

University of Swaziland  
Faculty of Humanities & Institute of Distance Education  
Department of Theology & Religious Studies  
Supplementary Examination, July 2016

**Course Code** : TRS 200  
**Course Title** : Studies in the Old Testament I  
**Duration** : Two (2) Hours

Instructions

- a. Choose and answer three (3) questions.
- b. Your answer to each question should not exceed two and a half pages.
- c. Write in clear and grammatically correct sentences.
- d. Your answers should demonstrate knowledge of the primary text where necessary.
- e. It is also expected that you will use relevant technical vocabulary that is normally used in Old Testament Studies.

**\*NB:** All questions are worth 20 marks.

This questions paper comes with three (3) appendices.

**DO NOT OPEN THIS EXAMINATION QUESTION PAPER UNTIL THE  
INVIGILATOR GRANTS YOU PERMISSION TO DO SO**

## **TRS 200 Studies in the Old Testament I (S) July 2016**

### **Question 1**

It is important for the student of Old Testament Studies to have a clear understanding of what the term “Old Testament” refers to. Explain why this is the case.

### **Question 2**

Discuss the manner in which Ancient Near Eastern topography influenced the development of culture in that region during the Old Testament period.

### **Question 3**

Analyse the two creation stories in Genesis 1:1 – 2: 4a and Genesis 2: 4b – 25 side by side demonstrating how the Priestly writers edit the older Yahwhist account. In your analysis, make sure that you explain the probable reasons for the editorial changes. (See Appendix 1)

### **Question 4**

Apply either sociological criticism or narrative criticism (specifically characterisation) in interpreting the patriarchal narrative in Genesis 27. (See Appendix 2)

### **Question 5**

Discuss the apparent harshness of some ancient Hebrew legislation as found in law codes that are contained in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. In your discussion pay particular attention to how canonical criticism can help a reader explain this apparent feature of these statutes.

### **Question 6**

Demonstrate how the narrative of David’s reign (2 Samuel 9 – 1 Kings 2) is shaped by the Deuteronomistic historian’s religious and political agenda.

### **Question 7**

Explain the distinctiveness and purpose of the covenant renewal ceremony found in Nehemiah 8: 1 – 12 (See Appendix 3).

### **Question 8**

Define the notion of a “revisionist history” and apply your understanding of this concept in demonstrating how the Chronicles revise the historical narratives contained in Samuel – Kings.

---

### Appendix 1: for Question 3

#### Genesis 1:1 – 2:4a

1 In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, 2 the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. 3 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

6 And God said, "Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." 7 So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. 8 God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

9 And God said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. 10 God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. 11 Then God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it." And it was so. 12 The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. 13 And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

14 And God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, 15 and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth." And it was so. 16 God made the two great lights — the greater light to rule the day

#### Genesis 2: 4b - 25

4 These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created. In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, 5 when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up — for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; 6 but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground — 7 then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. 8 And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. 9 Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

10 A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches. 11 The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; 12 and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. 13 The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Cush. 14 The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." 19 So out of the

and the lesser light to rule the night — and the stars. 17 God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, 18 to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19 And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

20 And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky." 21 So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. 22 God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." 23 And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

24 And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind." And it was so. 25 God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

26 Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."

27 So God created humankind in his image,  
in the image of God he created them;  
male and female he created them.

28 God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." 29 God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for

ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. 20 The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. 21 So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. 22 And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. 23 Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
this one shall be called Woman,  
for out of Man this one was taken."

24 Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

cursed is the ground because of you;  
in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life;  
18 thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;  
and you shall eat the plants of the field.

19 By the sweat of your face  
you shall eat bread  
until you return to the ground,  
for out of it you were taken;  
you are dust,  
and to dust you shall return."

20 The man named his wife Eve, because she was the mother of all living. 21 And the LORD God made garments of skins for the man and for his wife, and clothed them.

22 Then the LORD God said, "See, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" — 23 therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to

food. 30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. 31 God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

**Genesis 2: 1 – 4a**

1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. 2 And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. 3 So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

till the ground from which he was taken. 24 He drove out the man; and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a sword flaming and turning to guard the way to the tree of life.

## Appendix 2: Question 4

### Genesis 27 (NRSV)

1When Isaac was old and his eyes were dim so that he could not see, he called his elder son Esau and said to him, 'My son'; and he answered, 'Here I am.' <sup>2</sup>He said, 'See, I am old; I do not know the day of my death. <sup>3</sup>Now then, take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field, and hunt game for me. <sup>4</sup>Then prepare for me savoury food, such as I like, and bring it to me to eat, so that I may bless you before I die.'

5 Now Rebekah was listening when Isaac spoke to his son Esau. So when Esau went to the field to hunt for game and bring it, <sup>6</sup>Rebekah said to her son Jacob, 'I heard your father say to your brother Esau, <sup>7</sup>"Bring me game, and prepare for me savoury food to eat, that I may bless you before the Lord before I die." <sup>8</sup>Now therefore, my son, obey my word as I command you. <sup>9</sup>Go to the flock, and get me two choice kids, so that I may prepare from them savoury food for your father, such as he likes; <sup>10</sup>and you shall take it to your father to eat, so that he may bless you before he dies.' <sup>11</sup>But Jacob said to his mother Rebekah, 'Look, my brother Esau is a hairy man, and I am a man of smooth skin. <sup>12</sup>Perhaps my father will feel me, and I shall seem to be mocking him, and bring a curse on myself and not a blessing.' <sup>13</sup>His mother said to him, 'Let your curse be on me, my son; only obey my word, and go, get them for me.' <sup>14</sup>So he went and got them and brought them to his mother; and his mother prepared savoury food, such as his father loved. <sup>15</sup>Then Rebekah took the best garments of her elder son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them on her younger son Jacob; <sup>16</sup>and she put the skins of the kids on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. <sup>17</sup>Then she handed the savoury food, and the bread that she had prepared, to her son Jacob.

