

Dr. Elaine Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 1, Course Introduction Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 1, Course Introduction, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Phillips' lecture introduces an Old Testament Literature course, emphasizing the importance of studying the Old Testament. It begins with a prayer and Psalm reading, setting a tone of worship and seeking divine guidance in understanding scripture. **The lecture highlights that study should be considered an act of worship, integrating academic work with spiritual growth.** Practical matters like class procedures, office hours, and the value of review sessions are addressed. **The course aims to foster a love for God, integrate biblical studies with other disciplines, and understand the Old Testament as foundational to the New Testament.** The lecture argues that understanding the Old Testament is vital for cultural literacy, shaping a worldview, and comprehending the relationship between God and humankind, ultimately culminating in Jesus.

2. 25 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 1 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → OT Introduction → OT Lit).



**Phillips_OTLit_Sessi
on01.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 1, Course Introduction

Okay, here's a briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided excerpt of Dr. Elaine Phillips' Old Testament Literature Lecture 1:

Briefing Document: Dr. Elaine Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Lecture 1

Source: Excerpts from "ElainePhillips_OTL_EN_Lecture01.pdf"

Date: 2024

Overview:

This lecture serves as an introduction to an Old Testament Literature course. Dr. Phillips outlines the course objectives, emphasizing the integration of study and worship, the importance of the Old Testament for understanding Western culture and the New Testament, and the personal and spiritual growth that can come from studying scripture. The lecture highlights key theological themes and provides practical advice for success in the course.

Key Themes and Ideas:

- **Study as Worship (Liturgy):** Phillips stresses that studying scripture should be an act of worship, not merely an academic exercise.
- "Study is worship. Study is worship. In fact, I would suggest, and I'm quoting Stan Gady. The Holy Spirit is never so active as when we are using our minds"
- The Hebrew word *avodah* means both "work" and "worship," illustrating this connection.
- Students should approach scripture study as an "assignment from God" and allow the Holy Spirit to speak to them.
- **Importance of the Old Testament (First Testament):** The lecture advocates for a shift in perspective from viewing the Old Testament as "old" or obsolete to recognizing it as foundational and "first."
- "Therefore the tendency is to say old means that we just don't have to pay attention to it anymore. It's obsolete. It's out of date... really old here means original first. The foundation on which new is based"

- It is also referred to as the "Hebrew Bible" or "Tanakh" (Torah, Nevi'im, Ketuvim) to recognize the Jewish community's terminology.
- The Old Testament is vital for understanding:
- Western cultural heritage. "Goethe said if you don't know three thousand years of your heritage, you're living hand-to-mouth."
- The relationship between God and humankind, culminating in Jesus.
- The nature and attributes of God (compassion, love, forgiveness, justice, wrath), particularly as revealed in the Psalms.
- Humanity's fallen nature and need for salvation.
- **Interdisciplinary Approach:** The course will integrate literature, archaeology, history, and geography to provide a richer understanding of the Old Testament.
- "First Testament history and teaching are presented in the context of cultural geographical and literary backgrounds of the ancient Near East archaeology comparative history, and literature are studied. Do you get the impression this is sort of an interdisciplinary endeavor here?"
- Core curriculum courses are indispensable.
- **Theological Foundations and Personal Transformation:** The course aims to foster a love for God and an appreciation for His revelation in scripture.
- "It will foster an increasing love for God. If that's not happening, please come and talk to me."
- The course also aims to integrate biblical studies with other disciplines.
- **Old Testament as Foundation for New Testament:** The lecture emphasizes the crucial link between the two testaments, citing F.F. Bruce's work *New Testament Development, Old Testament Themes*.
- "In Jesus, the promise is confirmed...covenant is renewed...prophecies...fulfilled...law is vindicated...salvation is brought near...sacred history has reached its climax..."
- Jesus fulfills themes and prophecies articulated in the First Testament (e.g., Son of Man from Daniel 7, Servant of the Lord from Isaiah 53).

- **Examples and Warnings from the Old Testament:** Paul's use of Old Testament narratives as "examples" (types) and warnings for Christians (1 Corinthians 10) is discussed.
- "These things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did."
- The lecturer highlights the need for a sober understanding and the awareness of the temptations faced by the Israelites as relevant to contemporary Christians.
- **Promises and Divine Nature in 2 Peter:** Dr Phillips references 2 Peter 1 to show how God provides everything necessary for life and godliness.
- "God's divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness."
- She emphasizes the great and precious promises through which individuals participate in the divine nature and escape corruption.
- Phillips stresses the importance of active effort, listing qualities like goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love.

