Gurukul Lutheran Theological College & Research Institute, Kilpauk, Chennai.

MASTER OF THEOLOGY IN OLD TESTAMENT (M.Th. – OT)

M.TH. (OLD TESTAMENT) ENTRANCE EXAMINATION GUIDELINES

I. THE PURPOSE OF THE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION

The aim of the entrance examination is to assess the candidates' overall knowledge, academic competence, and critical perspectives in the field of Old Testament studies. Specifically, the examination seeks to evaluate the candidates' proficiency in the following areas:

1. **Biblical Hebrew and Textual Criticism:** Proficiency in reading, translating, and interpreting the Biblical Hebrew text, particularly the Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia *(BHS),* demonstrating knowledge of Hebrew grammar, syntax, and vocabulary, and the ability to use the textual critical apparatus to identify and evaluate textual variants and interpretive implications.
2. **Critical Introduction and Theology of the Old Testament:** Adequate knowledge of the historical, literary, and compositional backgrounds of the Old Testament books, including questions of authorship, date, sources, historical context, canonical formation, major theological themes, and significant scholarly debates in Old Testament studies.
3. **Critical Approaches to the History of Ancient Israel:** Adequate knowledge of the historical development of ancient Israel, including its origins, monarchy, divided kingdoms, exile, and post-exilic restoration, with an understanding of relevant biblical traditions, archaeological evidence, ancient Near Eastern sources, and contemporary scholarly debates concerning Israelite history.
4. **Recent Developments, Contemporary Issues, and Hermeneutical Approaches in Old Testament Studies:** Awareness of contemporary scholarly trends, methodological developments, significant recent publications, and current debates in Old Testament studies, including emerging hermeneutical approaches to interpreting the Hebrew Bible in historical, socio-cultural, political, theological, and contextual perspectives.
5. **Contextual Interpretation:** An adequate understanding of contextual approaches to reading and interpreting Old Testament texts, critically engaging their historical, social, cultural, political, economic, and theological contexts, and exploring their relevance to contemporary realities, particularly issues of justice, liberation, identity, marginalisation, and human dignity.
6. **Translation and Exegesis of Prescribed Hebrew Texts:** The ability to translate and exegetically analyse the prescribed Biblical Hebrew texts, demonstrating competence in Hebrew grammar, syntax, literary analysis, and theological interpretation. The prescribed texts are as follows:

   i. *Torah* – Pentateuch: Genesis 1 & 12 ***or*** Exodus 1:13-20; 2:23-3:8.
   ii. *Nevi'im* – Prophets: Isaiah 40:12-31; 52:12-53:3 ***or*** Amos 3:1-8; 7:10-17; 9:11-15.
   iii. *Ketuvim* – Writings: Job 2:1-6; 19:1-10; 42:10-17 ***or*** Psalm 1; 24; 119:1-8.

II. ENTRANCE EXAMINATION AND INTERVIEW

- A three-hour written examination will be conducted to assess candidates' knowledge of Hebrew texts, including translation, syntax, grammar, and exegesis, as well as their understanding of the Critical Introduction to the Old Testament, Old Testament Theology, and Hermeneutics.
- A separate written examination in English will be conducted to evaluate candidates' proficiency in English and their academic writing skills.
- In addition, each candidate will attend a 30-minute interview to assess their overall academic competence, subject knowledge, research aptitude, and suitability for the programme.

III. A BOOK REVIEW ON ANY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

A review of any one of the following books has to be submitted during the time of interview:

Hardy H.H. and Carroll R., M. Daniel. *The State of Old Testament Studies: A Survey of Recent Research*. New Delhi: Christian World Imprints, 2026.

Jesurathnam, Kondasingu. *Hebrew Prophets and Sages in Ancient Israel and their Relevance to Contemporary Dalit Prophets and Sages.* New Delhi: Christian World Imprints, 2025.

Chalcraft, David J. and Angami, Zhodi. *A Biblical Masala: Encountering Diversity in Indian Biblical Studies.* New Delhi: Christian World Imprints, 2021.

IV. M.TH. THESIS PROPOSAL

A tentative written *Thesis Proposal* on the intended area of Research has to be submitted during the time of departmental interview.

V. SUGGESTED BOOKS FOR READING AND PREPARATION

Baltzer, Klaus. *Deutero-Isaiah*, *A Commentary on Isaiah 40–55*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001.

Blenkinsopp, Joseph. *The Anchor Bible Isaiah 40-55: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002.

