

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

TRS 402 MAIN EXAMINATION, DECEMBER 2015

**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.

IDE/TRS 402 Gospel Tradition I, (M) December 2015**Question 1**

From the critical methods you have studied in this course, which one would you prefer in your reading of the Gospel traditions? Explain why you find the chosen method useful. [20]

Question 2

Explore hypotheses forwarded by scholars in solving the synoptic problem. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the suggested solutions? [20]

Question 3

Discuss the historical problems with Luke's nativity stories. What conclusions could be drawn about Luke as a writer? [20]

Question 4

"The ways in which the Jesus' Wife papyrus was exposed all have their parallels in past history: the questionable provenance, the suspicious resonance with contemporary problems and debates, the amateurish script, the ill-concealed copying of a printed source, the claim that the papyrus 'would have been impossible to forge'" (Jones 2015:377). In view of current scholarly research, discuss the extent to which you support this claim. [20]

Question 5

Explain ways in which woes given below could have fuelled tensions between Jesus and the Jewish leaders.

¹³ "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the door of the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to. [¹⁴] [b]

¹⁵ "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when you have succeeded, you make them twice as much a child of hell as you are.

¹⁶ "Woe to you, blind guides! You say, 'If anyone swears by the temple, it means nothing; but anyone who swears by the gold of the temple is bound by that oath.' ¹⁷ You blind fools! Which is greater: the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred? ¹⁸ You also say, 'If anyone swears by the altar, it means nothing; but anyone who swears by the gift on the altar is bound by that oath.' ¹⁹ You blind men! Which is greater: the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred? ²⁰ Therefore, anyone who swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. ²¹ And anyone who swears by the temple swears by it and by the one who

dwells in it. ²² And anyone who swears by heaven swears by God's throne and by the one who sits on it.

²³ "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. ²⁴ You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel.

²⁵ "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. ²⁶ Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean.

²⁷ "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean. ²⁸ In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.

²⁹ "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You build tombs for the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous. ³⁰ And you say, 'If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' ³¹ So you testify against yourselves that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets. ³² Go ahead, then, and complete what your ancestors started!

³³ "You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?

³⁴ Therefore I am sending you prophets and sages and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town. ³⁵ And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. ³⁶ Truly I tell you, all this will come on this generation.

³⁷ "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing. ³⁸ Look, your house is left to you desolate. ³⁹ For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'^[c]"

Question 6

From the genealogy of Jesus given below, discuss the most intriguing aspects in Matthew's explicit reference to women. What message is the author communicating to the readers and why? [20]

The Genealogy of Jesus the Messiah.

1 This is the genealogy^[a] of Jesus the Messiah^[b] the son of David, the son of Abraham:

² Abraham was the father of Isaac,

Isaac the father of Jacob,

Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,

³ Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was **Tamar**,

Perez the father of Hezron,

Hezron the father of Ram,

⁴ Ram the father of Amminadab,
Amminadab the father of Nahshon,
Nahshon the father of Salmon,

⁵ Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was **Rahab**,
Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was **Ruth**,
Obed the father of Jesse,

⁶ and Jesse the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been **Uriah's wife**,

⁷ Solomon the father of Rehoboam,
Rehoboam the father of Abijah,
Abijah the father of Asa,

⁸ Asa the father of Jehoshaphat,
Jehoshaphat the father of Jehoram,
Jehoram the father of Uzziah,

⁹ Uzziah the father of Jotham,
Jotham the father of Ahaz,

Ahaz the father of Hezekiah,

¹⁰ Hezekiah the father of Manasseh,
Manasseh the father of Amon,
Amon the father of Josiah,

¹¹ and Josiah the father of Jeconiah^[c] and his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon.

¹² After the exile to Babylon:

Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel,
Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,

¹³ Zerubbabel the father of Abihud,
Abihud the father of Eliakim,

Eliakim the father of Azor,

¹⁴ Azor the father of Zadok,

Zadok the father of Akim,

Akim the father of Elihud,

¹⁵ Elihud the father of Eleazar,

Eleazar the father of Matthan,

Matthan the father of Jacob,

¹⁶ and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and **Mary** was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah.