

**UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
&
INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

TRS 201 MAIN EXAM, MAY 2013

TITLE OF PAPER : Studies in the Old Testament II
COURSE CODE : TRS 201
DURATION : 3 Hours

INSTRUCTIONS: 1. Choose and answer **four (4)** questions in all.
2. Write in clear, grammatically correct sentences.

All questions are worth 25 marks.

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PERMISSION TO DO SO**

TRS 201 (M) Studies in the Old Testament II, May 2013

Question 1

Discuss the role of prophets in the ancient covenant community using fitting illustrations of your points from the selection of prophets we studied in this course. [25]

Question 2

Identify and explain the two integral aspects of prophecy which are best captured in the prophetic messages of the pre-exilic community. [25]

Question 3

Conduct a historical analysis of the following text focussing specifically on what the text reflects about the material conditions on life against which Amos prophesied. [25]

Amos 4

*Hear this word, you cows of Bashan
who are on Mount Samaria,
who oppress the poor, who crush the needy,
who say to their husbands, 'Bring something to drink!'*
² *The Lord GOD has sworn by his holiness:
The time is surely coming upon you,
when they shall take you away with hooks,
even the last of you with fish-hooks.*
³ *Through breaches in the wall you shall leave,
each one straight ahead;
and you shall be flung out into Harmon,**

says the LORD.

Question 4

Define the concept of “radical monotheism” and describe how the prophet Second Isaiah persuasively argues for it in his prophecies. [25]

Question 5

Analyse the rhetorical features of the book of *Lamentations*. [25]

Question 6

Demonstrate through ideological criticism how the book of *Song of Songs* can be said to both affirm and transform patriarchal gender relations. [25]

Question 7

Canonically analyse the Psalm text below. [25]

Psalm 1

¹ *Happy are those
who do not follow the advice of the wicked,
or take the path that sinners tread,
or sit in the seat of scoffers;
² but their delight is in the law of the LORD,
and on his law they meditate day and night.
³ They are like trees
planted by streams of water,
which yield their fruit in its season,
and their leaves do not wither.
In all that they do, they prosper.*

⁴ *The wicked are not so,
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgement,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;
⁶ for the LORD watches over the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.*

Question 8

What point is the author making in the text below? Give a full explanation to your answer. [25]

Ecclesiastes 3

*For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
² a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
³ a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
⁴ a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
⁵ a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
⁶ a time to seek, and a time to lose;*

*a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
7 a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
8 a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.*

*9 What gain have the workers from their toil? 10 I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. 11 He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover, he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. 12 I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; 13 moreover, it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil. 14 I know that whatever God does endures for ever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it; God has done this, so that all should stand in awe before him. 15 That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already is; and God seeks out what has gone by.**

16 Moreover, I saw under the sun that in the place of justice, wickedness was there, and in the place of righteousness, wickedness was there as well. 17 I said in my heart, God will judge the righteous and the wicked, for he has appointed a time for every matter, and for every work. 18 I said in my heart with regard to human beings that God is testing them to show that they are but animals. 19 For the fate of humans and the fate of animals is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and humans have no advantage over the animals; for all is vanity. 20 All go to one place; all are from the dust, and all turn to dust again. 21 Who knows whether the human spirit goes upwards and the spirit of animals goes downwards to the earth? 22 So I saw that there is nothing better than that all should enjoy their work, for that is their lot; who can bring them to see what will be after them?

Question 9

Apply sociological criticism in a reading of the book of Ruth [25]

Question 10

Explain the view that the Jewish apocalypse of Daniel does not only offer encouragement to persecuted believers to stick to their faith but also serves as protest against imperial rule. [25]