



**B O A R D O F S T U D I E S**  
NEW SOUTH WALES

## **2010 HSC Classical Hebrew Extension Sample Answers — Written Examination**

This document contains ‘sample answers’, or, in the case of some questions, ‘answers could include’. These are developed by the examination committee for two purposes. The committee does this:

- (a) as part of the development of the examination paper to ensure the questions will effectively assess students’ knowledge and skills, and
- (b) in order to provide some advice to the Supervisor of Marking about the nature and scope of the responses expected of students.

The ‘sample answers’ or similar advice are not intended to be exemplary or even complete answers or responses. As they are part of the examination committee’s ‘working document’, they may contain typographical errors, omissions, or only some of the possible correct answers.



## Section I — Prescribed Text

### Part A

#### Question 1 (a) (i)

*Sample answer:*

The expression גְּדוּלָה רָעָה גדולה רעה refers to great harm/evil. This is to be the punishment for making offerings to other gods. This will include: All of Israel being cut off from Judah with no one remaining, Israel becoming a cursed nation and being made a mockery of among all the nations of the world.

#### Question 1 (a) (ii)

*Sample answer:*

The grammatical rule is that לְבַלְתִּי and לְמַעַן act as the preposition before the verb (which follows directly after) causing the verb to be in the form of the infinitive construct. In this extract the verb הוֹתִיר in verse 7 is in the form of the infinitive construct because it is preceded by לְבַלְתִּי and the verb הִכְרִית in verse 8 is also in the form of the infinitive construct because of לְמַעַן preceding it. (Could also mention the verb הִיזְתְּכֶם as an example from verse 8.)

#### Question 1 (b) (i)

*Sample answer:*

The subject of אֲמַרְתֶּה is Baruch.

#### Question 1 (b) (ii)

*Sample answer:*

The subject of אֲמַר is Jeremiah.

#### Question 1 (b) (iii)

*Sample answer:*

The subject of אֲמַר is God.

**Question 1 (c)*****Answers could include:***

Jeremiah is prophesying the destruction of Egypt by the Babylonians. He says this will be done by God as a punishment for abandoning Him and for serving other gods instead. The animals/creatures in his prophecy are used as metaphors which convey the severity and magnitude of this punishment.

1. עֲגֵלָה יְפֹהֶפְיָהּ מִצְרַיִם  
Egypt is being compared to a beautiful heifer. Egypt was a beautiful country at that time. The commentary suggests that the heifer is used as a metaphor for a thing of beauty.
2. קָרַץ מִצְפוֹן בָּא בָּא  
A gadfly is coming from the north. The commentary suggests that this refers to Babylon which is about to sting the heifer (Egypt). The word ‘coming’ is repeated thus emphasising the point that the heifer is about to be stung.
3. בְּעֵגְלֵי מְרֻבָּק  
The mercenaries are like stall-fed calves. The mercenaries refer to the Egyptian troops who were standing idle for a lengthy period of time thus becoming like ‘fattened calves’. This metaphor also implies that these healthy calves were being fattened for the slaughter (as is done to stall-fed calves).
4. קוֹלָהּ כִּנְחֹשׁ יֹלֵךְ  
She will rustle like a moving snake. This refers to Egypt who was loud and boisterous in the past and now her slithering can hardly be heard. The noise from this army was fearsome, but now none of her enemies will be afraid.
5. כִּי רַבּוּ מֵאַרְבֵּה  
They are more numerous than locusts. This refers to the enemy (Babylon) who is on its way to destroy Egypt. The metaphor is being used to convey the image of Egypt being outnumbered by the Babylonians and the image of Egypt being plundered just as locusts destroy anything in their path.

## Question 2 (a)

### *Sample answer:*

In the case of Rabbi Levi Bar Lakhma in the name of Rabbi Hama Bar Haninah 2 contradictory verses are mentioned in regard to *Shofar* blowing on Rosh Hashanah. The first states זכרון תרועה, the other merely יום תרועה.

Rabbi Levi states לֹא קָשִׁיָא that this is no problem as the first verse refers to Rosh Hashanah when it falls on Shabbat, when we only *mention* the *Shofar*, whereas the second verse refers to a ‘weekday’ Rosh Hashanah when the *Shofar* is actually **sounded**. Rabbi Levi arrived at this position because he believed that blowing the *Shofar* on Shabbat was prohibited by Biblical (Divine) Law.

