

Religious Studies Spec A

Answers and commentaries

GCSE (8062)

Paper 2B: Textual studies

Marked answers from students from the June 2022 exams.
Supporting commentary is provided to help you understand how marks are awarded and how students can improve performance.

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Answers and commentaries

Please note that these responses have been reproduced exactly as they were written by the students.

4 mark question

Question 7.3 (Theme G)

Explain two contrasting Christian beliefs about the events in Gethsemane on the night Jesus was arrested.

[4 marks]

Mark scheme

Target: AO1:3 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including similarities and differences within and/or between religions and beliefs.

First contrasting belief

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 2 marks

Second contrasting belief

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate contrast – 2 marks

Contrast may mean opposing or mean different views in terms of either belief or issue.

If similar beliefs are given only **one** of them may be credited up to 2 marks max.

Students may include some of the following points, but all other relevant points must be credited:

Mark 14:32-52

Some Christians believe that Jesus went there deliberately / he knew that he would be betrayed and handed over / it was part of his mission / it would lead to his death / his prayer reflects that he was frightened / because of this he prayed that God would take the cup away from him / yet was willing to accept God's will / he expressed this through fervent prayer revealing that he regarded God as his Father (Abba) which emphasises the close relationship between Jesus and God / Jesus was in anguish in contrast to the disciples who seemed very relaxed, etc.

Some Christians may also believe that the disciples did not support him according to Mark / they fell asleep / they ran away after the arrest / Judas may have misunderstood what Jesus wanted and thought he was creating the situation when Jesus could begin the rebellion against Rome / the ear of the High Priest's servant was cut off which Jesus condemned, etc.

The young man who ran away naked may have been Mark himself / supports the belief that there is eyewitness testimony in the Gospel, etc.

Student responses

Response A

Some Christians believe that Judas betrayed Jesus and got him arrested for 12 pieces of silver. Some Christians believe that all of Jesus' disciples fled after Jesus was arrested.

This answer does not develop the Christian beliefs that may emerge from the events in Gethsemane on the night of Jesus' arrest. The student has recalled the text correctly, but has not offered anything in the way of development or Christian beliefs. The mark scheme gives examples of possible developments e.g. by adding to the comment that the disciples 'fled', that it shows that they did not support Jesus would have been enough for the development mark.

2 marks

Response B

The disciples ran away out of fear when Jesus was taken by the high priests, they were all too scared to help him. One of the disciples cut the ear of a roman soldier off but Jesus healed it.

This is a succinct answer but fulfils the requirements of the question set. The contrasting beliefs are the fear of the disciples and their willingness to fight back. The student develops the point that the disciples ran away, explaining that they were running away out of fear. In the second point the student correctly recalls that the high priest's servant's ear was cut off indicating that the disciples wanted to resist. The healing by Jesus is not relevant to the Markan text and is not credited. This answer illustrates that it is possible to achieve full marks without having to write in too much detail.

4 marks

5 mark question

Question 8.4 (Theme H)

Explain two things that Christians can learn from the story of the call of the first disciples.

You must refer to St Mark's Gospel in your answer

[5 marks]

Mark scheme

Target: AO1:1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including beliefs, practices and sources of authority

First thing

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate thing – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate thing – 2 marks

Second thing

Simple explanation of a relevant and accurate thing – 1 mark

Detailed explanation of a relevant and accurate thing – 2 marks

Relevant and accurate reference to St. Mark's Gospel – 1 mark

Students may include some of the following points, but other relevant points must be credited.

Mark 1:16-20

Christians can learn that all Jesus had to say was, 'Follow me' / the response can be instant / it is possible to become a disciple without waiting / Christians can learn that this is a commitment / it can involve sacrifice / the first disciples left their jobs and families / Jesus made no promises other than that they would 'fish for people' (become 'fishers of men') / many people follow the example of the early disciples and give up everything eg religious, nuns, priests / it was only later that Jesus taught that there would be rewards for discipleship / it brings those called into a community of like-minded followers, etc.

NB maximum 2 marks for answers that simply narrate the text.

