

Paper Reference(s)

9871

Edexcel GCE

Religious Studies

Advanced Extension Award

Tuesday 24 June 2008 – Afternoon

Time: 3 hours

Materials required for examination

Answer book (AB16)

Items included with question papers

Nil

Instructions to Candidates

In the boxes on the answer book, write your centre number, candidate number, your surname and initial(s), the paper reference and your signature. The paper reference is shown above.

Answer TWO questions, one from Section A and one from Section B.

Write your answers in the answer book provided.

You must ensure that your answers to parts of questions are clearly numbered.

Additional answer sheets may be used.

Information for Candidates

The marks for individual questions and the parts of questions are shown in round brackets: e.g. (2).

There are 21 questions in this question paper. The total mark for this paper is 80.

All questions carry 40 marks.

There are 8 pages in this question paper. Any blank pages are indicated.

Advice to Candidates

You should spend no more than 30 minutes reading the paper and deciding your choice of questions.

You will be assessed on your ability to organise and present information, ideas, descriptions and arguments clearly and logically, taking account of your use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

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Turn over

**Answer TWO questions,
ONE from Section A and ONE from Section B**

SECTION A

Answer ONE question from this section. Write your answer in the answer book provided.

You may answer the question from the point of view of one or more religious tradition(s).

**You should use the knowledge, understanding and skills which you have gained from
your areas of study.**

1. ‘Despite the many statements that God wills to save us all, that all will be forgiven who turn to Christ ... the teaching of the unlimited love of God is cancelled by a deeper insight that God’s anger will be poured out mercilessly on the wicked, who will be ‘thrown into the lake of fire’ ... If people do not repent, but persist in sin, they deserve to suffer forever ... Is this really divine revelation? It is in the Bible. That is to say, there are specific sentences in the Bible that speak of vindictive divine justice. But also in the Bible is the teaching that God is love ... One of these teachings must be sublated [cancelled out] by the other. The only question is: which?’
- (a) Analyse the argument and/or interpretation in the passage. (20)
- (b) Discuss the implications of the passage for understanding religion and human experience. (20)

(Total 40 marks)

2. ‘Revelations are not, despite what some people might hope for, clear and precise sets of doctrines and commands. Taken at their deepest level, revelations are tremendously mysterious and they are revelations of a being who remains ultimately mysterious. All genuine revelations are revelations of mystery They do not give definite and unambiguous answers to our direct questions They speak in terms of metaphor and symbol, and different religious traditions diverge partly because of their different ways of interpreting these symbols.’
- (a) Analyse the argument and/or interpretation in the passage. (20)
- (b) Discuss the implications of the passage for understanding religion and human experience. (20)

(Total 40 marks)

3. 'The processes of historical change and development are of the very essence of the diverse and continuously unfolding religious experience. Growing awareness of such historical change has played a critical role in the rise of modern theology, which cannot be understood without such an awareness. In short, one cannot understand faith working in society unless one sees it with the help of the historical perspective.'

(a) Analyse the argument and/or interpretation in the passage.

(20)

(b) Discuss the implications of the passage for understanding religion and human experience.

(20)

(Total 40 marks)

4. 'There are no objective values ... The statement of this thesis is liable to provoke one of three very different reactions. Some will think it not merely false but pernicious; they will see it as a threat to morality and to everything else that is worthwhile ... Others will regard it as a trivial truth, almost too obvious to be worth mentioning, and certainly too plain to be worth much argument. Others again will say that it is meaningless or empty, that no real issue is raised by the question whether values are or are not part of the fabric of the world. But, precisely because there can be these three different reactions, much more needs to be said.'

(a) Analyse the argument and/or interpretation in the passage.

(20)

(b) Discuss the implications of the passage for understanding religion and human experience.

(20)

(Total 40 marks)

5. 'Religious groups present believers with a set of prescribed beliefs and practices which they must follow in order to identify themselves as a Buddhist, a Christian, a Hindu, a Jew, a Muslim, a Sikh, or, indeed, as a follower of any particular faith. Yet hidden behind these is another, more controversial requirement, that those who belong to a religious community must have no doubt that theirs is the only true faith.'

(a) Analyse the argument and/or interpretation in the passage.

(20)

(b) Discuss the implications of the passage for understanding religion and human experience.

