

Dr. Elaine Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 29, To the Fall of Jerusalem 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 29, To the Fall of Jerusalem, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Phillips' lecture focuses on the kings of Judah, specifically after the split of the kingdom. She highlights key figures like Hezekiah, Manasseh, and Josiah, emphasizing their reigns' religious and political contexts within the broader scope of Assyrian and Babylonian influence. The lecture covers Hezekiah's reforms and defense against Sennacherib, Manasseh's wickedness and repentance, and Josiah's rediscovery of the Torah and subsequent reforms. It underscores the covenant consequences of disobedience, leading to the eventual Babylonian exile despite individual repentance, and prepares the students for upcoming discussions on prophetic literature by setting the historical stage.

2. 36 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 29 – 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
on29.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 29, To the Fall of Jerusalem

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

Briefing Document: Elaine Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Lecture 29 - Hezekiah, Manasseh, Josiah, and Kings of Judah

Source: Excerpts from "ElainePhillips_OTL_EN_Lecture29.pdf"

Date: 2024 (Implied)

Overview: This lecture focuses on the kings of Judah, particularly Hezekiah, Manasseh, and Josiah, leading up to the fall of the southern kingdom to Babylon. It emphasizes the cyclical nature of religious reform and apostasy, the importance of international politics, and the consequences of both obedience and disobedience to the covenant. The lecture also highlights the personalities and key events of each reign, connecting them to relevant Old Testament passages and archaeological findings.

Key Themes and Ideas:

1. **Review of Divided Kingdom History:** The lecture begins with a review of the divided kingdom, emphasizing key dates:
 - 931 BC: Kingdom divides.
 - 722 BC: Fall of the Northern Kingdom to Assyria.
 - 587/586 BC: Fall of the Southern Kingdom to Babylon.
1. **International Politics and Context:** The lecture stresses the importance of understanding the international political landscape in which Judah existed. Key players include:
 - **Assyria:** A major power, especially during Hezekiah's time. The lecture mentions Sennacherib's siege of Jerusalem and his boasting about trapping Hezekiah "like a bird in a cage."
 - **Babylon:** Becomes dominant and is responsible for the fall of the Southern Kingdom under King Nebuchadnezzar (or Nebuchadrezzar).
 - **Egypt:** A potential ally for Judah, but reliance on Egypt was often discouraged by prophets like Jeremiah.

1. The Reigns of Key Kings:

- **Ahaz:** A wicked king who makes an alliance with Assyria and introduces foreign religious practices into the temple. This prompts a rebuke from the prophet Isaiah. "King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria. He saw an altar in Damascus and sent to Uriah the priest to sketch of the altar...There's a whole muddle of stuff that Ahaz is doing. One is a political problem...The second is clearly a religious assimilation problem."
 - **Hezekiah:** A remarkably good king who initiates religious reforms, cleanses the temple, destroys idolatrous objects (including the bronze serpent), and celebrates Passover. He also rebels against Assyria. Despite his faithfulness, Sennacherib invades Judah. The lecture emphasizes Hezekiah's reliance on prayer and the prophet Isaiah, as well as his practical measures to defend the city (building walls, constructing Hezekiah's Tunnel to secure water). "After all that Hezekiah had so faithfully done, Sennacherib, king of Assyria, came and invaded Judah. He laid siege to the fortified cities, thinking to conquer them."
 - **Manasseh:** An extremely wicked king who reverses Hezekiah's reforms, sheds innocent blood, and promotes idolatry. However, he repents after being taken captive by the King of Assyria. The lecture stresses the important theological point that even someone as evil as Manasseh can be forgiven by God if they repent. "Manasseh shed so much innocent blood that it filled Jerusalem from end to end."..."In Manasseh's distress, he sought the favor of the Lord his God, and he humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers...When he prayed to him, the Lord was moved by his entreaty and listened to his plea, and the Lord brought him back to Jerusalem, and Manasseh knew that the Lord was God." However, the lecture also notes that there were covenant consequences for Manasseh's sins that could not be avoided.
 - **Josiah:** Another good king who discovers the Book of the Law (Torah) in the temple and initiates major religious reforms based on it. He destroys idols, cleanses the temple, and celebrates Passover. His reforms are described as being unparalleled in their scope. However, he is killed in battle, and his successors lead Judah to its downfall. "Never before nor after Josiah was there a king like him who turned the Lord as he did with all his heart, all his soul, all his strength."
1. **The Importance of Repentance and Forgiveness:** The story of Manasseh is used to illustrate the possibility of forgiveness even for the most grievous sins.

