

# **RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

## **SHELL**



## **REVISION BOOKLET**

**This booklet is designed to help you revise for the Shell Examination in Religious Studies.**

**The examination that you are taking lasts one hour. During this time you should answer three questions, all of which relate to the Life of Jesus, relevant Christian practices, and to the story of the Early Church.**

**Each question is divided into THREE sections. The first section - section (a) - has a maximum of eight marks. These marks are awarded for factual knowledge. The more you know the more marks you get. The second part of the question – section (b) asks you to explain why Christians believe or do something. A maximum of seven marks can be awarded for this section. The third section – section (c) begins with a quote and asks for your opinion. You should note that if you just state your opinion you can be awarded a maximum of three marks. You will need to give alternative opinions from Christian believe to obtain the maximum for this section, which is five marks.**

**Each question is therefore out of twenty marks.**

**A further five marks are available for your use of grammar, spelling and the way you express yourself.**

**There are therefore a maximum number of sixty-five marks, which is turned into a percentage.**

## **THE LIFE OF JESUS**

**The main features of the life of Christ are examined in the examination and the way in which these events relate to**

**Christian beliefs and practices today. The most important parts of Jesus' life are examined. These include –**

**Birth**

**Baptism**

**Jesus as teacher**

**Jesus as man of prayer**

**Jesus as miracle worker**

**The Last Supper**

**The Crucifixion**

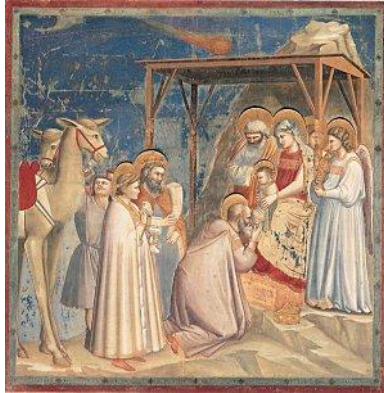
**The Resurrection**

**A limited number of events in the Early Church are examined. These may include –**

**Pentecost**

**The Life and Work of St Paul**

## **THE BIRTH OF JESUS**



**You should know both accounts of the Birth of Jesus. They are found in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. You should know the differences between the two.**

**Matthew's account is shown in the picture above. Star leads wise men (number not specified) first to Jerusalem, where they meet the evil king Herod, and then onto Bethlehem (Hebrew for House of Bread/ Arabic for House of Meat). Bethlehem was where, according to Jewish tradition, God's Chosen (Messiah) was to be born. It was the birth place of King David in the Old Testament. Wise men find Jesus in a cowshed, probably a cave, with his mother Mary, and Joseph. They worship the Child and offer gifts of Gold (symbol of kingship),**

**frankincense (symbol of priesthood, since priests burn incense before God's altar) and myrrh (a perfume used to wash the dead before burial). Jesus is, in Matthew's Gospel, born to die. The wise men are warned in a dream not to return to Jerusalem and depart to the East. Matthew's Gospel is designed for Gentile (non-Jewish) Christians. Matthew also mentions that Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem because of a census during the reign of Augustus and the governorship of Quirinius (BC 9-6).**

**Luke's Gospel begins with angels telling shepherds that the Messiah is to be born in Bethlehem. They go there and worship the Child Jesus. Shepherds were regarded as poor, simple, folk by Roman writers. Luke's Gospel is designed to be God's message to the poor. It should be noticed that, unlike Nativity Plays, the shepherds do not offer a sheep to Jesus.**

**Following on from the Birth of Jesus you should know about Christmas. Christ's Mass – Christmas – celebrates the birth of Jesus. Christians do this by**

- (a) Attending church worship – especially Midnight Mass**
- (b) Giving presents as God gave Jesus to humanity as saviour**

- (c) Have a communal family meal to celebrate the Holy Family, of Jesus, Mary and Joseph**
- (d) Eat Christmas pudding to illustrate God's goodness to the world (symbolised by the pudding), which is lit (to remember Jesus, the Light of the World)**
- (e) Decorate the home with holly (symbolising the shedding of Jesus' blood on the Cross, for which he was born to die) and mistletoe (symbolising the pure love of Jesus' mother)**
- (f) Decorate a tree, symbolising Jesus ridding the world of evil, the evergreen symbolising God being eternal.**
- (g) Eat mince pies celebrating Jesus as the Word made flesh**
- (h) Setting up a crib of the birth of Jesus**
- (i) Performing Nativity Plays**
- (j) Giving to charity as God gave himself to man**
- (k) Going to pantomimes – victory of good over evil**
- (l) Attending Christingle services**

## **THE BAPTISM OF JESUS**

**You will be expected to know about the baptism of Jesus and baptism in the Church today.**

**Jesus hears the preaching of John the Baptist in the desert. He is baptised by John in the river Jordan. John at first refuses to baptise Jesus because he is inferior to him. He baptises Jesus and as Jesus comes out of the water light shines from heaven, like the form of a dove, and a voice is heard saying: This is my beloved Son, on whom my favour rests. John is a strange preacher who tells his people to prepare for Judgement Day. John wears camel hair and eats locusts and wild honey. A comparison can be made between John and the Qumran community with its Dead Sea scrolls.**

**Baptism today – students should know about infant baptism and believers baptism, which takes place in the Baptist Church. Baptism is a sacrament that washes the believer clean from sin and makes him or her a member of the Church. Baptism is sometimes called Christening because during the service the baby is given his or her Christian names.**

## **PRAYER**

**You should know that Jesus told his disciples (followers) to pray and taught them how to do it. He did this by giving them the Lord's Prayer, sometimes called the Our Father (Latin – Pater Noster). It is –**



Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name.  
Thy Kingdom come,  
Thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.

