

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY & RELIGIOUS STUDIES
BA HUMANITIES IV/ IDE BA HUMANITIES IV
SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION JULY 2013

COURSE TITLE : GOSPEL TRADITION I

COURSE CODE : TRS 402

DURATION : TWO (2) HRS

INSTRUCTIONS :

- a. Choose and answer three (3) questions only.
- b. Write in clear, grammatically correct sentences.
- c. All questions carry equal marks.

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TRS 402/ IDE TRS 402 Exam (S) July 2013

1. “Since historians can establish only what *probably* happened in the past, they cannot show that miracles happened, since this would involve a contradiction – that the most probable event is the most probable” (Ehrman, 2008: 93).

In your opinion, do you think historians are within their professional rights to adjudicate miracle claims? Critically discuss.

2. Attempt a reconstruction of the life of Jesus. In your answer, make reference to his birth, ministry and death. In your view, do you think it is possible to reconstruct the life of Jesus confidently?
3. With special reference to the Gospel tradition, write detailed and explanatory notes on the following:
 - (a) Platonism.
 - (b) Stoicism.
 - (c) Gnosticism
4. What do we learn from the gospel tradition about life in the first century CE? Support your answer with good examples.
5. Discuss the arguments raised against the two documentary hypothesis.
6. Below are parallel passages from the synoptic gospels.
 - (a) Identify which of them is Mark.
 - (b) In what ways do the other gospel writers edit Mark and why?

A	B	C
<p>And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to his own city. And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" -- he then said to the Paralytic-- "rise, take up your bed and go home." And he rose and went home. When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.?"</p>	<p>And when he returned to Caper'na-um after some days, it was reported that he was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, not even about the door; and he was preaching the word to them. And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and when they had made an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic lay. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak thus? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question thus in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your pallet and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" --he said to the paralytic-- "I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home." And he rose, and immediately took up the pallet and went out before them all; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"</p>	<p>On one of those days, as he was teaching, there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem; and the power of the Lord was with him to heal. And behold, men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they sought to bring him in and lay him before Jesus; but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus. And when he saw their faith he said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you." And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, "Who is this that speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only?" When Jesus perceived their questionings, he answered them, "Why do you question in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" --he said to the man who was Paralyzed--"I say to you, rise, take up your bed and go home." And immediately he rose before them, and took up that on which he lay, and went home, glorifying God. And amazement seized them all, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, "We have seen strange things today."</p>