Practical Advice for Students:

- **Classroom Procedures:** Be on time for class; download lecture outlines; keep laptops focused on class material; ask questions.
- **Time Management:** Go to bed early; make breakfast dates with classmates to ensure timely arrival.
- **Utilize Resources:** Attend review sessions with TAs Matt and Carrie; take advantage of office hours and lunch appointments with Dr. Phillips.

Illustrative Examples/Cultural Literacy:

- The lecture includes a brief cultural literacy quiz using famous paintings (Rembrandt's Sacrifice of Isaac, Jacob wrestling the angel, David playing the harp for Saul) and musical compositions (Handel's oratorios) to demonstrate how knowledge of the Old Testament enriches one's understanding of Western art and culture.

Overall Tone:

The lecture conveys a sense of enthusiasm for the subject matter and a desire to engage students in a meaningful and transformative learning experience. Dr. Phillips blends academic rigor with a clear emphasis on the spiritual dimensions of studying the Old Testament.

4. Study Guide: Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 1, Course Introduction

Old Testament Literature: A Study Guide

Quiz: Short Answer Questions

1. What does the term "liturgy" mean, according to Dr. Phillips?
2. Explain the Hebrew word *avodah* and its significance.
3. What advice does Dr. Phillips give regarding studying scripture?
4. Why is Israel called the "testing ground of faith" (according to the multiple-choice question)?
5. What disciplines does Dr. Phillips suggest are important for understanding the Old Testament?
6. What is Tanakh, and what do the T, N, and K stand for?
7. According to Goethe, why is it important to know our cultural heritage?
8. Why is the Exodus experience so important to Israel's history?
9. What does Dr. Phillips mean by "adumbration?"
10. According to 2 Peter 1, what has God's divine power given us, and how do we access it?

Quiz: Answer Key

1. Liturgy, according to Dr. Phillips, means the work of the people of God, involving active engagement of the mind. It's not a stale or dead thing but an active participation in worship.
2. The Hebrew word *avodah* means both "work" and "worship," highlighting the interconnectedness of these concepts in the Hebrew Bible. It shows that studying and engaging with God's word can be seen as an act of worship.
3. Dr. Phillips advises students to approach their scripture study as an assignment from God and to pray that the Holy Spirit will speak to them. She emphasizes that study and worship should go together.

4. Israel is called the "testing ground of faith" because of its precarious geopolitical and agricultural position. This vulnerability made the Israelites' reliance on God a constant test of their faith.
5. Dr. Phillips suggests that literature, archaeology, history, and geography are important for understanding the Old Testament. She emphasizes the importance of an interdisciplinary approach.
6. Tanakh is an acronym used in Judaism for the Hebrew Bible or First Testament. The T stands for Torah (Law), the N stands for Nevi'im (Prophets), and the K stands for Ketuvim (Writings).
7. Goethe states that if you don't know three thousand years of your heritage, you're living hand-to-mouth. This emphasizes the importance of cultural literacy and understanding the foundations of Western society.
8. The Exodus experience is the defining experience for all of Israel's history. It provides the paradigm for what Christians experience in their Passover Lamb who was Jesus.
9. Adumbration is a foreshadowing, and we're going to see multiple foreshadowings, sometimes within the First Testament itself, but oftentimes First Testament looking forward to Jesus.
10. According to 2 Peter 1, God's divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness. We access this through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness, as well as his great and precious promises.

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the importance of studying the Old Testament for Christians, drawing on Dr. Phillips' lecture. How does understanding the Old Testament enhance one's understanding of Jesus Christ and the New Testament?
2. Explain Dr. Phillips' perspective on the relationship between study and worship. How can engaging with scripture be an act of worship, and what does this imply about the role of the Holy Spirit in academic pursuits?
3. Analyze Dr. Phillips' argument for referring to the Old Testament as the "First Testament" or "Hebrew Bible." What are the implications of the term "Old Testament," and why might other terms be more appropriate or respectful?