(Trespasses = sins)

**You should also know about the reasons people say their prayers today. These may include – a need for help, thanksgiving, a desire to be close to God, a desire to say sorry for past misdeeds, and a wish to help others by**

**prayer, the living and the departed. The Lord's Prayer may help you discover some other reasons.**

## **MIRACLES**

**Jesus is regarded in the Gospels as a miracle worker. You should know that there are three types of miracles in the New Testament – healing miracles, nature miracles and the raising of the dead. You should know about some of the miracles Jesus performed. This may be the Feeding of the Five Thousand or healing the blind man. The text of these two are given below –**

The apostles gathered round Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them.

When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things. By this time, it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. "This is a remote place," they said, "and it is already very late. Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." But he answered, "You give them something to eat." They said to him, "That would take eight months of a man's wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?" "How many loaves do you have?" he asked. "Go and see." When they found out, they said, "Five - and two fish." Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. So

they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. The number of men who had eaten was five thousand.

*Mark 6:30-44*

He came to Bethsaida. They brought a blind man to him, and begged him to touch him. He took hold of the blind man by the hand, and brought him out of the village. When he had spit on his eyes, and laid his hands on him, he asked him if he saw anything. He looked up, and said, "I see men; for I see them like trees walking."

Then again he laid his hands on his eyes. He looked intently, and was restored, and saw everyone clearly. He sent him away to his house, saying, "Don't enter into the village, nor tell anyone in the village".

*Mark 8:22-26*

You should also know why miracles are so important to Christians today. They give them hope and a feeling that God loves them and will help them. They point to a better tomorrow with God in heaven. They show Christians that God is all powerful and controls the Universe. They show that God does not ignore those that pray to him.



## THE LAST SUPPER

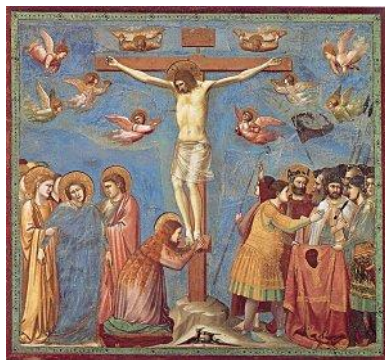
**You should know about the Last Supper. Jesus, the night before he died, celebrated the Passover meal with his disciples. He washed their hands and feet, just as a Roman slave would do before the meal. During the meal he took bread and wine and blessed it. The oldest account of this is found in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. It reads:**

### **1 Corinthians 11:23-32**

<sup>23</sup>For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread,  
<sup>24</sup>and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."<sup>25</sup>In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new

covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”<sup>26</sup> For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.<sup>27</sup> Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be answerable for the body and blood of the Lord.<sup>28</sup> Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup.<sup>29</sup> For all who eat and drink without discerning the body, eat and drink judgment against themselves.

**You should also know something of why Christians celebrate mass – Holy Communion or Eucharist – today. Some believe that it is the body and Blood of Christ that they eat; others think it symbolises the presence of Jesus in their lives. During the Reformation there was a dispute between Catholics and Protestants over this matter. All Christians believe though that this meal unites believers into a community, which we call the Church.**



## **TRIAL AND DEATH OF JESUS**

**You should know about the events leading up to and including the death of Jesus. This should include (a) his arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane, his trial before the Jewish Court and before Pilate, the humiliation of Jesus by whipping and the Crown of Thorns, and his crucifixion. You should also know why Christians regard Good Friday as a solemn and sacred day.**

## **RESURRECTION AND NEW LIFE**

You should know the story of the Resurrection plus the way in which Christians celebrate Easter as well as why and how Christians celebrate Easter –

- (a) The story of the Resurrection
- (b) Whether the notion of bodily resurrection is an acceptable idea in the modern scientific world
- (c) Celebrations of the Resurrection in the Christian Churches including the

Pascal Candle

Easter Eggs

Easter Garden

You should know

- (1) The significance of eggs in the Easter celebrations as a symbol of new life and the breaking of the tomb
- (4) The idea that Resurrection is the vindication (proof) of Christ as God's Son



## **PENTECOST**

Candidates will be expected to know what the Holy Spirit represents – fire, love, dove, truth and God as life giver – in the Christian Faith. You will also be expected to know something of the events of the first Whitsunday or Pentecost. You should also know how Christians celebrate Pentecost today and its association with Baptism and Confirmation.



They should know for example what tongues of fire and speaking in tongues mean

They should also think about whether it was an actual event or a psychological experience for St Luke, the writer of Acts.