

***EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL OF ESWATINI***

**JC**

**EXAMINATION REPORT**

**FOR**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**YEAR**

**2023**

## **Paper 533/02**

### **General Comments**

The overall performance of the candidates was not good. The paper itself was good because it assessed all three domains (knowledge and understanding; analysis and interpretation; and evaluation) of the subject. This syllabus was written for the sixth time and the performance of the candidates ranged from 0 to 59 out of 60 marks. The zero grade obtained by some candidates was due to their failure to attempt the questions, instead they left blank spaces, something that needs to be discouraged.

Candidates managed the time allocated to the paper quite well. They also made use of the spaces provided by giving specific answers with a few exceptions of those who wrote outside the spaces provided in the question paper. Rubric errors were very minimal. The use of SiSwati words was still common, with words like 'Jolidani', 'Johane', 'Adamu' and 'Eva' featuring conspicuously. However, the use of vulgar language, unpalatable messages and cellphone numbers being left for examiners were nonexistent this time around.

We would be doing a gross disservice if we did not appreciate the great work that Educators have done in equipping candidates with the necessary skills entailed in the subject. Without their tireless efforts, dedication, patience and endless sacrifice this could not have been possible. It is noted that there were many pilfering challenges that interfered with teaching and learning, but in spite of that, educators somehow found a way to pull through. May the Almighty God refresh their strength to continue the great work they are doing within and beyond the four walls of the classroom.

### **Comments on Assessment Objectives**

#### **AO1 Knowledge and Understanding**

The poor performance by candidates can be attributed to lack of knowledge of biblical accounts. Question 1 and 3, in particular, which demanded knowledge of biblical accounts, were partially answered to by some and left unanswered by others. This, therefore, could not give a clear picture of the abilities of the candidates on this part of the assessment. Educators are encouraged to enforce the reading of the Bible (RSV) as the primary text for the subject.

#### **AO2 Analysis and Interpretation**

Candidates who did not do well on the knowledge and understanding part of the assessment could not do well on this part as well. This is because one needs to analyse and interpret information in AO1 hence the need to encourage the reading of the bible stories. However, we noted great improvement on this part of assessment for candidates who had knowledge of the biblical accounts. They were able to draw lessons and substantiate them with evidence from the Biblical accounts for top level marks.

#### **AO3 Evaluation**

Most candidates demonstrated an improved level of the skill of evaluation. They were able to give more than one points of view and supported their arguments with evidence. However, there is still a concern for some who still give one-sided argument. A few still lack the basic skill of evaluation where candidates could not even salvage a mark from this part of the question, where it is possible by providing the statement of the obvious at least, which is drawn from the stimulus. What was also noted was that some candidates have the tendency of changing the stimulus in their effort to answer the question, something which made their arguments to be incorrect. For example, 'Do you think Christians still use the Bible in moral decision making?' instead they rephrase in their response by saying Christians still use the Bible because...thus stating the importance of the Bible rather than the demand of the question.

## Comments on Specific Questions

### Question 1

This question was not done well.

- (a) (i) **State the two ways in which the shepherds were to identify Jesus.** [2]

This part of the question was well done. Most candidates were able to give the expected responses.

**Incorrect responses:** 'white clothes', 'white linen', 'kraal', 'old clothes'.

**The expected responses:** 'wrapped in swaddling clothes'; 'lying in a manger'.

- (ii) **Explain the importance of the angel's message to the shepherds.** [4]

This part of the question was not well done. Most candidates failed to understand that the question demanded them to focus on the Angel's message to the shepherds but instead they focused on the Angel's visit to the shepherds. These candidates also demonstrated a lack of knowledge of the message brought by the angels. As a result, they were not able to respond fully to the question. Candidates who were able to identify the importance of the angel's message failed to support their reasons with evidence from the angel's message.

**Incorrect responses:** 'God cares for the lowly because the shepherds were the first to receive the message about the Messiah's birth'; 'it is when Jesus was blessed'.

**The expected responses:** 'revealed Jesus' identity'; 'fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecy'; 'brought hope for salvation.'

- (b) (i) **Explain what we learn about Mary during the shepherds' visit?** [2]

This part of the question was fairly done. Most candidates were able to identify the character of Mary but failed to support Mary's character with evidence from the account of the visit of the shepherds.