In the case of Rava, he holds that since they used to blow the *Shofar* in the Temple, it could not possibly be a Divine prohibition re: blowing on Shabbat. He also argues that blowing the *Shofar* (as part of the *mitzvah* of Rosh Hashanah) could not be described as a forbidden labour of Shabbat (מלאכה). Rava brings a *baraita* to prove this latter point. Consequently, Rava must look for an alternative explanation as to why we do not presently blow the *Shofar* on a Rosh Hashanah that coincides with Shabbat. In this regard he brings the view of Rabbah (רבה) that it is a rabbinic decree (*Gezerah*) in case people go first to an expert on Rosh Hashanah itself for training, and inadvertently carry the *Shofar* 4 *amot* (cubits) through a public domain.

## Question 2 (b)

### *Sample answer:*

R Yochanan sought to preserve the *Shofar* blowing on Shabbat (at least in some locations) since it serves such a critical role in Jewish practice on Rosh Hashanah. He did this by linking the blowing of the *Shofar* to the presence of a Jewish court (Bet Din) – as occurred originally in Jerusalem. It is, however, unclear whether he intended to include places which merely had a court of 3, or preferred to restrict the blowing to places that housed the larger courts of 23 or 71 sages.

The *baraita* described exactly how R Yochanan’s *takkanah* (institution) came about. Following the destruction of the Temple, there was one occasion when Rosh Hashanah fell on Shabbat, and with the Sanhedrin housed in Yavneh, the *Shofar* was blown.

When some questioned this practice, R Yochanan said to them

– כבר נשמעה קרן ביבנה –

‘The horn has already been heard in Yavneh and one should not refute the ruling of a Bet Din after it has been fulfilled.’ He was concerned that forbidding at this late stage would open the court to ridicule and the dignity of the Sanhedrin would be affected adversely. So the general rule was established as a result of R Yochanan’s decree, that one could blow the *Shofar* on Shabbat on Rosh Hashanah in a town that had a Bet Din.

## Section I — Prescribed Text

### Part B

#### Question 3

*Answers could include:*

#### **Historical Background**

- Jeremiah's reign extends from the 13th year of Josiah's reign (625 BCE) until after the destruction of the second Temple and the downfall of the Judean state in 586 BCE.
- Egypt and Assyria joined forces and a new power, Babylonia, became a threat to both.
- In 609, Pharaoh-Neccho II, together with the Assyrians, advanced to battle against the Babylonians. Josiah realised that his independence would be threatened if the Assyrians were victorious and tried to block their advance.
- He was defeated and met his death as a result.
- There were many who saw this as revenge for having tried to rid the land of idols and it even strengthened their belief in idol worship.
- Pharaoh-Neccho II had Jehoahaz (who succeeded Josiah) arrested, and appointed his brother, Jehoakim, who was pro-Egypt, as king.
- Assyria was losing strength and Babylon was beginning its conquest. In 605 Nebuchadnezzar became King of this new empire (regarded by Jeremiah as 'servant of the Lord' because Jeremiah regarded him as God's chosen instrument for punishing Judea).
- Jeremiah declared that all nations must submit to Him.

#### **Situation of the people of Judah**

- Division between Jeremiah's loyal followers and the majority who were immoral, committing adultery and supporting oppression of the poor.
- Breakdown within the moral fabric of society – lack of faith and trust amongst each other.
- Laws regarding slavery were not adhered to by the majority.
- Priests and prophets were deaf to the prophecies of Jeremiah – even hating him, plotting against his life.
- Idolatry was rife.
- Superstition, augury and divination were popular.
- Offerings were served to the 'queen of heaven' by the women.
- Human sacrifice was re-introduced (Menasseh, who was considered one of the most wicked kings to reign in Judah, set up an idol in the Temple on the 17th Tammuz and forced his own son to pass through Molech).
- Josiah's reaction to the Torah scroll found whilst repairing the Temple reflects the attitude of the population.
- He feared retribution from God and made an effort to purify the land.
- However, the pull of idolatry was too strong and it quickly became the preferred choice.

