

Dr. Elaine Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 27, The Divided Kingdom 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 27, The Divided Kingdom, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Phillips' lecture focuses on the period of the divided kingdoms of Judah and Israel, beginning with a review of Solomon's apostasy and the subsequent division. **The lecture highlights key figures like Jeroboam and Rehoboam, and discusses the establishment of rival religious practices** centered around golden calves, an affront to the covenant with Yahweh. **It further explores the reigns of kings like Asa, Omri, and Ahab, setting the stage for the dramatic confrontation between Elijah and the prophets of Baal.** The lecture stresses the significance of geographical locations like Bethel, Dan, and Mount Carmel and the influence of international politics from Syria, Assyria and Phoenicia. **The lecture details the importance of key geographical areas and their impact on religious practices in the Northern and Southern kingdoms.**

2. 26 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 27 – 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
on27.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 27, The Divided Kingdom

Okay, here's a briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided lecture transcript.

Briefing Document: Dr. Elaine Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Lecture 27

Subject: Divided Judah and Israel to the Time of Ahab and Elijah

Source: Excerpts from "ElainePhillips_OTL_EN_Lecture27.pdf"

Date: Today's date.

Overview: This lecture provides an overview of the historical period following the division of the Israelite kingdom after Solomon's reign, focusing on the political and religious climate of both the Northern Kingdom (Israel) and the Southern Kingdom (Judah). It sets the stage for understanding the narratives surrounding King Ahab, Queen Jezebel, and the prophet Elijah. The lecture emphasizes the cyclical nature of Israel's relationship with God (apostasy, oppression, repentance, deliverance), the consequences of idolatry, and the geopolitical factors influencing the region.

Key Themes and Ideas:

- **The Cycle of Apostasy and Redemption:** The lecture emphasizes the recurring pattern of the Israelites turning away from God, facing consequences, and then returning to Him. "People were really on fire for the Lord, and then they apostatized, and then God brought oppression to them, and then because of that, they turned back to him." This pattern, established during the time of the judges, continues into the divided kingdom period.
- **The Division of the Kingdom:** Solomon's apostasy, particularly his building of altars to foreign gods to please his wives, led to God's decision to divide the kingdom. The prophet Ahijah informed Jeroboam that he would receive ten tribes.
- **North vs. South:**
- **Northern Kingdom (Israel):** Often referred to as "Israel," "Ephraim," or "Samaria" (after its eventual capital). Marked by political instability, frequent dynastic changes (four major dynasties to be studied), and vulnerability to foreign influence due to its topography. Jeroboam's actions, such as establishing

alternative worship sites at Bethel and Dan with golden calves and appointing non-Levite priests, were particularly significant.

- **Southern Kingdom (Judah):** Primarily referred to as "Judah." Maintained the Davidic dynasty (with one exception, Athaliah) and Jerusalem as its capital, providing greater stability.
- **Jeroboam's Apostasy and "User-Friendly" Religion:** Jeroboam deliberately created a system of worship that was convenient and appealing to the people, but contrary to God's covenant. "What Jeroboam has done is to create a seeker-friendly religion. Oh, you don't have to go to Jerusalem, just come on over here... These are your gods who brought you out of Egypt, pointing to the golden calf." This involved establishing golden calves at Bethel and Dan, appointing non-Levite priests, shifting the date of festivals, and other deviations from God's commands.
- **Importance of Geography:** The lecture stresses the importance of geographical locations and features in understanding the historical and political context. "Because of its topography...the northern kingdom...has opened it up to foreign influence." The location of Bethel and Dan, the changing capitals of the Northern Kingdom (Shechem, Tirzah, Samaria), Mount Carmel, Jezreel, Remote Gilead, and the trade routes through Syria are all highlighted as being crucial to the narrative.
- **International Politics:** Syria (ruled by Ben-Hadad), Assyria (with Shalmaneser III), and Phoenicia all played significant roles in the geopolitics of the region. Ahab and Omri were recognized internationally, despite their wickedness in God's eyes. Baal worship, originating in Phoenicia, was particularly influential in the Northern Kingdom. "Baal controls rain, storms, and thunder...It was awfully significant and an incredible temptation to the people to try and do those things that would manipulate Baal."
- **The Significance of Signs and Prophecy:** The story of the man of God from Judah in 1 Kings 13 illustrates the use of immediate signs (altar splitting, Jeroboam's withered hand) to validate long-range prophecies (Josiah's future actions).
- **Asa's Mixed Legacy:** King Asa of Judah initially did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, removing idols and depending on God for victory. However, later in his reign, he relied on diplomacy and alliances with foreign powers instead of trusting God, leading to prophetic rebuke.
- **The Rise of Ahab and Jezebel:** Omri's dynasty culminated in the reign of Ahab, who married Jezebel, a Phoenician princess. They promoted Baal worship as the

state religion, setting the stage for the confrontation with the prophet Elijah.
 "Omri's son, Ahab, is going to adopt Baal worship as the state religion."

- **Elijah's Confrontation with Baal Worship:** The lecture foreshadows the narrative of Elijah's conflict with the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, highlighting the geographical context and the significance of Baal's association with rain and storms. "How long are you going to waver between two of them? In other words, how long are you going to sit on the fence? If the Lord is God follow him. If Baal is God follow him."
- **Elijah as a model for John the Baptist:** Elijah and his story are seen as prophetic of John the Baptist and his role as a forerunner for the Messiah

Key Figures:

- **Jeroboam:** First king of the Northern Kingdom, responsible for establishing idolatrous worship practices.
- **Rehoboam:** Son of Solomon, whose unwise decision led to the division of the kingdom.
- **Asa:** King of Judah who initially sought the Lord but later relied on diplomacy.
- **Omri:** King of Israel who moved the capital to Samaria.
- **Ahab:** King of Israel, son of Omri, who promoted Baal worship.
- **Jezebel:** Phoenician wife of Ahab, instrumental in promoting Baal worship.
- **Elijah:** Prophet who challenged Ahab and the prophets of Baal.
- **Ahijah:** Prophet who foretold the division of the kingdom.
- **Hanani:** Prophet who rebuked Asa for relying on diplomacy instead of God.

Important Locations:

- **Bethel and Dan:** Sites of Jeroboam's golden calves.
- **Shechem, Tirzah, Samaria:** Capitals of the Northern Kingdom.
- **Jerusalem:** Capital of the Southern Kingdom.
- **Mount Carmel:** Site of Elijah's confrontation with the prophets of Baal.
- **Jezreel:** Winter capital of the Northern Kingdom.
- **Remote Gilead:** A frequent battleground between Israel and Syria.

- **Ramah:** A strategic location controlling traffic in and out of Jerusalem.

Action Items:

- Review the map of the divided kingdom in the NIV Atlas of the Bible or a similar resource.
- Note the names and locations of the key figures and places mentioned in the lecture.
- Pay attention to the dynastic changes in the Northern Kingdom.
- Be aware of the international political context and the influence of Syria, Assyria, and Phoenicia.
- Consider the implications of Jeroboam's "user-friendly" religion.
- Consider the lessons from Asa's mixed legacy

4. Study Guide: Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 27, The Divided Kingdom

Divided Judah and Israel: A Study Guide

Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. Why did God determine to remove a large part of the kingdom from the house of David?
2. What are the two primary names used to refer to the northern and southern kingdoms after the division? Why are they called by these names?
3. What are the implications of Omri moving the capital of the northern kingdom to Samaria?
4. What was Jeroboam trying to achieve by setting up golden calves in Bethel and Dan?
5. Explain the significance of the sign given by the man of God from Judah at Bethel.
6. What does Elijah declare to Ahab that precipitates the events to follow?
7. Why did Jeroboam's actions constitute an affront to the covenant with God? Give at least two examples.
8. What three actions does God instruct Elijah to perform while he is at Mt. Horeb?
9. Why was the location of Mount Carmel significant in the contest between Elijah and the prophets of Baal?
10. How does international politics play a role in the relationship between Judah and Israel during this period?

Quiz Answer Key

1. God determined to remove a large part of the kingdom from the house of David because Solomon built altars to foreign gods to please his wives, which displeased the Lord. Solomon made political alliances solidified by marriages, and he allowed his heart to be led astray by his wives' religions, violating the covenant with God.
2. The northern kingdom is primarily referred to as Israel, named after Jacob/Israel, while the southern kingdom is usually called Judah, named for the dominant tribe

of Judah. The northern kingdom was also sometimes called Ephraim after Joseph's prominent son whose tribe dominated the region and sometimes called Samaria after its eventual capital.

3. Moving the capital to Samaria opened the northern kingdom to greater foreign influence, particularly from Phoenicia and its Baal worship culture. This move symbolized Omri's embrace of this foreign culture and facilitated the adoption of Baal worship as a state religion under his son Ahab.
4. Jeroboam aimed to create a more accessible, "user-friendly" religion that would prevent the people in the northern kingdom from traveling to Jerusalem for the mandated festivals. By establishing worship sites within the northern territory and appointing non-Levite priests, he sought to consolidate his power and prevent his subjects from returning to the Davidic kingdom in the south.
5. The man of God prophesied that a son named Josiah would be born to the house of David who would desecrate the altar at Bethel. The immediate sign of the altar splitting and its ashes being poured out served to confirm the validity of the long-term prophecy, assuring people that Josiah would eventually come and fulfill the prophecy.
6. Elijah declared to Ahab that there would be neither dew nor rain for the next few years except at his word, effectively initiating a drought that would demonstrate the power of Yahweh over Baal, the god of rain and storms. This pronouncement set the stage for the contest on Mount Carmel and the subsequent events.
7. Jeroboam's actions were an affront to the covenant with God because he appointed non-Levites as priests, violating the established priestly order. Additionally, he set up golden calves and goat idols and claimed they were the gods who brought the people out of Egypt, breaking the first three of the Ten Commandments by promoting idolatry and blasphemy.
8. God instructs Elijah to anoint Hazael as king over Syria, Jehu as king over Israel, and Elisha as his successor.
9. Mount Carmel was significant because it was on the border of Phoenician territory, the region where Baal worship was dominant. Being a high promontory jutting into the Mediterranean Sea, the usual source of storms and rain, Carmel was considered Baal's territory. This made it the ideal location to demonstrate Yahweh's power over Baal in his own domain, particularly during a drought.

10. International politics influenced the relationship between Judah and Israel, as demonstrated by Asa's alliance with Syria to counter Baasha's threat. Making alliances with ungodly foreign entities instead of relying on God constituted idolatry and a lack of trust in God's protection, demonstrating that international politics were tied to spiritual faithfulness.

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the cyclical pattern of apostasy, oppression, repentance, and deliverance seen in the period of the judges and how this pattern continues in the divided kingdom. How does this cycle reflect human nature, and what lessons can be learned from it?
2. Analyze the consequences of Jeroboam's actions in establishing a "user-friendly" religion in the northern kingdom. How did these actions contribute to the spiritual decline of Israel, and what parallels can be drawn between Jeroboam's policies and contemporary religious practices?
3. Examine the role of prophets like Elijah in the divided kingdom period. How did they challenge the kings and the people to remain faithful to the covenant with God, and what were the key messages they conveyed?
4. Compare and contrast the reigns of Asa in Judah and Omri in Israel. How did their decisions and actions impact their respective kingdoms, both politically and spiritually?
5. Evaluate the importance of geography in the history of the divided kingdom. How did the topography of the northern and southern kingdoms influence their vulnerability to foreign influence, their political stability, and their relationship with neighboring nations?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Ahab:** King of Israel (northern kingdom) known for his wickedness and marriage to Jezebel, who promoted Baal worship.
- **Ahijah:** A prophet from Shiloh who prophesied the division of the kingdom to Jeroboam.
- **Asherah:** A Canaanite goddess of fertility, often associated with Baal.
- **Asa:** A king of Judah (southern kingdom) noted for his initial faithfulness in removing idols but later reliance on foreign alliances.
- **Baal:** A Canaanite god of rain, storms, and fertility; a major rival to Yahweh in the Old Testament.
- **Baasha:** King of Israel (northern kingdom), founder of the second dynasty.
- **Ben-Hadad:** Dynastic name for the king of Syria, often involved in conflicts with Israel.
- **Bethel:** A city in the northern kingdom where Jeroboam set up one of the golden calves.
- **Dan:** A city in the northern kingdom where Jeroboam set up one of the golden calves.
- **Davidic Dynasty:** The lineage of kings descended from David, who ruled in the southern kingdom of Judah with one brief exception.
- **Elijah:** A prophet who challenged Ahab and Jezebel, demonstrating the power of Yahweh over Baal.
- **Ephraim:** A term often used to refer to the northern kingdom of Israel, named after the dominant tribe.
- **Golden Calf:** An idol made of gold, representing a false god, set up by Jeroboam in Bethel and Dan.
- **Hanani:** A prophet who rebuked King Asa for relying on Syria instead of God.
- **Israel:** The name often used to refer to the northern kingdom after the split.
- **Jeroboam:** The first king of the northern kingdom of Israel, who led the secession from Judah and established idolatrous worship.

- **Jerusalem:** The capital city of the southern kingdom of Judah.
- **Jezebel:** The Phoenician wife of King Ahab, known for her zealous promotion of Baal worship and persecution of Yahweh's prophets.
- **Judah:** The name often used to refer to the southern kingdom after the split.
- **Mount Carmel:** The site of the contest between Elijah and the prophets of Baal, located on the border of Phoenicia.
- **Omri:** King of Israel (northern kingdom) who established Samaria as the capital and whose dynasty was known for its wickedness.
- **Phoenicia:** An ancient region north of Israel, known for its trade and worship of Baal.
- **Ramah:** A city in the territory of Benjamin that Baasha fortified to control access to Jerusalem.
- **Rehoboam:** The first king of the southern kingdom of Judah after the split, known for his unwise decisions that led to the division of the kingdom.
- **Samaria:** The capital city of the northern kingdom of Israel, established by Omri.
- **Shechem:** The first capital of the northern kingdom, where Abraham first entered the promised land and where the covenant was renewed.
- **Shishak (Shishak):** Pharaoh of Egypt who invaded Judah during the reign of Rehoboam.
- **Syria (Aram):** A neighboring kingdom to the north and east of Israel, often involved in conflicts and alliances with both the northern and southern kingdoms.