**Incorrect responses:** 'Mary was not jealous; responsible; compassionate; loving; respectful; obedient; brave'.

**The expected responses:** 'she is quiet / reserved; prudent; moderate; discreet; humble'.

- (ii) **Explain two lessons drawn from the account of the visit of the shepherds?** [3]

This part of the question was not well done. Most candidates failed to draw a lesson from the account of the angel's visit to the shepherds. Instead, they drew a lesson from the account of the three Wiseman's visit in the gospel of Matthew. However, some candidates were able to identify the expected lessons but failed to corroborate the lessons with evidence from the account. Other candidates gave lessons derived from the birth of Jesus.

**Incorrect responses:** 'we should be happy when a child is born'; 'we should bring gifts'; 'we should check on each other'.

**The expected responses:** 'God cares for his people'; 'God shows no partiality'; 'God speaks through angels'; 'Jesus would be a saviour for all people'.

- (c) **Do you think the shepherds had to fear angels sent by God? Give reasons for your answer and show you have thought about different points of view.** [4]

This part of the question was not done well. Some candidates assumed that the 'fear' referred to in this question had to do with venerating or reverence towards God, yet, the question demanded that the candidates focus on the human emotion experienced by the shepherds on seeing the angels. This lack of understanding caused most candidates to score low marks.

**Incorrect responses:** Yes, they had to fear them because they represent God; God has to be respected or feared; the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

No, they were not supposed to fear the angels but fear God; Jesus taught them not to be anxious.

**The expected responses were:**

Yes: they were not familiar with angels; they could have confused them with ghosts.

NO: they should have discerned that the angels were God sent; it was common for God to send angels.

## Question 2

This question was well done.

- (a) (i) **Name the people from whom humanity inherited the original sin.** [2]

This part of the question was well done. Most of the candidates gave correct responses as demanded by the question. A few candidates listed the 'serpent' as one of the people demanded by the question.

**Incorrect responses:** 'Cain'; 'Abel'; 'Zechariah'; 'Moses'; 'Abraham'.

**The expected responses:** 'Adam'; 'Eve'.

- (ii) **Explain the consequences of the fall of man.** [4]

This part of the question was fairly done. Some candidates were unable to mention the consequences but only gave details of the punishments meted out to Adam, Eve and the serpent. Other candidates named the consequences but then failed to substantiate them with evidence from the story of the fall of man. A few candidates gave an account of the fall of man.

**The expected responses:** 'Separation from God; Suffering; Guilt; Shame; Death'.

- (b) **'So, God created man in His own image...' (Genesis 1:27)**

- (i) **What is the meaning of these words?** [2]

This part of the question was fairly done. Candidates who gave wrong responses demonstrated a lack of the skill of interpretation.

**Incorrect responses:** 'they were created in the image of God'; 'God breathed into his nostrils'; 'man is made out of dust'; 'they were a mirror of God'.

**The expected response:** 'Human beings have godly qualities'.

- (ii) **Explain what we learn about the character of the serpent in the fall of humanity.** [3]

This part of the question was well done. A majority of the candidates were able to support the character of the serpent with the appropriate evidence from the story of the fall of humanity. However, a few candidates provided lessons drawn from the fall of humanity. Such candidates gave incorrect responses such as, 'we learn that we must avoid bad company'; 'some friends can mislead you'.

**Incorrect responses:** 'serpent was selfish; dishonest; clever; smart; disobedient'.

**The expected responses:** 'It had a convincing tongue'; 'it was opportunistic'; 'it was cunning'.

- (c) **'Avoiding the forbidding fruit was difficult for Adam and Eve.' Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer and show you have thought about different points of view.** [4]

This part of the question was well done. A majority of the candidates who attained top level marks were able to substantiate their arguments with examples from the story of the fall of humanity. Candidates who scored low level marks separated Adam and Eve in their responses. For Example they blamed Eve for giving Adam the fruit.

**The expected responses were:** Yes: 'it is human nature to be curious; the tree was accessible.

No: they should have listened to God's instruction; there were many other fruits to eat.

### Question 3

This question was not well done.

- (a) (i) **Give an account of Jesus' baptism.** [4]

This part of the question was not well done. Most candidates did not know Luke's account of the Baptism of Jesus. Those who had some knowledge of the account wasted most of their time narrating the debate that took place between John and Jesus on who was to baptise the other, thereby omitting the actual baptism story. A few candidates claimed that Jesus was baptised by Peter or Moses.

