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Surname

Other names

Pearson
Edexcel GCE

Centre Number

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Candidate Number

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Religious Studies

Advanced

Unit 4: Implications – Judaism

Monday 11 June 2018 – Morning

Time: 1 hour 15 minutes

Paper Reference

6RS04/1G

You do not need any other materials.

Total Marks

Instructions

- Use **black** ink or ball-point pen.
- **Fill in the boxes** at the top of this page with your name, centre number and candidate number.
- Read the passage carefully.
- Answer **BOTH** part (a) and part (b) of the question.
- Answer the question in the spaces provided
– *there may be more space than you need.*

Information

- The total mark for this paper is 50.
- The marks for **each** question are shown in brackets
– *use this as a guide as to how much time to spend on each question.*
- Quality of written communication will be taken into account in the marking of all your responses
– *you should take particular care with your spelling, punctuation and grammar, as well as the clarity of expression.*

Advice

- The assessment of your answers will be based on your knowledge and understanding of the topic in question (for 60% of the marks) and your evaluative skills (for 40% of the marks).

Turn over ►

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Judaism

It would seem that the basic issue which underlay discussions of ethics among medieval Jewish philosophers had to do with the nature of God: the importance one attaches to ethical behaviour depends upon one's assessment of human nature. Since Judaism teaches that human beings are created in the image of God and reach their most perfect self-realization through the imitation of God, it follows that our estimation of human nature depends to a great extent upon our estimation of divine nature. If God is construed as essentially active, then we should find our perfection in activity and ethics becomes a very important department of human endeavour; if, on the other hand, God is essentially contemplative, then we should find our perfection in contemplation and ethics plays a correspondingly less important role in our lives, often being seen as a propaedeutic (preparatory instruction) to intellectual (contemplative) perfection.

Maimonides presented a slightly modified version of Aristotle's doctrine of the 'Golden Mean' as the ethical teaching of Judaism. In his philosophic work, *Guide for the Perplexed*, however, he seems to advance a purely intellectualist interpretation of Judaism, reducing ethical (and, concomitantly, halakhic) perfection to the level of a necessary propaedeutic for the achievement of intellectual perfection. At the very end of the book, however, the moral, practical orientation of Judaism wins out and Maimonides informs his reader that the truest perfection involves the imitation of God's lovingkindness, justice, and righteousness after having achieved the highest achievable level of intellectual perfection. Maimonides the philosopher, one might say, urges us to imitate God through metaphysical speculation; Maimonides the rabbi cannot leave it at that and insists that such imitation have practical impact on our lives in the community.

(Source: adapted from Kellner M, 'Jewish Ethics' in Singer P (ed.), *A Companion to Ethics*, Blackwell Publishers, 2002, Edexcel Anthology)

- 1 (a) Examine the argument and/or interpretation in the passage. (30)
- (b) Do you agree with the idea(s) expressed? Justify your point of view and discuss its implications for understanding religion and human experience. (20)

(Total for Question 1 = 50 marks)

Start your answer on Page 3.



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TOTAL FOR PAPER 1G = 50 MARKS