However, the lecture also notes that forgiveness does not always erase the consequences of sin.

2. **The Role of Prophets:** Prophets like Isaiah and Jeremiah play a crucial role in advising and rebuking the kings, conveying God's messages, and predicting future events. The lecture sets up a future discussion of Isaiah's prophecies in the context of Ahaz's alliance with Assyria.
3. **The Significance of Passover:** Passover is highlighted as a celebration of redemption and deliverance, and its observance is associated with periods of religious revival under Hezekiah and Josiah. "Why is Passover the celebration of a reformed, repentant, reviving people? What does Passover celebrate? Deliverance? Redemption? Big thing. God's deliverance. God's redemption."
4. **Archaeological Context:** The lecture integrates archaeological findings, such as the Sennacherib reliefs at the British Museum depicting the siege of Lachish, and the Siloam Inscription found in Hezekiah's Tunnel, to provide a richer understanding of the historical events. The lecture mentions, "there is a whole room in the British Museum that's devoted specifically to this material that was taken off a wall in a room in Sennacherib's palace...all the way around the room are the reliefs that were taken off the wall of Sennacherib's palace, and it shows the storming of Lachish."
5. **Covenant Consequences:** The lecture emphasizes that despite individual repentance and forgiveness, the nation as a whole still faces the consequences of covenant disobedience, leading to the exile in Babylon. "God forgives, but he doesn't always remove the consequences for what happens and what we do." The lecture ties the exile to the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy and the land's need for Sabbath rest.

Key People & Places:

- **Kings:** Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Josiah, Zedekiah, etc.
- **Prophets:** Isaiah, Jeremiah, Huldah.
- **Assyrian Kings:** Sennacherib, Tiglath-Pileser
- **Babylonian Kings:** Nebuchadnezzar
- **Places:** Jerusalem, Lachish, Nineveh, Bethel

Connections to Other Texts/Concepts:

- Old Testament Parallels (a supplemental reading source referenced frequently)
- 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Numbers, Deuteronomy
- Hebrews 11 (catalog of the faithful)
- The concept of covenant theology
- The Deuteronomic theme of obedience leading to blessing and disobedience leading to cursing.

Actionable Items/Further Study:

- Review the dates of the division of the kingdom and the fall of the Northern and Southern Kingdoms.
- Study the reigns of Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, and Josiah in detail, paying attention to their actions and their impact on Judah.
- Consider the theological implications of Manasseh's repentance and forgiveness.
- Research the archaeological evidence related to Hezekiah's Tunnel and Sennacherib's siege of Lachish.
- Prepare for the upcoming discussion of the prophets, particularly Isaiah and Jeremiah.

4. Study Guide: Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 29, To the Fall of Jerusalem

Kings of Judah: A Study Guide

Quiz: Short Answer Questions

1. What is the significance of the dates 931, 722, and 586/587 BC in relation to the divided kingdom of Israel and Judah?
2. Explain Athaliah's role in the southern kingdom and what motivated her actions.
3. Describe Uzziah's accomplishments and the critical mistake he made.
4. What political issue was at stake during the alliance between the northern kingdom of Israel and Syria, and how did King Ahaz react?
5. Describe Hezekiah's religious reforms and his preparations to defend Judah against Sennacherib.
6. Explain the significance of Hezekiah's tunnel and the Siloam inscription.
7. What is the lesson to be learned from Manasseh's reign, repentance, and subsequent impact on Judah?
8. How did Josiah's discovery of the Book of the Law lead to religious reforms?
9. What is the significance of the Passover celebrations under Hezekiah and Josiah?
10. What happened to Sennacherib when he returned to Nineveh?

