

# Dr. Elaine Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 30, 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 30, To the Fall of Jerusalem, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This lecture from Dr. Elaine Phillips explores the Old Testament prophets, primarily focusing on those of the northern kingdom, and their messages. The lecture preps students for an upcoming exam, emphasizing key issues and the role of prophets as covenant enforcement mediators. It covers Jonah, Amos, and Hosea in detail, highlighting their historical contexts, symbolic actions, and New Testament references. Amos is characterized as a skilled psychologist who begins with criticizing surrounding nations before turning to Israel. Hosea's marriage to a prostitute is examined as a representation of God's relationship with Israel. Finally, the lecture briefly introduces Nahum and his prophecy of Nineveh's fall, emphasizing God's vengeance against those who harm His people.

**2. 18 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 30 – 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).**



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on30.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 30, To the Fall of Jerusalem

Okay, here's a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided lecture excerpts, complete with relevant quotes:

#### Briefing Document: Prophets of the North - Elaine Phillips Lecture 30

##### Overview:

This lecture excerpt focuses on the "Prophets of the North," specifically Jonah, Amos, Hosea, and Nahum. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the historical context and the main issues addressed by each prophet, particularly in relation to the covenant. The lecture also previews material to be covered in future lectures, such as Isaiah, Micah, and Joel.

##### Key Themes and Ideas:

- **Exam Information:** The instructor emphasizes the importance of studying material related to specifically named prophets (Hosea through Joel) for the upcoming exam, beyond what is covered in the practice exam. The exam will cover material from Solomon through Isaiah, Micah, and Joel.
- **Covenant Enforcement Mediators:** The prophets are presented as "covenant enforcement mediators," called by God to address disobedience to the covenant in specific historical circumstances. Students are urged to consider how this applies to each prophet. "God has called them to speak to given historical circumstances when the people are being disobedient to the covenant. And so these are, if you want to put it this way, the policemen of the day, policing covenant enforcement."
- **Methods of Prophetic Communication:** The lecture highlights various ways the prophets conveyed their message, including symbolic actions (Hosea marrying a prostitute), oracles, references to previous scriptures (Torah), and visions. "What media did we talk about in terms of how the prophets got their message across to hardened, dull-eared, deaf people? ... Certainly, symbolic actions. I'm sorry, say it again. Well, they're certainly uttering oracles, aren't they? They are going to call on previous scriptures and the previous Torah."
- **Historical Context - Assyria:** The brutal nature of the Assyrian empire is emphasized as a crucial backdrop for understanding the prophets, especially

Jonah's reluctance to preach to Nineveh. "Assyria is an ugly, brutal empire, and I read you those excerpts from Ashurnasirpal II, who flays people, takes the skins off them, puts those skins on pillars, and does all sorts of other really heinous kinds of things."

- **The Sovereignty of God (Jonah):** The book of Jonah demonstrates God's sovereignty through his control over nature (the storm, the fish, the shady tree), the repentance of Nineveh, and the casting of lots. "The purpose of the book, I would suggest to you, is to demonstrate that God is sovereign...What are the ways that God demonstrates he is sovereign in this book?" The instructor points out that Jonah is a unique prophetic book since it is largely narrative and contains very little direct preaching from Jonah himself.
- **Jonah and Jesus:** The lecture connects Jonah's experience in the belly of the fish with Jesus's time in the grave, highlighting parallels between the two. Jesus refers to Jonah, a "next-door neighbor" when asked for a miraculous sign by the Pharisees. *"as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the son of man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. And the men of Nineveh are going to stand up in judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here."*
- **Amos - Social Injustice and the Day of the Lord:** Amos is portrayed as a "blue-collar worker" and a "good psychologist" who effectively critiques the surrounding nations before turning his attention to the injustices within Israel. He condemns the people for their social injustices. "If you want to preach a message on social justice, go to Amos. It's there because people were using other people in every way you could possibly imagine. All right? And there's obviously the idolatry there. There's complacency." Amos also introduces the concept of the "day of the Lord" as a time of judgment for God's people, not just for their enemies. "Amos begins a thread that's going to continue and that is the day of the Lord is going to be pretty sobering for God's people—woe to you who long for the day of the Lord. Guess what? It's going to start with judgment for God's people."
- **Amos in the New Testament:** The lecture points out that Amos is cited in the New Testament, specifically during the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15, where James references Amos 9:11 to support the inclusion of Gentiles in the covenant community.

