



RS.IP11 Laylat al-Qadr and the Last Ten Nights of Ramadan

AQA 8062 • Calculators not allowed • about 50 minutes

Total Marks

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Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Answer ALL questions. Show all your working.

- 1** Which one of the following best defines Laylat al-Qadr, the Night of Power, as understood in Islam during the month of Ramadan?

- ☐ A The night when Eid al-Fitr is celebrated
- ☐ B The night when the first verses of the Qur'an were revealed to Muhammad
- ☐ C The night when all Muslims must complete the Hajj pilgrimage
- ☐ D The night when the Prophet Muhammad was born

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

- 2** Define the term i'tikaf as it is practised by some Muslims during the last ten nights of Ramadan in the mosque.

(Total for Question 2 is 1 mark)

- 3** Outline three ways Muslims often mark the last ten nights of Ramadan in mosques and at home.

(Total for Question 3 is 3 marks)

- 4** Explain two reasons why Laylat al-Qadr is significant for Muslims today, giving one development for each reason.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

- 5 Explain two contrasting Muslim beliefs about the importance of the last ten nights of Ramadan compared with the rest of Ramadan. In your answer include a reference to the Qur'an as a source of authority.

(Total for Question 5 is 5 marks)

- 6 Give three features of the practice of i'tikaf during the last ten nights of Ramadan.

(Total for Question 6 is 3 marks)

- 7 Explain two benefits that believers may gain from observing i'tikaf during the last ten nights of Ramadan.

(Total for Question 7 is 4 marks)

- 8 Explain two practices Muslims commonly perform specifically on Laylat al-Qadr and why they do them.

(Total for Question 8 is 4 marks)

- 9** State two textual sources that Muslims might use to support the observance of Laylat al-Qadr and give the short reference for one of them.

(Total for Question 9 is 2 marks)

- 10** Give three practical reasons why some Muslims choose to spend the last ten nights in the mosque rather than at home.

(Total for Question 10 is 3 marks)

- 11** Explain two ways the worship and practices in the last ten nights of Ramadan may differ from the rest of Ramadan, focusing on intensity and setting.

(Total for Question 11 is 4 marks)

- 12** Evaluate the view that Laylat al-Qadr is the most important night in the Muslim calendar. 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 12 is 15 marks)

Mark scheme · RS.IP11 Laylat al-Qadr and the Last Ten Nights of Ramadan

Question 1

- **B1** selecting B, Laylat al-Qadr as the night when the first verses of the Qur'an were revealed to Muhammad
- **Answer: B**

Question 2

- **B1** a period of spiritual retreat usually spent in a mosque devoted to prayer, Qur'an recitation and reflection, oe
- **Answer: A period of spiritual retreat, usually spent in a mosque, devoted to prayer, Qur'an recitation and reflection.**

Question 3

- **B1** increased night prayer such as extra taraweeh or tahajjud prayers, oe
- **B1** intensive recitation and study of the Qur'an, often aiming to complete its reading, oe
- **B1** performing i'tikaf, staying in the mosque for a period of retreat and devotion, oe
- **Answer: Any three: extra night prayers (taraweeh or tahajjud); increased Qur'an recitation or study; performing i'tikaf in the mosque.**

Question 4

- **B1** reason 1: it marks the night when the first revelation of the Qur'an began, so it is seen as the beginning of God communicating guidance to humanity, oe
- **B1** development of reason 1: this gives the night special spiritual authority and prompts Muslims to seek guidance by reading the Qur'an and reflecting on its message, oe
- **B1** reason 2: it is believed that worship on this night has greater reward than at other times, including mercy and forgiveness of sins, oe
- **B1** development of reason 2: this belief motivates Muslims to increase prayer, supplication and repentance on that night in the hope of securing multiplied blessings, oe
- **Answer: E.g. it commemorates the first revelation of the Qur'an so Muslims focus on reading and reflecting on the text; worship is believed to be more rewarded, encouraging extra prayer and repentance.**

Question 5

- **B1** belief 1: many Muslims believe the last ten nights are uniquely important because of Laylat al-Qadr, so they concentrate extra worship and devotion on those nights, oe
- **B1** development 1: this leads to practices such as i'tikaf, extra night prayers and intensified Qur'an recitation focused on the final nights, oe
- **B1** belief 2: some Muslims emphasise that the whole month of Ramadan is sacred and commanded, so consistent devotion across all nights is important and not only the last ten, oe
- **B1** development 2: this view leads to maintaining regular fasting, prayer and charity throughout Ramadan rather than concentrating only on the final nights, oe
- **B1** reference to the Qur'an: citing Surah 97 (Al-Qadr) or noting that the Qur'an was revealed in Ramadan is credited, oe
- **Answer: Contrast: one view gives special status to the last ten nights because of Laylat al-Qadr and so encourages extra worship then; another view stresses the whole month is sacred and commands steady devotion. Reference example: Surah 97:1-5 identifies the Night of Power, supporting the first view.**