Quiz Answer Key

1. 931 BC marks the division of the kingdom into the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. 722 BC is the date of the fall of the northern kingdom to Assyria. 586/587 BC represents the fall of the southern kingdom to Babylon.
2. Athaliah, who married into the Southern dynasty, seized power after her son's assassination and attempted to eradicate the Davidic line to establish Baal worship as the primary religion in Judah. Her actions were driven by a desire to prevent Baal worship from disappearing.

3. Uzziah was a successful king who expanded Judah's borders and developed war machinery. However, he entered the temple to burn incense, a priestly duty, and was struck with leprosy as a result.
4. The northern kingdom and Syria formed an alliance against Judah, pressuring Ahaz to join them. Ahaz, fearing the alliance, appealed to Assyria for help, which Isaiah rebuked because it meant relying on a foreign power instead of God.
5. Hezekiah reopened and repaired the temple, removed idolatrous objects like the bronze serpent, and reinstituted Passover celebrations. To defend Judah, he built walls, fortified Jerusalem, and constructed a tunnel to secure the water supply.
6. Hezekiah's tunnel, with the Siloam inscription describing its construction, secured Jerusalem's water supply during Sennacherib's siege. It showed Hezekiah's ingenuity and resourcefulness in protecting his people.
7. Manasseh's reign, despite his extreme wickedness, teaches that God is willing to forgive even the most grievous sins if one repents. However, Manasseh's evil led to covenant consequences for the entire nation of Judah.
8. Josiah's discovery of the Book of the Law prompted him to implement extensive religious reforms, purging the temple of idols and reinstituting the proper worship of Yahweh. It also prompted him to recognize the blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience in the covenant.
9. Passover celebrates God's deliverance and redemption of his people from bondage, in both instances, the celebration demonstrates a restored and repentant nation turning back to God after periods of apostasy and idolatry. These Passover celebrations symbolized a renewed commitment to the covenant and a rejection of foreign gods.
10. Sennacherib was assassinated by his own sons after returning to Nineveh, according to the biblical text, this illustrates the brutal nature of power and the lack of divine blessing on the Assyrian king.

Essay Questions

1. Compare and contrast the reigns and religious reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah, highlighting their strengths, weaknesses, and overall impact on the kingdom of Judah.
2. Discuss the role of international politics and alliances in the history of Judah during the reigns of Ahaz and Hezekiah, analyzing the consequences of their decisions in relation to Assyria and other regional powers.
3. Analyze the significance of the Old Testament Parallels, in the way that Dr. Phillips presented them, to help explain how history impacts the Hebrew Bible.
4. Explain the covenant consequences of kings such as Manasseh, as well as other examples provided by Dr. Phillips.
5. How did the prophet Isaiah impact the kings, Ahaz and Hezekiah, and the people of Judah?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Assyria:** A powerful empire in Mesopotamia that exerted significant influence over Israel and Judah, eventually conquering the northern kingdom.
- **Babylon:** Another major Mesopotamian empire that rose to prominence and ultimately conquered Judah, leading to the Babylonian exile.
- **Chutzpah:** A Yiddish term meaning brazen arrogance or audacity, used to describe Hezekiah's rebellion against Assyria.
- **Gihon Spring:** The primary water source for the city of David, which Hezekiah protected and channeled through his tunnel.
- **Hezekiah's Tunnel:** An engineering feat built by King Hezekiah to provide Jerusalem with a secure water supply during the Assyrian siege.
- **Huldah:** A prophetess consulted during Josiah's reign after the discovery of the Book of the Law.
- **Josiah:** A king of Judah renowned for his religious reforms and rediscovery of the Book of the Law.
- **Lachish:** A fortified city in Judah that was besieged by Sennacherib's army.
- **Manasseh:** A king of Judah known for his wickedness and idolatry, though he later repented.
- **Nebuchadnezzar:** The king of Babylon who conquered Judah and destroyed Jerusalem.
- **Passover:** A Jewish festival celebrating God's deliverance of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt.
- **Rehoboam:** The first king of Judah after the split of the kingdom.
- **Sennacherib:** The king of Assyria who invaded Judah during Hezekiah's reign.
- **Siloam Inscription:** An inscription found in Hezekiah's tunnel that describes its construction.
- **Uzziah (Azariah):** A king of Judah who expanded the kingdom's borders but was struck with leprosy for entering the temple to burn incense.