- The continued existence of the Temple led them to believe that despite their sins and the remonstrations of the prophets, the situation was not all that critical as God could not allow the Temple to be destroyed.
- This false feeling of national self-confidence was what Jeremiah was about to undermine.

#### **Reference to Jeremiah 44:1–6**

- Referring to those Jews now living in Egypt.
- Reference made to the destruction of Jerusalem which had been witnessed by these people. Jeremiah is trying to prove that just as Jerusalem was destroyed because of the lack of faith displayed by the people of Judah, so too will God continue to punish the Jewish people until they ‘turn back from their wickedness and not make offerings to other gods’ (verse 5).

#### **Reference to Jeremiah 44:13–14**

- The first reference outlines the reason for this punishment, the second reference describes the actual punishment itself. Just like Jerusalem was destroyed, so too will Egypt be destroyed by the sword, famine and pestilence.
- Although the survivors will long to return to Judah, only a few survivors will return.

## **Section II — Non-prescribed Text**

### **Question 4 (a)**

#### ***Sample answer:***

באו and עבדו, הריעו.

### **Question 4 (b)**

#### ***Sample answer:***

It affects our understanding as one would arrive at different meanings of the text depending on the *Qeré/Ketiv* – see below.

*Qeré* – He made us, and we are His, His people, and the flock of His pasture.

*Ketiv* – He made us, and not we (have made ourselves), His people, the flock of His pasture.

### **Question 4 (c)**

#### ***Sample answer:***

The title means a ‘Psalm of Thanksgiving’. The content of the psalm fully reflects this because it refers constantly to being thankful to God, serving Him in joy, and coming before Him singing. It describes Israel as entering the Temple – another reason for thanksgiving. Thanks are also due to God because He is good, His mercy endures forever etc.

**Question 5 (a)****Sample answer:**

The gods of the nations are idols (worth nothing, do nothing), the Lord however created the heavens.

**Question 5 (b)****Answers could include:**

- 1) Poetic style and vocabulary – use of repetition (verses 1 and 2 – שִׁירוּ)  
(verses 7 and 8 – הָבוּ)  
– use of parallelism (see verse 1)  
Purpose – to emphasise a particular message from the psalmist.  
Poetic vocabulary/phrases eg מִיּוֹם לַיּוֹם (verse 2), הוֹדַד וְהִדְרָה (verse 6), תְּבִלָּה (verse 10), בְּלִתְמוֹנִים (verse 10)
- 2) Alliteration – the repetition of the letter sounds in verses 1 and 2 is used to express the element of song
- 3) Synonymous parallelism / Synthetic parallelism (verse 1) / Antithetical parallelism (verse 5)  
– Parallelism in its various forms – a basic structure of Hebrew poetry where phrases of similar construction or similar or opposing meaning are placed alongside each other. For example verse 5, which is a comparison between Israelite and pagan worship
- 4) Repetition (see verses 1 and 2, verses 7 and 8)  
(*shiru . . . shir . . . shiru* etc) (*havu* verses 7 and 8) – purpose – for emphasis
- 5) Personification  
– non-human is spoken of in human terms eg verse 1 ‘all the earth sings to the Lord’
- 6) Anthropomorphism (The Lord is king)  
– describing God in human terms in order to make God’s reality more pertinent to the reader eg verse 10 ‘The Lord reigns’ (like a human king)
- 7) Metaphor (strength and glory are his sanctuary)  
– an implied comparison – see verse 6 ‘strength and glory/crown are His sanctuary’.  
The metaphor is used to make the message of the psalm vivid, to catch the attention of the people and exemplify the reality for them.

**Question 6 (a) (i)****Sample answer:**

מָלַס – מָלַס / Piel / Perfect or Past

**Question 6 (a) (ii)****Sample answer:**

יִבְשׁוּ – בִּוּשׁ / Kal/Pa'al / Imperfect or Future



**Question 6 (b)**

*Sample answer:*

- 1) Building a house
- 2) Guarding a city
- 3) Earning a living (providing food to eat)

**Question 6 (c)**

*Sample answer:*

- 1) Children are an inheritance from God
- 2) Like arrows, children can serve as a protection
- 3) Children can defend their parents against enemies at the gates