1.11 Christian Responses to Suffering: The Cross and the Book of Job: 30-minute Pack

AQA 8062 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions.

1 Give two Christian teachings about suffering that come from the Book of Job and the New Testament.

(Total for Question 1 is 2 marks)

2 Evaluate the view that Christian teaching gives a satisfying answer to the problem of suffering. In your answer you should: give reasoned arguments to support this statement, give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view, refer to religious arguments, and reach a justified conclusion.

(Total for Question 2 is 15 marks)

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3 Explain two ways the Book of Job can offer comfort to a believer who has experienced injustice or loss.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

4 Explain two Christian beliefs about why suffering happens, referring to Christian teaching rather than philosophical theodicies, in the context of the Book of Job and the New Testament.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

5 Explain two reasons why some Christians might struggle with the idea of a God who allows suffering, despite scripture about the cross and Job.

(Total for Question 5 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 1.11 Christian Responses to Suffering: The Cross and the Book of Job: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

teaching 1: suffering is not always punishment for sin, as shown in the Book of Job, oe **B1**

teaching 2: through the cross Christians believe God shares in human suffering and can bring good from suffering, oe **B1**

Answer: Any two: e.g. Job shows suffering is not always punishment; the cross shows God suffers with people and can bring good from suffering.

Question 2

Level 1 Simple, brief statements about Christian teaching on suffering with little development, limited use of scripture or religious argument, and a weak or missing conclusion. **1-3**

Level 2 Some developed arguments for and against the view with reference to Christian teaching or scripture, but limited evaluation and a partial conclusion. **4-6**

Level 3 Clear, developed arguments on both sides, using Christian sources such as the Book of Job, the cross and Romans 8:18-28, and a reasoned conclusion that addresses the question. **7-9**

Level 4 A comprehensive, balanced evaluation with sustained, well-supported arguments for and against, showing understanding of theological complexity and arriving at a justified, well-argued conclusion. **10-12**

Indicative content:

- Arguments that Christian teaching is satisfying: the cross shows a God who enters suffering with humanity, making pain meaningful because God shares it.
- Job provides a model where faith can persist even without explanation, which comforts believers who face unexplained suffering.
- Paul in Romans 8:18-28 promises that God can bring good out of suffering and that present suffering is temporary compared with future glory, offering hope.
- Christian responses include practical care by the church, pastoral support and liturgical practices that give sufferers a sense of being held by a faith community.
- Arguments that Christian teaching is not fully satisfying: some sufferers find the idea of a loving, omnipotent God who allows extreme suffering hard to reconcile, and promises of future glory may not comfort those in acute distress.
- The Book of Job does not provide a clear explanation or justification for suffering, and God does not give a direct answer, which can leave believers dissatisfied.
- Some critics argue that appeals to future good or spiritual growth can seem to minimise present pain or to demand passive acceptance rather than justice or action.
- A balanced conclusion might accept that Christian teaching offers meaning, companionship and hope for many, while acknowledging that for others it does not fully resolve the emotional and intellectual problem of suffering.

Question 3

point 1: Job models honest lament and questioning of God, showing that expressing grief and anger can be part of faithful life, oe **B1**

development: this can comfort sufferers who fear that doubt or complaint is disallowed, oe **B1**

point 2: the book ends with restoration of Job, offering hope that God may ultimately restore or bring justice, oe **B1**

development: this provides hope that current injustice or loss may not be the final word, oe **B1**

Answer: E.g. Job shows faithful lament is permitted; Job's restoration offers hope of future restoration or justice.

Question 4

point 1: some Christians believe suffering happens as part of living in a broken world, shown in Job where suffering occurs without obvious moral cause, oe **B1**

development: Job's story shows that even the righteous can suffer, so suffering is part of human experience not always linked to personal sin, oe **B1**

point 2: some Christians believe suffering can lead to spiritual growth or trust in God, as Paul suggests in Romans 8:18-28, oe **B1**

development: Paul teaches present suffering is temporary and God can bring good out of it, encouraging believers to maintain faith, oe **B1**

Answer: E.g. suffering as part of a fallen, broken world shown by Job; suffering can lead to spiritual growth and be used by God for good, as in Romans 8:18-28.

Question 5

point 1: the scale of some suffering, such as natural disasters or child suffering, seems incompatible with belief in a loving, all-powerful God, oe **B1**

development: this emotional difficulty can lead to loss of faith or anger even if scriptures offer theological responses, oe **B1**

point 2: scriptural answers may appear to defer answers to the future (Romans) or to avoid direct explanation (Job), which some find intellectually unsatisfying, oe **B1**

development: this can lead some Christians to seek additional philosophical or pastoral explanations rather than accept the scriptural responses alone, oe **B1**

Answer: E.g. the scale of suffering can make belief in a loving omnipotent God hard; scriptural responses that defer answers or avoid direct explanation can feel unsatisfying.

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