



RS.CB1 The Nature of God

AQA 8062 · Calculators not allowed · about 55 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Answer ALL questions. Show all your working.

1 This question checks key vocabulary used in Christian teaching about the nature of God.

(a) Give one word that means 'all-powerful', used to describe God. (1)

(b) Give one word that means 'all-knowing', used to describe God. (1)

(c) State what is meant by describing God as benevolent. (1)

(d) State what is meant by God's justice. (1)

(e) Give one word that means 'present everywhere at once', used to describe God. (1)

(Total for Question 1 is 5 marks)

2 Give three ways the Bible describes the nature of God.

(Total for Question 2 is 3 marks)

- 3** Explain two Christian teachings about the power of God (God's omnipotence). Refer to scripture or another source of Christian belief and teaching in your answer.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

- 4** Explain two contrasting Christian beliefs about why an all-powerful, loving God allows suffering to exist. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority in your answer.

(Total for Question 4 is 5 marks)

5 This question is about the nature of God in Christian belief. It is the AQA-style 24-mark, five-part question.

- (a)** State one word for God's quality of knowing everything. (1)
- (b)** Give two ways the Bible describes God as just. (2)
- (c)** Explain two Christian teachings about God's omnipresence. Refer to scripture in your answer. (4)
- (d)** Explain two contrasting Christian views on whether God's justice or God's mercy should be given greater priority when understanding God's character. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority in your answer. (5)
- (e)** Evaluate this statement: 'An all-powerful and totally loving God would not allow suffering to exist.' In your answer you should: refer to Christian teaching, refer to different points of view, reach a justified conclusion. (12)

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(Total for Question 5 is 24 marks)

- 6** Explain two ways a belief in God's justice and love might affect the life of a Christian believer today.

(Total for Question 6 is 4 marks)

- 7** Give three sources of authority Christians use to learn about the nature of God.

(Total for Question 7 is 3 marks)

Mark scheme · RS.CB1 The Nature of God

Question 1

- (a) **B1** omnipotent, oe
- (a) **Answer: Omnipotent.**
- (b) **B1** omniscient, oe
- (b) **Answer: Omniscient.**
- (c) **B1** all-loving / good, oe
- (c) **Answer: All-loving, or perfectly good.**
- (d) **B1** God treats everyone fairly, without favouritism, and wrongdoing has consequences, oe
- (d) **Answer: God treats everyone fairly, without favouritism, and wrongdoing has consequences.**
- (e) **B1** omnipresent, oe
- (e) **Answer: Omnipresent.**

Question 2

- **B1** all-powerful / omnipotent, oe
- **B1** all-knowing / omniscient, oe
- **B1** loving / benevolent, oe
- **Answer: Any three: all-powerful (omnipotent); all-knowing (omniscient); loving (benevolent).**

Question 3

- **B1** point 1: God's power is shown in creation, since God is believed to have created the universe simply by speaking, oe
- **B1** development: Genesis 1:3 states 'Let there be light,' and there was light, showing creation happening through God's word alone, oe
- **B1** point 2: nothing is beyond God's power or ability, oe
- **B1** development: Jeremiah 32:17 states 'Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power ... Nothing is too hard for you', oe
- **Answer: E.g. (1) God's power shown through creation by his word alone (Genesis 1:3); (2) nothing is beyond God's power (Jeremiah 32:17).**

Question 4

- **B1** belief 1: some Christians hold the free will defence, that suffering results from humans misusing the free will God gave them, not from any failure of God's love or power, oe
- **B1** development: based on Genesis 3, the Fall, in which Adam and Eve's disobedience is described as bringing sin and its consequences into the world, oe
- **B1** belief 2: other Christians hold that some suffering has a purpose within God's plan, helping to develop character, faith and compassion, oe
- **B1** development: based on James 1:2-4, which teaches that the testing of faith produces perseverance and maturity, and Romans 8:28, that God works for good in all things for those who love him, oe
- **B1** reference to a source of wisdom and authority is made accurately, oe
- **Answer: Contrast: the free will defence (Genesis 3) vs suffering as purposeful character-building within God's plan (James 1:2-4, Romans 8:28).**