5. FAQs on Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 27, The Divided Kingdom, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions: The Divided Kingdom (Judah and Israel)

1. Why did the kingdom of Israel divide after Solomon's reign, and what were the names of the resulting kingdoms?

After Solomon's apostasy, specifically his building of altars to foreign gods to please his wives, God determined to remove a large part of the kingdom from the Davidic dynasty. The kingdom divided into two: the northern kingdom, known primarily as Israel (but also sometimes referred to as Ephraim or Samaria), and the southern kingdom, known as Judah.

2. Who were the key figures involved in the division of the kingdom, and what roles did they play?

Rehoboam, Solomon's son and successor, made a critical error in judgment by choosing to listen to the younger advisors and increasing the burden on the people, leading to the secession of the northern tribes. Jeroboam, son of Nebat, was the leader who took control of the northern tribes and established himself as king of Israel. The prophet Ahijah played a role in telling Jeroboam that God was going to take the ten tribes away from the dynasty of David and give them to Jeroboam.

3. What were the key differences between the northern kingdom (Israel) and the southern kingdom (Judah) in terms of their capitals, dynasties, and religious stability?

The Northern Kingdom (Israel) had multiple capitals, including Shechem, Tirzah, and Samaria, demonstrating instability. It experienced frequent dynastic changes, with at least four major dynasties. The Southern Kingdom (Judah) maintained Jerusalem as its constant capital and was ruled almost exclusively by the Davidic dynasty, with a single exception (Athaliah). Geographically, Israel was more open to foreign influence, while Judah was more isolated.

4. What was Jeroboam's "sin" that led Israel astray, and how did it impact the religious practices of the northern kingdom?

Jeroboam's sin involved establishing a user-friendly religion in the northern kingdom. He built golden calves in Bethel and Dan as alternative worship sites, appointed non-Levite priests, and changed the date of the Feast of Tabernacles to the eighth month instead of the divinely appointed seventh month. He did these things to prevent the people from

going to Jerusalem to worship and to consolidate his power. This was a direct affront to the Mosaic covenant, and resulted in widespread idolatry and a departure from true worship.

5. What was the significance of Bethel and Dan in the context of the divided kingdom?

Bethel and Dan were the locations where Jeroboam set up the golden calves, making them alternative worship centers to Jerusalem. This made worship more convenient for the people in the northern kingdom, preventing them from making pilgrimages to Jerusalem for the required festivals. The choice of these cities is also significant because they are on the Northern and Southern border of the Kingdom.

6. Who was Elijah, and what role did he play in the conflict between Yahweh and Baal during the reigns of Ahab and Jezebel?

Elijah was a prophet from Gilead who emerged as a key figure in challenging the Baal worship promoted by King Ahab and his Phoenician wife, Jezebel. Elijah confronted Ahab, prophesied a severe drought, and famously challenged the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, demonstrating Yahweh's power through fire from heaven. His name "Yahweh is my God" encapsulates his mission.

7. What was the significance of the Mount Carmel showdown between Elijah and the prophets of Baal?

The showdown on Mount Carmel was a pivotal event where Elijah challenged the 450 prophets of Baal to prove their god's power by bringing fire down to consume a sacrifice. After the prophets of Baal failed, Elijah prayed, and God sent fire from heaven, consuming the sacrifice and demonstrating his supremacy. This event led the people to proclaim, "The Lord, he is God! The Lord, he is God!" and was followed by Elijah slaughtering the prophets of Baal at the Kishon Brook according to the instructions in Deuteronomy.

8. What is the overall significance of the divided kingdom period in Israel's history, and what lessons can be learned from it?

The divided kingdom period was marked by religious apostasy, political instability, and foreign influence, particularly in the northern kingdom. It illustrates the consequences of disobedience to God's covenant and the dangers of syncretism with foreign religions. It also reveals God's faithfulness in sending prophets like Elijah to call the people back to repentance and faithfulness. The story of the man of God from Judah emphasizes the importance of obedience to God's specific instructions. A key lesson is that the truth, even when challenging, is what sets people free, not comfort or convenience.