

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

SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION, JULY 2014

**TITLE OF PAPER : Gospel Tradition I
COURSE CODE : TRS 402
DURATION : 2 Hours**

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Choose and answer three (3) questions in all.
2. Write in clear, grammatically correct sentences.
3. The paper consists of four (4) printed pages including the cover page.
4. All questions carry equal marks.

DO NOT OPEN THIS PAPER UNTIL THE INVIGILATOR GRANTS YOU PERMISSION TO DO SO.

Question 1

Discuss the historical problems with Matthew and Luke's infancy narratives. In your opinion, do you think the nativity stories are historically reliable? [20]

Question 2

With reference to this text provided below and other related passages, comment on John's use of the phrase "the Jews". [20]

True Disciples

³¹ Jesus then said to **the Jews** who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." ³³ **They answered** him, "We are descendants of Abraham, and have never been in bondage to any one. How is it that you say, 'You will be made free'?"

³⁴ Jesus answered **them**, "Truly, truly, I say to you, every one who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵ The slave does not continue in the house for ever; the son continues for ever. ³⁶ So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed. ³⁷ I know that you are descendants of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me, because my word finds no place in you. ³⁸ I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father."

Jesus and Abraham

³⁹ **They answered** him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do what Abraham did, ⁴⁰ but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth which I heard from God; this is not what Abraham did. ⁴¹ You do what your father did." **They said** to him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God."

⁴² Jesus said to **them**, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I proceeded and came forth from God; I came not of my own accord, but he sent me. ⁴³ Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. ⁴⁴ You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies. ⁴⁵ But, because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. ⁴⁶ Which of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me?"

⁴⁷ He who is of God hears the words of God; the reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God."

⁴⁸ **The Jews** answered him, "Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?" ⁴⁹ Jesus answered, "I have not a demon; but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me. ⁵⁰ Yet I do not seek my own glory; there is One who seeks it and he will be the judge. ⁵¹ Truly, truly, I say to you, if any one keeps my word, he will never see death." ⁵² **The Jews** said to him, "Now we know that you have a demon. Abraham died, as did the prophets; and you say, 'If any one keeps my word, he will never taste death.' ⁵³ Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets died! Who do you claim to be?" ⁵⁴ Jesus answered, "If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing; it is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say that he is your God. ⁵⁵ But you have not known him; I know him. If I said, I do not know him, I should be a liar like you; but I do know him and I keep his word. ⁵⁶ Your father Abraham rejoiced that he was to see my day; he saw it and was glad." ⁵⁷ **The Jews** then said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?" ⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am." ⁵⁹ So they took up stones to throw at him; but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple. (John 8:31 -59)

Question 3

Name and describe each of the literary forms in extracts A – D. Explain their *sitz-im-leben* and function in meeting the primary needs of the early Christian communities.

Extract A	Extract B	Extract C	Extract D
<p>22 And as they were eating, he took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." 23 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. 24 And he said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. 25 Truly, I say to</p>	<p>40 And a leper came to him beseeching him, and kneeling said to him, "If you will, you can make me clean." 41 Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, "I will; be clean." 42 And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. 43 And he sternly charged him, and sent him away at once, 44 and said to him, "See that you say nothing to any one; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a proof to the people."</p>	<p>8 In those days, when again a great crowd had gathered, and they had nothing to eat, he called his disciples to him, and said to them, ² "I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days, and have nothing to eat; ³ and if I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way; and some of them have come a long way." ⁴ And his disciples answered him, "How can one feed these men with bread here in the desert?" ⁵ And he asked them, "How many loaves have you?" They said, "Seven." ⁶ And he commanded the crowd to sit down on the ground; and he took the seven loaves, and having given thanks he broke them and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and they set them before the crowd. ⁷ And they</p>	<p>28 And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?" 29 Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one; 30 and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and</p>

you, I shall not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." (Mark 14: 22-25)	45 But he went out and began to talk freely about it, and to spread the news, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town, but was out in the country; and people came to him from every quarter." (Mark 1:40-45)	had a few small fish; and having blessed them, he commanded that these also should be set before them. ⁸ And they ate, and were satisfied; and they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. ⁹ And there were about four thousand people. (Mark 8:1-9)	with all your strength.' ³¹ The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:28-31)
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Question 4

What do you understand by redaction criticism? Do you think this method is of any intellectual benefit in your reading of the gospel tradition? [20]

Question 5

Discuss the points of conflict between Jesus and the Jewish authorities. In your answer, give close references to the primary text. [20]

Question 6

Attempt a critical reading of the parable below. [20]

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

²⁵ Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. ^[a] "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" ²⁶ He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" ²⁷ He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." ²⁸ And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live."

²⁹ But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" ³⁰ Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹ Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³² So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii, ^[b] gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' ³⁶ Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" ³⁷ He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise." (Luke 10: 25-37)