Question 5

- (a) **B1** omniscient / omniscience, oe
- **(a) Answer: Omniscient (or omniscience).**
- (b) **B1** God judges without favouritism, oe
- (b) **B1** wrongdoing has consequences under God's justice, oe
- **(b) Answer: E.g. God judges without favouritism, and wrongdoing has consequences.**
- (c) **B1** point 1: God's presence cannot be escaped, since God is present everywhere at once, oe
- (c) **B1** development: Psalm 139:7-10 asks 'Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?', concluding that God is present in every place, oe
- (c) **B1** point 2: God is present with and available to believers at all times, offering comfort and guidance, oe
- (c) **B1** development: in Matthew 28:20, Jesus promises his followers, 'I am with you always, to the very end of the age', oe
- **(c) Answer: E.g. God's presence cannot be escaped (Psalm 139:7-10); God is present with believers at all times, offering comfort (Matthew 28:20).**
- (d) **B1** view 1: some Christians emphasise that God's justice means sin must have consequences, oe
- (d) **B1** development: based on Romans 6:23, 'For the wages of sin is death', showing that God's justice takes wrongdoing seriously, oe
- (d) **B1** view 2: other Christians emphasise that God's mercy and steadfast love are God's defining priority towards humanity, oe
- (d) **B1** development: based on Psalm 103:8, 'The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love', and Lamentations 3:22-23, that God's compassions 'are new every morning', oe
- (d) **B1** reference to a source of wisdom and authority made accurately, oe
- **(d) Answer: Contrast: justice-first emphasis (Romans 6:23) vs mercy/love-first emphasis (Psalm 103:8, Lamentations 3:22-23).**
- (e) **L4** (10-12): A well-argued, balanced answer that considers more than one point of view in a developed way, using accurate and detailed references to Christian teaching and/or scripture to support each point, and reaches a clear, justified conclusion.
- (e) **L3** (7-9): A clear and reasoned answer that considers more than one point of view, supported by relevant references to Christian teaching and/or scripture, though the justification of the conclusion may be less developed.
- (e) **L2** (4-6): A reasoned answer that considers at least one point of view, with some relevant supporting evidence, but with limited or no consideration of an alternative view.
- (e) **L1** (1-3): One or more relevant points are made, but with little or no supporting evidence and no reasoned conclusion.
- (e) **L0** (0): No relevant content.
- **(e) Indicative content:**
 - Agree: the philosopher J.L. Mackie argued (in 'Evil and Omnipotence', 1955) that an omnipotent, wholly good God and the existence of evil are logically inconsistent, since a truly all-powerful and all-loving being would both want to and be able to remove all evil.
 - Agree: the sheer scale and apparent randomness of some suffering, such as suffering caused by natural disasters rather than human choice, is hard to reconcile with the idea of a loving God who is in control of creation.
 - Agree: if suffering exists to 'build character', this seems to fail for suffering that destroys a person rather than developing them, or that is experienced by those, such as very young children or animals, who cannot draw any moral lesson from it.
 - Disagree: the free will defence argues that most human suffering results from humans misusing the free will God gave them (Genesis 3), so it is not evidence against God's power or love, since removing suffering would mean removing free will itself.
 - Disagree: the 'soul-making' or character-building response argues some suffering serves a good purpose within God's plan, developing perseverance, compassion and faith, drawing on Romans 8:28 and James 1:2-4.
 - Disagree: in the Book of Job, God's response to Job's suffering is not to explain it away but to assert his own greater wisdom and the limits of human understanding (Job 38-42), which many Christians take as showing that a lack of a full explanation does not disprove God's love.
 - A balanced answer might conclude that the argument presents a genuine intellectual challenge that Christian theology has not fully 'solved', but that the free will defence and soul-making responses offer Christians reasonable, if not certain, grounds for continuing to believe in a loving and all-powerful God.

Question 6

- **B1** point 1: a Christian might try to forgive others, reflecting God's own mercy towards them, oe
- **B1** development: e.g. Matthew 6:14-15 teaches that God forgives those who forgive others, encouraging a Christian to let go of grudges, oe
- **B1** point 2: a Christian might work for fairness and support charitable causes, reflecting belief that God cares about justice for all people, oe
- **B1** development: e.g. drawing on Micah 6:8, to 'act justly and to love mercy', a Christian might volunteer for or donate to organisations that tackle poverty or injustice, oe
- **Answer: E.g. forgiving others out of gratitude for God's mercy (Matthew 6:14-15); working for fairness/justice, e.g. through charity (Micah 6:8).**

Question 7

- **B1** the Bible, oe
- **B1** the Nicene Creed, oe
- **B1** personal religious experience / prayer, oe
- **Answer: Any three: the Bible; the Nicene Creed; personal religious experience or prayer.**