4. Describe the challenges and opportunities of approaching the Old Testament from an interdisciplinary perspective, as suggested by Dr. Phillips. How can disciplines like archaeology, history, and literature enrich our understanding of the biblical text?
5. Examine Dr. Phillips' use of cultural literacy examples (e.g., Rembrandt, Handel) to illustrate the importance of knowing the Old Testament. How does familiarity with biblical narratives contribute to a deeper appreciation of Western culture and art?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Liturgy:** The work of the people of God; active engagement and participation in worship.
- **Avodah:** A Hebrew word meaning both "work" and "worship," emphasizing their interconnectedness.
- **Tanakh:** An acronym for the Jewish scriptures, comprising the Torah (Law), Nevi'im (Prophets), and Ketuvim (Writings).
- **Adumbration:** A foreshadowing; a prefigurement of something to come.
- **Cultural Literacy:** The ability to understand and appreciate the shared knowledge and references that shape a culture.
- **Covenant:** A binding agreement or relationship, especially between God and humanity.
- **Worldview:** A fundamental set of beliefs and assumptions about the world and how it works.
- **Theology:** The study of God and religious beliefs.
- **Interdisciplinary:** Involving or drawing upon different branches of knowledge or expertise.
- **Revelation:** God's act of disclosing himself and his will to humanity.

5. FAQs on Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 1, Course Introduction, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Old Testament Literature FAQs

- **What is "liturgy" in the context of this course, and why is it important?** Liturgy, in this course, refers to the "work of the people of God." It's not just a stale, dead ritual but rather an active engagement of the mind in worship and study. This means approaching the study of scripture as an act of worship and a personal assignment from God, allowing the Holy Spirit to actively engage with your mind. The Hebrew word "avodah," which means both "work" and "worship," further emphasizes this connection.
- **Why should we approach studying the Old Testament as an "interdisciplinary" endeavor?** Studying the Old Testament involves understanding its historical, cultural, geographical, and literary backgrounds within the context of the ancient Near East. This requires integrating knowledge from various disciplines such as archaeology, comparative history, and literature. Core curriculum courses provide indispensable context for understanding the Old Testament in a wider perspective.
- **Why is the Old Testament referred to as the "First Testament" in this course, and what are the implications of this naming choice?** The instructor often uses "First Testament" instead of "Old Testament" to avoid the implication that it is obsolete or irrelevant. "Old" can suggest something outdated, whereas "First" emphasizes its role as the original foundation upon which the New Testament is built. Additionally, "First Testament" is a more respectful term in interfaith contexts, particularly when interacting with the Jewish community, who often refer to it as the Hebrew Bible.
- **What is "Tanakh," and what does it reveal about the structure of the Hebrew Bible?** Tanakh is the Jewish acronym for the Hebrew Bible, standing for Torah (the Law), Nevi'im (the Prophets), and Ketuvim (the Writings). This three-part structure provides a different lens through which to view the text compared to typical Christian arrangements and helps students understand how the Jewish community organizes and understands their scriptures.

- **What is the significance of the question "Why is Israel called the testing ground of faith?" and what does the answer reveal about the nature of Israel's relationship with God?** The question emphasizes Israel's unique position, geographically and geopolitically. Israel is precariously situated on a land bridge between large power circles, with agricultural productivity dependent on marginal rainfall and dew. God's choice to place his people in such a vulnerable situation serves as a continuous test of their faith and dependence on Him, because covenant blessings and curses are tied right into the land.
- **According to the lecture, why is studying the Old Testament essential for cultural literacy?** Knowledge of the Old Testament narratives is crucial for understanding Western cultural heritage. Many works of art, music, drama, and literature are infused with biblical themes, stories, and language. A lack of familiarity with the Old Testament can lead to a diminished understanding and appreciation of these cultural works, impacting one's cultural literacy.
- **What are some of the theological foundations that the Old Testament provides, and how do they enrich our understanding of God and humanity?** Studying the Old Testament provides a profound sense of who God is, including his compassion, love, forgiveness, justice, and wrath. It also helps us understand humanity's creation in the image of God, the tragedy of the fallen nature of humankind, and the necessity of covenant as God's instrument for restoring the relationship between humankind and himself.
- **How do the passages from 1 Corinthians 10 and 2 Peter 1 illustrate the practical importance of studying the Old Testament?** 1 Corinthians 10 uses the experiences of the Israelites as examples (types) to warn believers against repeating their mistakes, such as idolatry, sexual immorality, and grumbling. These examples serve as warnings to guide behavior and prevent spiritual downfall. 2 Peter 1 emphasizes that God has given us everything we need for life and godliness through great and precious promises. It calls believers to actively add to their faith qualities like goodness, knowledge, self-control, and love, underscoring the expectation that believers exercise these qualities to avoid being ineffective and unproductive.