- **Hosea - God as a Wounded Lover:** Hosea's marriage to a prostitute (Gomer) is presented as a symbolic representation of God's relationship with Israel, which is marked by Israel's "adultery" (idolatry). Hosea's experience is linked to that of God, the "wounded lover" who experiences anger, hurt, and a desire for punishment, yet remains committed to loving his people. "What thing are you going to remember about Hosea? ...His marriage to a prostitute. That's what we want to think of, and then we want to think of God as the wounded lover because that's exactly what's going on here."
- **Hosea and the Lawsuit Oracle:** Chapter 4 of Hosea begins as a lawsuit oracle that references the Ten Commandments, highlighting Israel's violation of God's law. The message of Hosea is applicable to modern-day believers. "The prophets are not speaking to those nasty old people out there. They're speaking to us. They're speaking to us."
- **Hosea in the New Testament:** Hosea is quoted in the New Testament in various contexts, including the inclusion of Gentiles (Romans, 1 Peter), Jesus's emphasis on mercy over sacrifice (Matthew), and the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15).
- **Nahum - The Fall of Nineveh:** Nahum prophesies the violent end of Nineveh as divine retribution for its atrocities. The poetry in Nahum is described as punchy and choppy to convey a sense of war. "Nahum is our prophet...What we can figure out is a window, that's my second bullet up there, a window during which he prophesied...Babylonian Chronicles, one place we can go. There's also some good archaeological evidence. And what's fun is that what you see described in Nahum about outer cities and fortresses being plucked off like fruit, about the river playing a key part in actually breaking down and flooding the city, you know, those are alluded to in Nahum in very poetic fashion." Nahum's book can be troubling to some people since God is portrayed as a God of vengeance.

**Quotes:**

- "God uses these people to bring the covenant to bear on their given historical circumstances."
- "Each prophet is going to do it in a different way."
- "God is sovereign over the lives and the souls of humankind as well."
- "I am the Lord, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, forgiving iniquity."
- "The Lion has roared - who can but prophesy?"
- "...woe to you who long for the day of the Lord."
- "I desire mercy, not sacrifice."

**Conclusion:**

This lecture excerpt provides a valuable overview of the Prophets of the North, emphasizing the importance of historical context, covenant theology, and the diverse ways in which these prophets communicated God's message. It also sets the stage for future discussions on other prophets and their relevance to the New Testament.

## 4. Study Guide: Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 30, To the Fall of Jerusalem

### Prophets of the North: A Study Guide

#### I. Quiz

Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. Why are the prophets often referred to as "covenant enforcement mediators"?
2. Describe the significance of symbolic actions in the prophetic ministry, using an example from the prophets covered in this lecture.
3. In what ways does the book of Jonah demonstrate God's sovereignty? Provide at least two examples.
4. Why was Jonah hesitant to preach repentance to Nineveh? What were his possible motivations?
5. What is the significance of Jesus referencing the "sign of Jonah"?
6. Describe Amos's background and how it influenced his prophetic ministry.
7. How does Amos use the "nations roundabout" in the beginning of his prophecy?
8. What is the "day of the Lord," and how does Amos challenge the Israelites' perception of it?
9. What is the significance of Hosea's marriage to Gomer? What does it represent?
10. What is Nahum's central message?