Student responses

Response A

Christians learn that Jesus had a lot of authority in his words, because the first disciples left their whole lives and families just because Jesus said 'take up your nets and follow me.' Christians can also learn that as disciples of Jesus we should be obedient as the first disciples obeyed Jesus.

This answer has been awarded full marks because the student demonstrates that they know the importance of the story of the call of the first disciples. The answer gives two developed points and does not need to relate the story. The idea of giving up everything and following Jesus is followed by an understanding of the faith that the early disciples must have had. These two points are enough for 4 marks. The fifth mark comes from the accurate reference to Jesus' words recorded in Mark 10:30. This quotation is correctly identified.

5 marks

Response B

One thing Christians can learn is to follow Jesus you must sacrifice everything. Belongings, money, family and friends. Everything.

This answer makes one basic point, that discipleship rests on sacrifice. The second mark is awarded for the list of examples. There is insufficient explanation or development the idea of what Christians might learn to go beyond the two marks. There is no recognisable quotation of an authority or text as required for the 5 mark question.

2 marks

12 mark question

Question 7.5 (Theme G)

'The evidence in Mark's Gospel shows that Jesus did rise from the dead.'

Evaluate this statement.

In your answer you:

- should give reasoned arguments in support of this statement
- should give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- should refer to St Mark's Gospel in your answer
- may refer to non-religious arguments
- should reach a justified conclusion.

[12 marks]
[Plus SPaG 3 marks]

Mark scheme

Target: AO2: Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including significance and influence.

Level	Criteria	Marks
4	A well-argued response, reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning leading to judgement(s) supported by knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. Reference to religion applied to the issue.	10–12
3	Reasoned consideration of different points of view. Logical chains of reasoning that draw on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. Clear reference to religion.	7–9
2	Reasoned consideration of a point of view. A logical chain of reasoning drawing on knowledge and understanding of relevant evidence and information. OR Recognition of different points of view, each supported by relevant reasons / evidence. Maximum of Level 2 if there is no reference to religion.	4–6
1	Point of view with reason(s) stated in support.	1–3
0	Nothing worthy of credit.	0

Students may include some of the following evidence and arguments, but all relevant evidence and arguments must be credited:

Mark 16:1-8

Arguments in support

- Mark's Gospel is thought to be the earliest gospel so would be reliable / some of the eyewitnesses would still be alive / it may have been Peter's memoirs.
- The women found an empty tomb / they experienced something very frightening.
- A messenger / young man in white / told them that Jesus risen from the dead and would meet the disciples in Galilee.
- Later Jesus appeared and gave instructions to the disciples about the future.
- Jesus had predicted that he would rise from the dead / if it didn't happen Jesus would have lied and not been Son of God / it was well within God's power for this to happen / it makes the resurrection the ultimate miracle / it is the climax of Mark's Gospel.
- The authorities could have produced Jesus' body but they didn't.
- The resurrection fulfilled Jesus' ministry and confirms that he is the Messiah (Christ) / it also is in the Gospel which is inspired by God so it must be true.
- There are other references in the New Testament to him appearing to other people.
- No one has ever definitively identified the location of the tomb, it became unimportant.
- The existence of the Christian Church is based on the resurrection and that has billions of members worldwide, etc.

Arguments in support of other views

- Atheists dismiss the idea of resurrection all together / there is no scientific evidence of resurrection from the dead.
- The resurrection did not happen as the women went to the wrong tomb.
- It was all made up by the early Christians to make Jesus look more powerful / the disciples and the women were lying.
- Jesus may have just passed out and recovered in the cool of the tomb and escaped / and claims of Jesus' appearances after the resurrection were hallucinations.
- The disciples may have stolen the body to be able to claim that Jesus had been raised from the dead / the Romans may have removed the body to stop further political problems / the Jewish authorities may have taken the body to be able to stop any further claims of resurrection by the followers of Jesus.
- It is a statement of faith rather than a description of a historical event / many people can believe in Jesus' teachings without the need to believe in the resurrection.
- Some people say that what the Bible says is not evidence, etc.

