not report any great conflict, and seems to portray Paul and the early church in Jerusalem as on good terms. Paul is mindful of the church in Jerusalem and their views concerning circumcision, and arranges for Timothy to be circumcised in 16:3. However, it is clear that Jerusalem was more traditional and more concerned with being true to its Jewish inheritance, whereas Paul was much more focussed on the universalisation of the church. Candidates may draw on the events in Antioch, 15:1–3.	6	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
5(c)	‘The early church grew because of Paul’s missionary journeys.’ Do you agree? Show in your answer that you have considered more than one point of view. Examiners should mark according to the AO2 level descriptors. Candidates’ responses in support of the statement may include: Paul’s missionary journeys brought many Christian converts. Paul’s missionary journeys enabled the spread of the gospel to Europe. Through Paul’s missionary journeys the early church grew because of the churches that Paul founded and because of the continued relationship that he had with these churches, encouraging them in times of difficulty. (For example, Derbe, where the second mission included re-visiting churches established in the first.) Through his journeys, Paul was able to teach large numbers, of the good news of Christ. Paul was powerful in addressing local Jewish communities and was able to demonstrate how Jesus was the fulfilment of prophecy. Paul’s teaching of individuals such as Aquila and Priscilla led them to share what they had learnt with others (Apollos), who in turn evangelised others. Candidates may refer to the Ephesian elders at Miletus. Candidates’ responses against the statement may include: Paul faced a huge amount of opposition throughout his missionary journeys which undermined his effectiveness (following the healing of the fortune teller at Philippi, preaching in Corinth, in Ephesus, etc.) and therefore, may have restricted the growth of the early church.	8	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
5(c)	Throughout the journeys, Paul's life was in danger; he was beaten and imprisoned. There are a number of occasions where his teaching has not been understood, which may have prevented the early church from growing. Candidates may consider alternative reasons for the growth of the early church, for example, because of Peter, or another member of the church or persecution. All valid comments should be credited. Better candidates will be balanced in their responses, giving a range of informed views, a supported personal view point and providing a well-organised answer.		

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
6(a)	Describe what happened to the Sons of Sceva. Examiners should mark according to the AO1 level descriptors. Responses might include: 19:11–20 There were itinerant Jewish exorcists who tried naming the name of Jesus over those who had evil spirits. Seven sons of a Jewish priest named Sceva were doing this. The evil spirit answered: ‘Jesus I know and Paul I know about, but who are you?’ Following this, the man who had the evil spirit turned on them and overpowered them and they ran away naked. The response to this from the Jews and Greeks in Ephesus was that they were in awe and magnified the name of Jesus. They burnt their magic books and their charms which would have been profitable to them.	6	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
6(b)	Explain what we learn from the Acts of the Apostles about the practice of magic at that time. Examiners should mark according to the AO1 level descriptors. Responses might include: We learn that exorcisms were a regular trade. It was believed that those who had illnesses and diseases, especially mental illness, had them because of the activity of an evil spirit. There are several examples of magic in Acts, and it is suggested that magic was even practised in Jewish synagogues. Candidates may refer to Peter encountering Simon the sorcerer (RSV magician) in Acts 8. In this example the use of magic is seen as a business, a chance to earn money from bewitching people, and he wishes to purchase the power of the Holy Spirit and is condemned for wanting to do this. Again, with the exorcism of the Philippian slave girl, fortune-telling etc. was a profitable business and when Paul commanded the spirit out of her, her owners dragged Paul and Silas to the authorities. Although fortune-telling or visions can be dismissed as being visions of the individuals' making and not of the Lord's, in this case it is interesting that the girl correctly identifies the servants of the Most High God and their message of salvation. With the example of the Sons of Sceva, the fact of the existence of magical acts and books among Ephesian Christians is perhaps surprising. However, it is made clear in this text, that magic alone is no match for Christianity. Magic is seen mostly as a fraudulent way of making money. However, in the Acts of the Apostles we can see that there is a danger of confusing Christian miracles with magic which may lead to a blasphemous usurpation of Christian holy names for magical purposes. This is perhaps what Luke is fearful of.	6	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
6(c)	‘The stories about evil spirits have no relevance to Christians today.’ Do you agree? Show in your answer that you have considered more than one point of view. Examiners should mark according to the AO2 level descriptors. Candidates are likely to draw on their own personal experiences and or beliefs. All relevant comments should be credited. Candidates agreeing with the statement may include: In Western Protestant churches, you could argue that evil spirits are not relevant as very few exorcisms or deliverances take place today. Today, many Christians do not believe that physical and mental disabilities are the result of evil spirits and may look at alternative explanations for the stories of evil spirits in the Acts of the Apostles, for example, epilepsy. Candidates disagreeing with the statement may include: Many Christians believe that the stories of evil spirits are accurate descriptions of the power and activity of evil spirits, and are therefore relevant to Christians today. Many Christians believe in the reality of Satan and the power of satanic forces that can play a role in people’s lives. Jesus is seen as a healer, exorcist and controller of evil spirits in the Bible and in some African countries. These are the primary functions of a tribal shaman.	8	

Question	Answer	Marks	Guidance
6(c)	In Roman Catholic and Pentecostal churches especially, exorcisms take place and the power of evil spirits is relevant. There are Pentecostal preachers who deliver evil spirits as there are Roman Catholic priests who, with permission from the local bishop, can perform exorcisms. There are some African Catholics who believe that witchcraft is a form of evil spirits that can be expelled by priests/pastors. All valid comments should be credited. Better candidates will be balanced in their responses, giving a range of informed views, a supported personal view point and providing a well-organised answer.		