(20)

(Total 40 marks)

6. 'It may be questioned whether there is an objective religious reality 'out there' at all in the same way as there is a physical reality open to inspection, and its ontological status is just being taken for granted by referring to it as Being or Truth – an unwarranted procedure. It must first be proved by means of clinching arguments to be there, before we can proceed to discuss the validity of our statements about it. ... No domain of experience, including that of physical reality, can be proved to be there merely by argument and at some stage or another we have to fall back on experience. I believe that it is not the job of a philosopher to decide whether or not certain characteristic kinds of experience, including religious experience, have objective reference.'

(a) Analyse the argument and/or interpretation in the passage.

(20)

(b) Discuss the implications of the passage for understanding religion and human experience.

(20)

(Total 40 marks)

7. 'Psychoanalysis has made us familiar with the intimate connection between the father-complex and belief in God; it has shown us that a personal God is, psychologically, nothing other than an exalted father, and it brings us evidence every day of how young people lose their religious beliefs as soon as their father's authority breaks down. Thus we recognise that the roots of the need for religion are in the parental complex...'

(a) Analyse the argument and/or interpretation in the passage.

(20)

(b) Discuss the implications of the passage for understanding religion and human experience.

(20)

(Total 40 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION A: 40 MARKS

SECTION B

Answer ONE question from this section. Write your answer in the answer book provided.

You may answer the question from the point of view of one or more religious tradition(s).

You should use the knowledge, understanding and skills which you have gained from your areas of study.

8. ‘The Scriptures are the inspired word of God. They are the most important aid to human progress in the future.’

Analyse and evaluate this claim.

(Total 40 marks)

9. ‘Religious believers have a duty to oppose fundamentalists within their own religious community.’

Analyse and evaluate this claim.

(Total 40 marks)

10. ‘The articulation of theological thought has always been influenced by the prevailing culture.’

Analyse and evaluate this claim.

(Total 40 marks)

11. ‘Theology has to contend with modernisation and globalisation; many of the traditional responses will no longer suffice.’

Analyse and evaluate this claim.

(Total 40 marks)

12. ‘Religious history cannot be adequately perceived if it is studied through the eyes of only one period, one movement, or one category of believers.’

Analyse and evaluate this claim.

(Total 40 marks)

13. 'The history of a religion cannot fail to tell us something important about that religion.'

Analyse and evaluate this claim.

(Total 40 marks)

14. 'In ethics, questions about the proper role of sex in the pursuit of happiness are central.'

Analyse and evaluate this claim.

(Total 40 marks)

15. 'A key question in ethics is not "What ought I to do?" but "What sort of person ought I to be?"'

Analyse and evaluate this claim.

(Total 40 marks)

16. 'God is not interested in rituals. The truly religious person is the one who goes out and does good in the world.'

Analyse and evaluate this claim.

(Total 40 marks)

17. 'Religious rituals and practices have enabled us to know about God and about love. They have done more to improve the human condition than all of our scientific and technological advances.'

Analyse and evaluate this claim.

(Total 40 marks)

18. 'It is as atheistic to affirm the existence of God as it is to deny it.'

Analyse and evaluate this claim.

(Total 40 marks)

19. 'The safest bet is to act as if God does exist. If you win, you gain all; if you lose, you lose nothing.'

Analyse and evaluate this claim.

(Total 40 marks)

20. 'An insoluble problem with talk of 'secularisation' is the lack of an agreed definition of secularisation.'

Analyse and evaluate this claim.

(Total 40 marks)

21. 'A belief in God is an innate human disposition.'

Analyse and evaluate this claim.

(Total 40 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION B: 40 MARKS

TOTAL FOR PAPER: 80 MARKS

END

Quotations in Section A of this paper are in most cases taken from original texts, and except for omissions, their language has normally been left unaltered.

Sources used in Section A of this question paper

Question 1: Keith Ward, *What the Bible really teaches* (SPCK 2004), p.149

Question 2: Keith Ward, *God a Guide for the Perplexed* (Oneworld 2003), p.238

Question 3: Euan Cameron, *Interpreting Christian History* (Blackwell Publishing 2005), p.1

Question 4: J. L. Markie, *Inventing Right and Wrong* (Penguin 1977), p.15

Question 5: Anon

Question 6: Pratima Bowes, *The Hindu Religious Tradition* (Routledge & Kegan Paul), pp268–271

Question 7: S Freud, *The Penguin Freud Library* (The Hogarth Press 1990), 14:216