3.15 Sunni and Shia Islam: The Historical Origins of the Split: 10-minute Pack

AQA 8062 · about 10 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer all questions. Short-answer responses may be phrases; the evaluation question requires full sentences. Time guidance: 10 minutes for the whole pack.

1 Which of these best explains the meaning of the name 'Sunni', used for the branch of Islam that makes up the majority of Muslims worldwide?

- ☐ A: Those who reject the authority of the Quran
- ☐ B: Those descended from the tribe of Quraysh
- ☐ C: Those who follow only the teachings of Ali
- ☐ D: Those who follow the Sunnah, the example and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

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2 Give two reasons why Abu Bakr was chosen by some of the early Muslim community to be the first caliph, referring to the succession crisis context in 632 CE.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

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3 Give three ways the further conflict following the assassination of the third caliph, Uthman, deepened the divide between early Sunni and Shia Muslims.

(Total for Question 3 is 3 marks)

4 Explain two ways the Shia doctrine of the Imamate differs from the Sunni understanding of religious leadership after Muhammad.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 3.15 Sunni and Shia Islam: The Historical Origins of the Split: 10-minute Pack

Question 1

selecting option D, those who follow the Sunnah, the example and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, cao **B1**

Answer: D

Question 2

reason 1: he was a close companion and father-in-law of Muhammad, giving him prestige and trust, oe **B1**

reason 2: some community leaders valued immediate continuity and political stability, so they chose an experienced leader quickly, oe **B1**

Answer: Close companion and father-in-law of Muhammad; chosen to provide quick continuity and political stability.

Question 3

Uthman's assassination led to a period of conflict among Muslims over who should lead next, weakening trust that the community could agree on leadership peacefully, oe **B1**

Ali became caliph in this period of conflict, but his authority was contested by other prominent Muslims, so his caliphate did not end the succession dispute, oe **B1**

the conflict hardened developing views about legitimate leadership, contributing to the more distinct religious and political identities that developed into Sunni and Shia Islam, oe **B1**

Answer: E.g. the assassination led to further conflict over leadership; Ali's caliphate remained contested; the conflict hardened the developing Sunni-Shia identities.

Question 4

point 1: Shia Muslims traditionally believe the Imam must be a descendant of Ali and Fatima, appointed by divine guidance rather than chosen by the community, oe **B1**

development: this means, for Shia Muslims, religious authority continues through a specific spiritual lineage rather than through election or consensus, oe **B1**

point 2: Sunni Muslims do not require a leader to belong to the Prophet's family, and historically saw leadership as something the wider Muslim community could confer on a suitably qualified person, oe **B1**

development: this reflects a Sunni emphasis on the community's collective judgement, whereas the Shia view places religious authority within a single, divinely guided line, oe **B1**

Answer: E.g. Shia: Imam must descend from Ali and Fatima, divinely appointed; Sunni: no family requirement, leadership conferred by the community's judgement.

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