5. FAQs on Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 29, To the Fall of Jerusalem, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ on the Kings of Judah

- **What are the three key dates to remember concerning the divided kingdom?**
- The three dates are 931 BC, when the kingdom divided; 722 BC, the fall of the northern kingdom to Assyria; and 587/586 BC, the fall of the southern kingdom to Babylon. These dates mark major turning points in the history of Israel and Judah and help provide a chronological framework for understanding the events described in the Old Testament.
- **Why is it important to consider international politics when studying the history of Israel and Judah?**
- Israel and Judah did not exist in a vacuum. Their fates were intertwined with those of powerful empires like Assyria, Babylon, and Egypt. Understanding the political landscape, alliances, and conflicts of these empires helps explain many of the events that transpired in Israel and Judah, including invasions, tributes, and changes in leadership. Understanding the international forces at play provides valuable context to the decisions made by the Kings of Judah.
- **What was the significance of Athaliah's reign in Judah?**
- Athaliah, the mother of King Ahaziah, seized power after her son's assassination and attempted to eradicate the Davidic dynasty. Her reign of terror aimed to establish Baal worship as the dominant religion in Judah, mirroring the religious practices of her homeland in the northern kingdom of Israel. She was eventually overthrown, and Joash, a surviving member of the Davidic line, was crowned king, marking a return to the worship of Yahweh.
- **What were the key religious reforms enacted by King Hezekiah?**
- Hezekiah initiated significant religious reforms in Judah, including reopening and repairing the Temple of the Lord, removing idolatrous objects such as the bronze serpent, and reinstituting the celebration of Passover. He also sent messengers to the remnants of the northern kingdom, inviting them to participate in the Passover celebration in Jerusalem, symbolizing a desire for reconciliation and a return to the worship of Yahweh.

- **How did Hezekiah prepare Jerusalem for the siege by Sennacherib and the Assyrian army?**
- In anticipation of the Assyrian invasion led by Sennacherib, Hezekiah undertook several defensive measures to protect Jerusalem. He reinforced the city's walls, built an outer wall to protect refugees from the north, and constructed a tunnel to divert the Gihon Spring's water supply into the city, ensuring a protected water source during the siege. These actions demonstrated Hezekiah's proactive approach to defending his people and preserving Jerusalem.
- **What is the lesson we can learn from King Manasseh's story?**
- Manasseh, one of the most wicked kings of Judah, initially led the nation into apostasy and bloodshed. However, after being taken captive by the Assyrians, he humbled himself before the Lord, repented of his sins, and was restored to his throne. Manasseh's story serves as a powerful reminder of God's boundless mercy and forgiveness, even for those who have committed the most grievous sins, provided they turn to Him in repentance.
- **What impact did the rediscovery of the Book of the Torah have on King Josiah and the nation of Judah?**
- The rediscovery of the Book of the Torah during Josiah's reign had a profound impact on the king and the nation. Josiah was deeply moved by the words of the Torah and recognized the extent to which Judah had strayed from God's commands. In response, he initiated sweeping religious reforms, including removing idolatrous objects from the Temple, destroying high places and pagan altars throughout the land, and reinstituting the celebration of Passover.
- **What happened after Josiah's death and how did it lead to the fall of the Southern Kingdom of Judah?**
- After the death of Josiah, Judah experienced a rapid decline under a series of weak and unfaithful kings. These kings failed to heed the warnings of the prophets and continued to engage in idolatry and social injustice, provoking God's judgment. As a result, Babylon invaded Judah in several waves, eventually destroying Jerusalem, demolishing the temple, and taking many of its inhabitants into exile in 587/586 BC, fulfilling the covenant curses for disobedience.