**Incorrect responses:** 'sky opened instead of heaven opened'; 'turtledove or pigeon fell from the sky'; 'the dove spoke instead of the voice'.

**The expected response:** Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist in the River Jordan; While Jesus was praying, the heavens opened; The Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form as a dove; A voice was heard from heaven saying, "Thou art my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased."

- (ii) **Explain the importance of the baptism of Jesus.** [2]

This part of the question was fairly done. Candidates demonstrated understanding of the question. However, some candidates failed to provide Biblical evidence from Luke's account of the baptism of Jesus.

**The expected responses:** 'It prepared Jesus for his ministry'; 'It revealed Jesus' identity'; 'Jesus identified himself with humanity'.

- (b) (i) **Explain the symbolism in the baptism of Jesus?** [3]

This part of the question was not well done. Most of the candidates lacked knowledge of the term 'symbolism' and therefore could not identify the symbols in the baptism of Jesus. Other candidates were giving the significance of the baptism instead of explaining the symbolism.

**The expected responses:** Dove: Holy Spirit/Peace; Water: Cleansing of sins; Heavens Opened: Presence of God.

- (ii) **What do we learn about Jesus from his baptism?** [2]

This part of the question was fairly done. Some candidates were able to give the expected responses but failed to support their responses with evidence from the account of the baptism of Jesus.

**The expected responses:** Humble; Son of God.

- (c) **Do you think baptism is still significant for Christians today? Give reasons for your answer and show you have thought about different points of view.** [4]

This part of the question was fairly done. However, some candidates demonstrated lack of understanding of what baptism is and why Christians partake in baptism. Other candidates tended to refer to Christians as people in general.

**Incorrect responses:** 'people now use witchcraft'; 'people now worship ancestors'; 'they now believe in God'.

**The expected responses:** Yes: To emulate Jesus; As a way to cleanse sins.

No: People continue to sin after baptism; Baptism is only a symbol of purification.

#### Question 4

This question was not well done.

- (a) (i) **Mention two ways in which Christians can show that their bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit.** [2]

This part of the question was fairly done. However, some candidates gave vague responses such as, 'they must not do evil things that lead them to Satan; 'they must respect their bodies'. Other candidates misinterpreted the question.

**Incorrect responses:** 'remove your shoes when you enter the Temple'.

**The expected responses:** Honor God / Worship God; Obey God; Serve God with your body

- (ii) **Explain what the Bible teaches about self-respect.** [4]

This part of the question was not well done. A majority of the candidates were stating the significance of self-respect instead of explaining Biblical teachings on self-respect.

**Incorrect responses:** 'respect yourself so that you can be respected'; 'honor your father and mother'.

**The expected responses:** God created all of us and we have the Holy Spirit in us; Jesus Christ preached that we should be humble and that we should trust God more than ourselves; People are obliged to glorify God with their bodies; Jesus is a good example of self-respect.

- (b) (i) **Name one source of authority that can help Christians to make decisions.** [1]

This part of the question was well done. However, a few candidates gave general responses such as, 'external sources', 'moral decisions'. Other candidates gave the names of organisations such as, 'SWAGAA'; 'CAFOD'; 'GOGO CENTRE'.

**The expected responses:** The Bible; The Church; Your conscience; Talking to parents or trained professionals.

- (ii) **Explain the importance of the Bible in decision making.** [4]

This part of the question was not done well. Most candidates were giving the importance of the Bible without explaining the importance of the Bible in relation to decision making.

**Incorrect responses:** 'the Bible is inspired by God'; 'the Bible has authority'.

**The expected responses:** It contains the Ten Commandments which are God's principal laws; It contains examples of people who made right decisions; It has Jesus' teachings on decision making.

- (c) **Do you think Christians still use the Bible in making moral decisions? Give reasons for your answer and show you have thought about different points of view.** [4]

This part of the question was not well done. Most candidates could not provide evidence to prove that Christians still use the Bible in making moral decisions. Most candidates tended to explain the importance of the Bible thus not meeting the demand of the question.

**The expected responses:** Yes: It contains the Ten Commandments which are God's principal laws; It contains examples of people who made right decisions; It has Jesus' teachings on decision making.

No: Some Christians are guided by their peers in making decisions; some are influenced by their environment; some believe the Bible is not a modern time instrument for making decisions.