



OUNDLE

School

Academic Scholarship 2014

Religious Studies

Time Allowed: **1 hour and 30 minutes**

- Answer Section 1 and **two** questions from Section 2

Section 1: Comprehension 20 marks

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow. In this extract the author is considering whether ethical decisions (decisions about whether actions are right or wrong) are better approached by a religious or a non-religious perspective:

What was your reaction recently when it emerged that thousands of unborn babies had been burnt by NHS hospitals? And that some had been put into 'waste-to-energy' incinerators and so used as fuel to heat hospitals?

Revulsion, I would imagine. But why? I would hazard that it is either because you are religious or because your customs and beliefs derive from faith, even if you outwardly reject it. Because if you grant that an unborn baby is not a life and that once aborted it could have no further use, there is at least an argument that these bodies might as well be put to use. Why not use unwanted babies to keep a hospital nice and warm?

It isn't such a ridiculous argument. And it is time that atheists began to take such stories as seriously as believers do. Atheists tend to imply that there isn't much work to do after discarding a belief in God. On the contrary, after discarding God, all the work of establishing morals is still before you.

We continuously see the uniqueness of life being whittled away at all ends. With each year that goes by in increasingly post-Christian societies abortion becomes less and less of an issue. Too few atheists make arguments as passionate as those of believers over the aborting of unborn infants if they are of the 'wrong' sex, or have some birth defect.

At the other end of life we watch euthanasia become more accepted. More and more it is about granting people a 'humane' end, rather than focusing on what such a move does to the significance of life as a whole.

The concept of the holiness of human life is a Christian notion which might very easily not survive our present generation.

Adapted from Douglas Murray's article 'Ethics for Atheists, Can Human Life be Sacred in a post-Christian World?'.

- a) In relation to any religion you have studied, describe the teaching of that religion about the value of human life. 6 marks
- b) In your own words, explain why the author feels that religious approaches to abortion and euthanasia are better than non-religious approaches. 6 marks
- c) “The author is right to say that religious approaches to Ethics are better than non-religious approaches”. Do you agree? Give reasons for your ideas and show that you have thought about different points of view. You may refer to some of the ideas found in the above article. 7 marks

Section 2: Essay writing – 10 marks each

Choose **2** questions from the following choice of 4:

1. With reference to at least one story from the Bible, explain what the Bible teaches about the role of a Prophet.
2. With reference to at least one story from the Bible, explain what the Bible teaches about Jesus’ relationship with outcasts.
3. Choose one religion, and explain how that religion makes use of their holy book.
4. Consider whether or not David Cameron was correct to say in a recent speech that “Britain is a Christian country”.

Section 1: 20 marks

Section 2: 20 marks (10 marks for each of the two essay questions)

Total: 40 marks