18 So he went in to his father, and said, 'My father'; and he said, 'Here I am; who are you, my son?' <sup>19</sup>Jacob said to his father, 'I am Esau your firstborn. I have done as you told me; now sit up and eat of my game, so that you may bless me.' <sup>20</sup>But Isaac said to his son, 'How is it that you have found it so quickly, my son?' He answered, 'Because the Lord your God granted me success.' <sup>21</sup>Then Isaac said to Jacob, 'Come near, that I may feel you, my son, to know whether you are really my son Esau or not.' <sup>22</sup>So Jacob went up to his father Isaac, who felt him and said, 'The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.' <sup>23</sup>He did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him. <sup>24</sup>He said, 'Are you really my son Esau?' He answered, 'I am.' <sup>25</sup>Then he said, 'Bring it to me, that I may eat of my son's game and bless you.' So he brought it

to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank. <sup>26</sup>Then his father Isaac said to him, 'Come near and kiss me, my son.' <sup>27</sup>So he came near and kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his garments, and blessed him, and said,

'Ah, the smell of my son

is like the smell of a field that the Lord has blessed.

<sup>28</sup> May God give you of the dew of heaven,  
and of the fatness of the earth,  
and plenty of grain and wine.

<sup>29</sup> Let peoples serve you,  
and nations bow down to you.

Be lord over your brothers,  
and may your mother's sons bow down to you.

Cursed be everyone who curses you,  
and blessed be everyone who blesses you!

30 As soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, when Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of his father Isaac, his brother Esau came in from his hunting. <sup>31</sup>He also prepared savoury food, and brought it to his father. And he said to his father, 'Let my father sit up and eat of his son's game, so that you may bless me.' <sup>32</sup>His father Isaac said to him, 'Who are you?' He answered, 'I am your firstborn son, Esau.' <sup>33</sup>Then Isaac trembled violently, and said, 'Who was it then that hunted game and brought it to me, and I ate it all\* before you came, and I have blessed him?—yes, and blessed he shall be!' <sup>34</sup>When Esau heard his father's words, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, 'Bless me, me also, father!' <sup>35</sup>But he said, 'Your brother came deceitfully, and he has taken away your blessing.' <sup>36</sup>Esau said, 'Is he not rightly named Jacob?\* For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright; and look, now he has taken away my blessing.' Then he said, 'Have you not reserved a blessing for me?' <sup>37</sup>Isaac answered Esau, 'I have already made him your lord, and I have given him all his brothers as servants, and with grain and wine I have sustained him. What then can I do for you, my son?' <sup>38</sup>Esau said to his father, 'Have you only one blessing, father? Bless me, me also, father!' And Esau lifted up his voice and wept.

39 Then his father Isaac answered him:

'See, away from\* the fatness of the earth shall your home be,

and away from\* the dew of heaven on high.  
<sup>40</sup> By your sword you shall live,  
and you shall serve your brother;  
but when you break loose,\*  
you shall break his yoke from your neck.'

41 Now Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and Esau said to himself, 'The days of mourning for my father are approaching; then I will kill my brother Jacob.'<sup>42</sup> But the words of her elder son Esau were told to Rebekah; so she sent and called her younger son Jacob and said to him, 'Your brother Esau is consoling himself by planning to kill you.<sup>43</sup> Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; flee at once to my brother Laban in Haran,<sup>44</sup> and stay with him for a while, until your brother's fury turns away—<sup>45</sup> until your brother's anger against you turns away, and he forgets what you have done to him; then I will send, and bring you back from there. Why should I lose both of you in one day?'

46 Then Rebekah said to Isaac, 'I am weary of my life because of the Hittite women. If Jacob marries one of the Hittite women such as these, one of the women of the land, what good will my life be to me?'

---

## Appendix 3: Question 7

### Nehemiah 8:1 – 12

<sup>1</sup>all the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had given to Israel. <sup>2</sup>Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. <sup>3</sup>He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. <sup>4</sup>The scribe Ezra stood on a wooden platform that had been made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah on his right hand; and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hash-baddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam on his left hand. <sup>5</sup>And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. <sup>6</sup>Then Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, 'Amen, Amen', lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground. <sup>7</sup>Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites,<sup>\*</sup> helped the people to understand the law, while the people remained in their places. <sup>8</sup>So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, 'This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep.' For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. <sup>10</sup>Then he said to them, 'Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our Lord; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.' <sup>11</sup>So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, 'Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be grieved.' <sup>12</sup>And all the people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared to them.

13 On the second day the heads of ancestral houses of all the people, with the priests and the Levites, came together to the scribe Ezra in order to study the words of the law.

---