Problem 1 Merkle hash trees.
Merkle suggested a parallelizable method for constructing hash functions out of compression functions. Let $f$ be a compression function that takes two 512 bit blocks and outputs one 512 bit block. To hash a message $M$ one uses the following tree construction:

Prove that if one can find a collision for the resulting hash function then one can find collisions for the compression function.

Problem 2 In the lecture we saw that Davies-Meyer is often used to convert an ideal block cipher into a collision resistant compression function. Let $E(k, m)$ be a block cipher where the message space is the same as the key space (e.g. 128-bit AES). Show that the following methods do not work:

$$f_1(x, y) = E(y, x) \oplus y \quad \text{and} \quad f_2(x, y) = E(x, x) \oplus y$$

That is, show an efficient algorithm for constructing collisions for $f_1$ and $f_2$. Recall that the block cipher $E$ and the corresponding decryption algorithm $D$ are both known to you.
Problem 3 Suppose user $A$ is broadcasting packets to $n$ recipients $B_1, \ldots, B_n$. Privacy is not important but integrity is. In other words, each of $B_1, \ldots, B_n$ should be assured that the packets he is receiving were sent by $A$. User $A$ decides to use a MAC.

(a) Suppose user $A$ and $B_1, \ldots, B_n$ all share a secret key $k$. User $A$ MACs every packet she sends using $k$. Each user $B_i$ can then verify the MAC. Using at most two sentences explain why this scheme is insecure, namely, show that user $B_1$ is not assured that packets he is receiving are from $A$.

(b) Suppose user $A$ has a set $S = \{k_1, \ldots, k_m\}$ of $m$ secret keys. Each user $B_i$ has some subset $S_i \subseteq S$ of the keys. When $A$ transmits a packet she appends $m$ MACs to it by MACing the packet with each of her $m$ keys. When user $B_i$ receives a packet he accepts it as valid only if all MAC’s corresponding to keys in $S_i$ are valid. What property should the sets $S_1, \ldots, S_n$ satisfy so that the attack from part (a) does not apply? We are assuming all users $B_1, \ldots, B_n$ are sufficiently far apart so that they cannot collude.

(c) Show that when $n = 6$ (i.e. six recipients) the broadcaster $A$ need only append $4$ MAC’s to every packet to satisfy the condition of part (b). Describe the sets $S_1, \ldots, S_6 \subseteq \{k_1, \ldots, k_4\}$ you would use.

Problem 4 Strengthening hashes and MACs.

(a) Suppose we are given two hash functions $H_1, H_2 : \{0,1\}^* \rightarrow \{0,1\}^n$ (for example SHA1 and MD5) and are told that both hash functions are collision resistant. We, however, do not quite trust these claims. Our goal is to build a hash function $H_{12} : \{0,1\}^* \rightarrow \{0,1\}^m$ that is collision resistant assuming at least one of $H_1, H_2$ are collision resistant. Give the best construction you can for $H_{12}$ and prove that a collision finder for your $H_{12}$ can be used to find collisions for both $H_1$ and $H_2$ (this will prove collision resistance of $H_{12}$ assuming one of $H_1$ or $H_2$ is collision resistant). Note that a straight forward construction for $H_{12}$ is fine, as long as you prove security in the sense above.

(b) Same questions as part (a) for Message Authentication Codes (MACs). Prove that an existential forger under a chosen message attack on your $MAC_{12}$ gives an existential forger under a chosen message attack for both $MAC_1$ and $MAC_2$. Again, a straight forward construction is acceptable, as long as you prove security. The proof of security here is a bit more involved than in part (a).

Problem 5 In this problem, we see why it is a really bad idea to choose a prime $p = 2^k + 1$ for discrete-log based protocols: the discrete logarithm can be efficiently computed for such $p$. Let $g$ be a generator of $\mathbb{Z}_p^*$.

(a) Show how one can compute the least significant bit of the discrete log. That is, given $y = g^x$ (with $x$ unknown), show how to determine whether $x$ is even or odd by computing $y^{(p-1)/2} \mod p$. 

2
b. If $x$ is even, show how to compute the 2nd least significant bit of $x$.
    Hint: consider $y^{(p-1)/4} \mod p$.

c. Generalize part (b) and show how to compute all of $x$.
    Hint: let $b \in \{0, 1\}$ be the LSB of $x$ obtained using part (a). Try setting $y_1 \leftarrow y/g^b$
    and observe that $y_1$ is an even power of $g$. Then use part (b) to deduce the second
    least significant bit of $x$. Show how to iterate this procedure to recover all of $x$.

d. Briefly explain why your algorithm does not work for a random prime $p$. 