

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

**TRS 100 SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION, JULY 2015**

**TITLE OF PAPER : Introduction to Biblical Studies**  
**COURSE CODE : TRS 100**  
**DURATION : 2 Hours**

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Choose and answer three (3) questions in all.
2. Choose at least one question from each section.
3. Write in clear, grammatically correct sentences.
4. The paper consists of five (5) printed pages including the cover page.
5. All questions carry equal marks.

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

**SECTION A**

**Question 1**

How does the Tanak compare with the Christian Bible? What do the similarities and/or differences inform you of different communities' understanding of sacred scriptures? [20]

**Question 2**

Identify and explain the characteristics of the Priestly source from the passage below. [20]

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

<sup>3</sup> And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. <sup>4</sup> God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

<sup>6</sup> And God said, "Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water." <sup>7</sup> So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so.

<sup>8</sup> God called the vault "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

<sup>9</sup> And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. <sup>10</sup> God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good.

<sup>11</sup> Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. <sup>12</sup> The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

<sup>14</sup> And God said, "Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, <sup>15</sup> and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. <sup>16</sup> God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars.

<sup>17</sup> God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, <sup>18</sup> to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup> And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky." <sup>21</sup> So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup> God blessed them and said,

“Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.”<sup>23</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup> And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so. <sup>25</sup> God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals,<sup>[a]</sup> and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

<sup>27</sup> So God created mankind in his own image,  
in the image of God he created them;  
male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

<sup>29</sup> Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. <sup>30</sup> And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

<sup>31</sup> God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

### **Question 3**

In your thinking, how does the issue of the land, the people and language help you understand biblical traditions? To what extent have these been politicised in ethnic and religious tensions obtaining in the Middle East today? [20]

### **Question 4**

Briefly summarise Isaiah’s message to King Ahaz. In your view, is this message of Isaiah to the king pacifistic, idealistic, realistic, or practical? Critically discuss. [20]

## **SECTION B**

### **Question 5**

Who wrote the gospel of Matthew and for what purpose? [20]

### **Question 6**

What does Paul teach about the Second Coming of Christ in 1 Thessalonians? In your view, why was this Christian community concerned about the delayed Parousia? Do you think the response of Paul was comforting enough? [20]

### **Question 7**

1 “If any of you has a dispute with another, dare he take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the saints? 2 Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? 3 Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life! 4 Therefore, if you have disputes about such matters, appoint as judges even men of little account in the church! 5 I say this to shame you. Is it possible that there is nobody among you wise enough to judge a dispute between believers? 6 But instead, one brother goes to law against another--and this in front of unbelievers!” (1 Corinthians 6:1 -6, NIV).

Do you think believers should drag fellow Christians before secular courts for arbitration? What are your views on Paul’s teaching on settling disputes within the church? [20]

### **Question 8**

Write a critical commentary on the following extract. Illustrate your thinking with day-to-day life experiences. [20]

The parable of the unmerciful (Matthew 18: 21 -25, NIV)

<sup>21</sup> Then Peter came to him and asked, “Lord, how often should I forgive someone<sup>[a]</sup> who sins against me? Seven times?”

<sup>22</sup> “No, not seven times,” Jesus replied, “but seventy times seven!”<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>23</sup> “Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven can be compared to a king who decided to bring his accounts up to date with servants who had borrowed money from him. <sup>24</sup> In the process, one of his debtors was brought in who owed him millions of dollars.<sup>[c]</sup> <sup>25</sup> He couldn’t pay, so his master

ordered that he be sold—along with his wife, his children, and everything he owned—to pay the debt.

<sup>26</sup>“But the man fell down before his master and begged him, ‘Please, be patient with me, and I will pay it all.’ <sup>27</sup> Then his master was filled with pity for him, and he released him and forgave his debt.

<sup>28</sup>“But when the man left the king, he went to a fellow servant who owed him a few thousand dollars.<sup>[d]</sup> He grabbed him by the throat and demanded instant payment.

<sup>29</sup>“His fellow servant fell down before him and begged for a little more time. ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it,’ he pleaded. <sup>30</sup> But his creditor wouldn’t wait. He had the man arrested and put in prison until the debt could be paid in full.

<sup>31</sup>“When some of the other servants saw this, they were very upset. They went to the king and told him everything that had happened. <sup>32</sup> Then the king called in the man he had forgiven and said, ‘You evil servant! I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me.

<sup>33</sup> Shouldn’t you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?’ <sup>34</sup> Then the angry king sent the man to prison to be tortured until he had paid his entire debt.

<sup>35</sup>“That’s what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters<sup>[e]</sup> from your heart.”