3.11 Predestination and Free Will: 30-minute Pack

AQA 8062 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions.

1 Explain two contrasting Muslim beliefs about how Al-Qadar relates to human free will. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority in your answer.

(Total for Question 1 is 5 marks)

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2 This question is about predestination and free will in Islam. It is the AQA-style 24-mark, five-part question: parts (a) to (d) are worth 12 marks; part (e) is the 12-mark evaluation.

(a) State what is meant by 'divine decree'. **(1)**

(b) Give two ways belief in Al-Qadar might comfort a Muslim during hardship. **(2)**

(c) Explain two reasons why belief in Al-Qadar does not remove human responsibility for actions. Refer to the Qur'an in your answer. **(4)**

(d) Explain two contrasting Muslim views on how much a person's fate is fixed compared with how much they can change through their own actions. Refer to a source of wisdom and authority in your answer. **(5)**

(e) Evaluate this statement: 'If Allah already knows what will happen, humans cannot really have free will.' In your answer you should: refer to Muslim teaching, refer to different points of view, reach a justified conclusion. **(12)**

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(Total for Question 2 is 24 marks)

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Mark scheme · 3.11 Predestination and Free Will: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

belief 1: some Muslims emphasise Allah's complete knowledge and decree over all things, so that everything that happens, good or bad, ultimately occurs by Allah's will, oe **B1**

development: this reflects the Hadith of Jibril, recorded in Sahih Muslim, in which belief in 'divine decree, both good and bad' is named as one of the six articles of faith, oe **B1**

belief 2: other Muslims emphasise that humans are genuinely free to choose their actions and are held responsible for them, oe **B1**

development: Qur'an 18:29 teaches, 'So whoever wills, let him believe; and whoever wills, let him disbelieve', supporting genuine human free choice, oe **B1**

reference to a source of wisdom and authority made accurately, oe **B1**

Answer: Contrast: everything occurring by Allah's decree (Hadith of Jibril) vs genuine human free choice (Qur'an 18:29).

Question 2

(a) Allah's decision/knowledge about everything that will happen, oe **B1**

(a) Answer: Allah's decision/knowledge about everything that will happen.

(b) believing hardship happens as part of Allah's wise plan, rather than being meaningless, oe **B1**

(b) trusting that Allah is in ultimate control, which can reduce feelings of anxiety or despair, oe **B1**

(b) Answer: E.g. believing hardship has a purpose within Allah's plan; trusting Allah is in ultimate control.

(c) point 1: the Qur'an teaches that people must act to change their own circumstances, rather than relying only on fate, oe **B1**

(c) development: Qur'an 13:11 teaches, 'Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves', oe **B1**

(c) point 2: Muslims will be judged on the Day of Judgement according to their own deeds, which would be unjust if they had no genuine choice, oe **B1**

(c) development: this belief in judgement according to freely chosen deeds is linked to belief in Akhirah, when each person's actions are weighed, oe **B1**

(c) Answer: E.g. Qur'an 13:11 teaches people must change their own condition; judgement according to deeds requires real choice.

(d) belief 1: some Muslims hold that major matters, such as the length of a person's life and their provision (rizq), are fixed by Allah's decree before birth, oe **B1**

(d) development: this view is supported by the Hadith of Jibril's inclusion of belief in 'divine decree, both good and bad', recorded in Sahih Muslim, as one of the pillars of faith (Iman), oe **B1**

(d) belief 2: other Muslims place greater weight on human effort and prayer, believing sincere prayer (dua) and good choices can genuinely affect a person's circumstances, within limits Allah allows, oe **B1**

(d) development: this reflects a widely repeated Islamic teaching, recorded in a hadith attributed to al-Tirmidhi, in which the Prophet is reported to have told a man to 'tie your camel, then trust in Allah', encouraging both effort and reliance on Allah's decree, oe **B1**

(d) reference to a source of wisdom and authority made accurately, oe **B1**

(d) Answer: Contrast: major matters fixed by decree (Hadith of Jibril) vs effort and prayer genuinely mattering ('tie your camel' hadith).

(e) **L4** A well-argued, balanced answer that considers more than one point of view in a developed way, using accurate and detailed references to Muslim teaching and/or the Qur'an to support each point, and reaches a clear, justified conclusion. **10-12**

(e) **L3** A clear and reasoned answer that considers more than one point of view, supported by relevant references to Muslim teaching and/or the Qur'an, though the justification of the conclusion may be less developed. **7-9**

(e) **L2** 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. **4-6**

(e) **L1** One or more relevant points are made, but with little or no supporting evidence and no reasoned conclusion. **1-3**

(e) **L0** No relevant content. **0**

(e) Indicative content:

- Agree: if Allah already knows exactly what a person will choose, some argue the outcome is fixed in advance, so the choice cannot be genuinely open.
- Agree: the Hadith of Jibril lists belief in divine decree, 'both good and bad', as an article of faith, which some read as meaning even a person's choices are ultimately decreed by Allah.
- Agree: historically, Muslim theologians have debated this exact tension (sometimes discussed as the relationship between Allah's knowledge and human agency), showing it is a genuinely difficult question, not one with an easy answer.
- Disagree: many Muslim scholars argue Allah's knowledge of what a person will freely choose does not cause that choice, in the same way a person can know a friend well enough to predict their decision without controlling it.
- Disagree: the Qur'an directly commands people to choose belief or disbelief (Qur'an 18:29), and holds people responsible for their actions on the Day of Judgement, which assumes real freedom to choose.
- Disagree: teachings such as 'tie your camel, then trust in Allah' show that mainstream Muslim practice assumes real human effort and choice matter, alongside trust in Allah's decree.
- A balanced answer might conclude that Muslims are taught to hold both Allah's complete knowledge/decree and genuine human responsibility together as a mystery beyond full human understanding, rather than treating them as a simple contradiction.

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