Student responses

Response A

Some people would disagree with this statement because there could be other explanations for the empty tomb eg the pharisees could have taken Jesus' body from the tomb so that the didn't have a chance to do the same thing themselves pretending Jesus had risen. Another explanation is that maybe Jesus never actually died and managed to recover in the tomb, and so didn't actually rise from the dead. The disciples also could have taken Jesus' body and pretended he had risen just so it looked like he was the messiah.

Other people would agree with this statement because if the pharisees took Jesus' body they would have to prove that Jesus was still dead by showing the body to everyone which would cause them to lose their reputation and status for doing such an inventive and immoral thing. I believe that evidence in Mark's gospel does show that Jesus resurrected because Jesus can't not have been dead and recovered in the tomb because Pilate sent a centurion (a professional killer) to check Jesus was dead. The disciples couldn't have stolen the body either because they were so afraid- all of them fled Gethsemane at Jesus' arrest and Peter denied Jesus 3 times because he was scared of what people would say and confronting Roman soldiers guarding the tomb wouldn't be high on their list of things to do. Also something miraculous must have happened (eg Jesus rising from the dead) to make the disciples proclaim the gospel wherever they went and live in the name of Jesus as they did later in Mark's gospel. The disciples wouldn't have done all that or been able to overcome their fears if Jesus never rose and it was based off a lie.

This is a Level 4 response

This response has two well-argued viewpoints. The first relies on two possible explanations for the empty tomb: the Pharisees taking the body of Jesus and the theory that Jesus did not actually die. The first point about the Pharisees is further developed.

The second part of the answer is fuller and the student makes references to other parts of the Markan narrative which helps their argument. The reference to the centurion is a good example. The phrase 'something miraculous shows that the student understands the position of believers. What holds this answer from being awarded 12 marks is that there are other significant explanations that could have been included and evaluated. An example would be the arguments around the role of the women in the narrative and suggestions that they went to the wrong tomb or hallucinated.

10 marks + 3 SPaG marks

Response B

Some would disagree with the statement. There may be other explanations for the empty tomb like Jesus may have recovered in the tomb and somehow escaped. Another view is that maybe the disciples stole the body from the tomb and claimed that Jesus had risen to bring glory to themselves. Maybe the pharisee stole the body from the tomb and shown it to everyone to make fun of the followers of Jesus.

All of these different ideas agree that scientifically it is impossible to rise from the dead, so Jesus can't have risen.

However, others would agree with the statement. They would agree that Jesus must have died because the centurion checked to see he was dead. This shows Jesus can't have recovered in the tomb.

Also, no-one could have stolen the body because there was a big, heavy stone in the way and there were also guards. The disciples can't have stolen the body because of this and also they had fled because of fear at this point, so wouldn't have come back. The pharisees didn't steal the body because if they had, they would have shown everyone when the disciples claimed Jesus rose from the dead. Mark's Gospel gives no sign that this happened.

I personally agree with this statement. All of the claims in Mark's Gospel add up with each other and also other historical sources like Caesars Galic Wars. Because of this, it is very unlikely Mark would lie about the resurrection.

This is a Level 4 response

This answer is a good example of a Level 4 answer. The student has presented a balanced response which shows good reasoning. In a succinct way the student has noted one of the alternative solutions that has been proposed to explain the empty tomb of Jesus. The concluding sentence to this first part sums up the argument clearly.

In the second part there are clear references to Mark's Gospel. For example, the centurion affirming Jesus' death (Mark 15:45) and the stone in front of the tomb (Mark 15:46). The reference to the guards is not Markan so is ignored for assessment.

A very strong aspect to this answer is the student's mention of the suggestion that the Pharisees may have stolen Jesus' body and the comment, 'Mark's Gospel gives no sign that this happened.' This shows that the student is confident with the material.

The reference to Caesar's Gallic Wars is usually part of a discussion about evidence for the existence of Jesus and Julius Caesar but shows that the student is aware of the need for evidence.

The answer comes to a clearly expressed conclusion supported by knowledge, evidence and information.

12 marks + 3 SPaG marks

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