Boice, James Montgomery. *Psalms: An Expositional Commentary*. Michigan: Baker Academic, 2005.

Brueggemann, Walter. *Spirituality of the Psalms*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002.

Brueggemann, W. and Bellinger William H. *Psalms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Dube, Musa. *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible*. St. Louis: Chalice, 2000.

Durham, John I. *Word Biblical Commentary: Exodus*. Vol. 3. Texas: Word Books, 1987.

Edayadiyil, G. *Exodus Event: Its Historical Kernel*. Bangalore: ATC, 2007.

Gottwald, Norman K. *The Hebrew Bible: A Socio-literary Introduction*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985.

Hardy H.H. and Carroll R., M. Daniel. *The State of Old Testament Studies: A Survey of Recent Research*. New Delhi: Christian World Imprints, 2026.

Jesurathnam, Kondasingu. *Hebrew Prophets and Sages in Ancient Israel and their Relevance to Contemporary Dalit Prophets and Sages.* New Delhi: Christian World Imprints, 2025.

_____, *Introduction to the Old Testament: A Dalit Liberation & Hermeneutical Perspective.* New Delhi: Christian World Imprints, 2023

_____, *Introduction to the Old Testament: Tracing the History, Culture, and Scripture of Ancient Israel.* New Delhi: Christian World Imprints, 2018.

Jesurathnam, Kondasingu. *Old Testament Theology: History, Issues and Perspectives.* New Delhi: Christian World Imprints, 2016.

Joseph, Joel. *Text Book on Pentateuch*. New Delhi: Christian World Imprints, 2025

_____, *Text Book on Old Testament Theology.* New Delhi: Christian World Imprints, 2025

_____, *Handbook on the Prophetic Response in the Old Testament.* New Delhi: Christian World Imprints, 2025

Kizhakkeyil, Sebastian. *Isaiah: An Exegetical Commentary*. Bangalore: ATC, 2006.

Longman III, Temper & Dillard, Raymond B. *An Introduction to the Old Testament.* Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2006.

Maisuangdibou, M. and Newmai, Hunibou. *Biblical Hermeneutics: Methodologies and Perspectives*. New Delhi: Christian World Imprints, 2023

Mathew, Shiju. *Torah and Formation of the Israelite Identity: A Study of Pentateuch*. New Delhi: Christian World Imprints, 2026.

_____, *TANAK (Hebrew Bible): A Concise Guide Book for Theological Students.* New Delhi: Christian World Imprints, 2025

Moniraj, Aravind Jeyakumar. *General Introduction to the Bible & Its Contents: A Concise Guide to the Formation and Contents of the Old Testament & New Testament Books*. New Delhi: Christian World Imprints, 2026.

_____, *Yahweh at Work: The Significance and Function of the Theme "Creation" in Isaiah 40-48.* SITMA 22. Hamburg: Missionshilfe Verlag, 2021.

Oswalt, John N. *The Book of Isaiah Chapters 40–66*, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1998.

Prabakar, Charles and Paul M. Raj eds. *Rights and Responsibilities of the Minorities.* Bangalore: Theological Book Trust, 1999.

Rad, Gerhard von. *Old Testament Theology.* Vol. 1, The Theology of Israel's Historical Traditions. Translated by D. M. G. Stalker. Introduction by Walter Brueggemann. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.

_____. *Old Testament Theology.* Vol. 2, The Theology of Israel's Prophetic Traditions. Translated by D. M. G. Stalker. Introduction by Walter Brueggemann. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.

Segovia, F. F. *Decolonizing Biblical Studies*: *A View from the Margins.* Maryknoll: Orbis, 2000.

Soares-Prabhu, George. *Theology of Liberation: An Indian Biblical Perspective.* Francis X D'sa (ed.). Pune: Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth, 2001.

Soggin, J. Alberto. *Introduction to the Old Testament,* 3rd Edition, Kentucky, Westminster John Knox Press, 1989.

Sugirtharajah, R. S. *Asian Biblical Hermeneutics and Postcolonialism: Contesting the Interpretations.* Sheffield: SAP, 1998.

Sweeney, Marvin A. "The Book of Isaiah in Recent Research," *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies 1* 1993: 141-162.

Watts, John D.W. *Isaiah 34-66*, (Revised Edison), Word Biblical Commentary, Vol. 25, Nashville, Thomas Nelson, Inc. 2005.

Whybray, R. N. *Introduction to the Pentateuch*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.

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