Question 6

- **B1** staying in the mosque for extended periods, often the final ten nights, oe
- **B1** spending time in prayer, Qur'an recitation and reflection rather than normal daily activities, oe
- **B1** limiting social contact and focusing on worship, sometimes with simple meals in the mosque, oe
- **Answer: Any three: staying in the mosque for the period, focusing on prayer and Qur'an recitation, reducing normal social activities to concentrate on worship.**

Question 7

- **B1** benefit 1: deeper spiritual focus and closeness to Allah through extended prayer and reflection, oe
- **B1** development 1: removing distractions in the mosque can help a believer concentrate on repentance and seeking forgiveness, oe
- **B1** benefit 2: strengthening knowledge and understanding of the Qur'an through concentrated recitation and study, oe
- **B1** development 2: this study can increase personal faith and guide moral behaviour after Ramadan, oe
- **Answer: E.g. increased closeness to Allah and focused repentance; improved understanding of the Qur'an which can strengthen faith and behaviour.**

Question 8

- **B1** practice 1: intense prayer and night vigils, seeking Allah's mercy and forgiveness, oe
- **B1** development 1: belief that worship on Laylat al-Qadr is especially rewarded motivates spending the night in prayer, oe
- **B1** practice 2: extra Qur'an recitation and reflection, oe
- **B1** development 2: because Laylat al-Qadr is associated with the revelation of the Qur'an, reciting it is seen as particularly meritorious, oe
- **Answer: E.g. staying awake praying and making supplication to seek mercy; reciting and reflecting on the Qur'an because the night commemorates its first revelation.**

Question 9

- **B1** source 1: the Qur'an, for example Surah 97 (Al-Qadr) 97:1-5, oe
- **B1** source 2: hadith reports about the Prophet Muhammad's practice of seeking the night in worship, oe
- **Answer: Qur'an (Surah 97:1-5) and hadith about the Prophet seeking Laylat al-Qadr; citation example: Surah Al-Qadr 97:1-5.**

Question 10

- **B1** to remove distractions and focus wholly on worship, oe
- **B1** to join a community engaged in collective prayers and support, oe
- **B1** to increase the chance of being present for Laylat al-Qadr whenever it occurs in the last ten nights, oe
- **Answer: Any three: fewer distractions; communal encouragement for prayer; greater likelihood of being present on Laylat al-Qadr.**

Question 11

- **B1** difference 1: worship is often intensified in the last ten nights with more night vigils and longer prayers than typical nights earlier in Ramadan, oe
- **B1** development 1: this is because of the search for Laylat al-Qadr and the belief in multiplied rewards, oe
- **B1** difference 2: some believers take up i'tikaf and stay in the mosque, changing the setting from home-based observance to a mosque-centred retreat, oe
- **B1** development 2: staying in the mosque reduces normal family and work duties and concentrates time on communal and individual worship, oe
- **Answer: E.g. increased intensity of prayer and night vigils due to seeking Laylat al-Qadr; change of setting where some perform i'tikaf in the mosque rather than worshipping at home.**

Question 12

- **Level 1** (1-3): A few basic statements about Laylat al-Qadr or other important nights with little development, showing limited evaluation and few, if any, religious arguments.
- **Level 2** (4-6): Some developed points for and against the view, with some use of religious ideas or examples, but analysis is partial and the conclusion, if present, is not fully justified.
- **Level 3** (7-9): Clear arguments for and against the view, with relevant religious examples and reasoning. The conclusion is supported though it may lack synthesis or full evaluation of counterarguments.
- **Level 4** (10-12): A well-developed, balanced evaluation that considers strong religious reasons on both sides, uses relevant examples such as Qur'anic and hadith evidence, and arrives at a justified, well-explained conclusion.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Arguments that Laylat al-Qadr is most important: it commemorates the first revelation of the Qur'an (Surah 97:1-5) and so marks the beginning of divine guidance for humanity; worship on the night is believed to carry multiplied reward, making it uniquely meritorious; historical practice of the Prophet Muhammad seeking the night supports its centrality.
 - Arguments against the claim: other events and times are also central, for example the whole month of Ramadan with its commanded fast, or the Day of Arafah during Hajj which many Muslims consider supremely important for forgiveness and prayer; obligatory acts like the five daily prayers and the two Eids have communal and legal significance that some may place above a single night.
 - Religious arguments and evidence: citing Surah 97 and hadith about the Prophet's practice on the last ten nights supports the pro view; references to the Qur'an's repeated commands about prayer, charity and the yearly cycle of worship can support the alternative view.
 - Consideration of different Muslim perspectives: some Muslims emphasise personal spiritual experience and rank Laylat al-Qadr highest, while others emphasise the institutional obligations of Islam and the importance of communal rites.
 - A justified conclusion that weighs the spiritual significance of Laylat al-Qadr against the broader, ongoing obligations and events in Islam, and that recognises legitimate diversity of view among Muslims.