#### II. Quiz Answer Key

1. The prophets are referred to as "covenant enforcement mediators" because they were called by God to address specific historical situations where the people were disobedient to the covenant. They acted as God's messengers, warning the people and calling them back to faithfulness.
2. Symbolic actions were a powerful way for prophets to communicate God's message to a hardened audience. Hosea, for example, was called to marry a prostitute, Gomer, to symbolize Israel's unfaithfulness to God through idolatry.
3. The book of Jonah demonstrates God's sovereignty in numerous ways, including His control over nature through the storm and the great fish. Further evidence of

God's sovereignty is shown when God brings about the repentance of the people of Nineveh.

4. Jonah was likely hesitant to preach repentance to Nineveh because he feared for his own safety in the brutal Assyrian capital. He may have also feared that if Nineveh repented and was spared, it would pose a continued threat to his own people, Israel.
5. Jesus's reference to the "sign of Jonah" highlights both Jonah's three days in the belly of the fish and the repentance of the Ninevites. Jonah's time in the fish is a parallel to Jesus's three days in the tomb, and the Ninevites' repentance stands as a contrast to the hard-heartedness of Jesus's contemporaries.
6. Amos was a sheep herder and tender of sycamore fig trees from Tekoa in the southern kingdom of Judah. His humble, blue-collar background likely gave him a unique perspective on the social injustices and moral decay prevalent in the more prosperous northern kingdom of Israel.
7. Amos begins his prophecy by condemning the surrounding nations for their sins, which serves to capture the attention of the Israelites and create a sense of shared outrage. This allows him to then more effectively turn his attention to Judah and, ultimately, Israel, where he levels even stronger criticisms.
8. The "day of the Lord" was often viewed by the Israelites as a time of victory and deliverance for them and judgment for their enemies. Amos challenges this perception by warning that the day of the Lord will also bring judgment upon God's own people for their sins and injustices.
9. Hosea's marriage to Gomer, a prostitute, is a powerful symbol of God's relationship with Israel. Gomer's unfaithfulness mirrors Israel's idolatry and spiritual adultery, while Hosea's continued love for her reflects God's persistent love and commitment to His covenant people.
10. Nahum's central message is a pronouncement of judgment against Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, for its cruelty and violence. The book emphasizes God's sovereignty and justice, asserting that He will avenge the wrongs done to His people and bring about the downfall of even the most powerful empires.

### III. Essay Questions

1. Compare and contrast the prophetic styles and messages of Amos and Hosea. How do their backgrounds and personal experiences shape their perspectives on Israel's sin and God's judgment?
2. Discuss the theme of repentance in the books of Jonah and Hosea. What does each book teach about the nature of repentance, its possibility, and its consequences?
3. Analyze the role of social justice in the prophetic messages of Amos and Hosea. What specific injustices do they address, and how do they connect these injustices to Israel's covenant relationship with God?
4. Explore the use of symbolic language and imagery in the books of Jonah, Amos, and Hosea. How do these literary devices enhance the impact and memorability of the prophetic messages?
5. Trace the development of the "day of the Lord" concept in the book of Amos and discuss its implications for understanding God's judgment and salvation. How does this concept evolve in later prophetic literature?



## IV. Glossary of Key Terms

- **Covenant Enforcement Mediator:** A prophet called by God to address disobedience to the covenant in specific historical circumstances.
- **Sovereignty of God:** God's supreme authority and control over all things.
- **Symbolic Action:** An action performed by a prophet to visually communicate a message from God.
- **Day of the Lord:** A future day of divine intervention, often associated with judgment and restoration.
- **Social Justice:** Fairness and equity in the distribution of resources and opportunities within a society.
- **Idolatry:** The worship of idols or anything other than the one true God.
- **Prophetic Oracle:** A message from God delivered through a prophet. There are three main kinds of oracles: lawsuits, woes, and blessings.
- **Assyria:** An ancient empire known for its brutality and military power, which threatened the northern kingdom of Israel.
- **Nineveh:** The capital city of Assyria.
- **Tarshish:** A distant city, possibly located in Spain, to which Jonah attempted to flee.
- **Tekoa:** Amos's hometown in the southern kingdom of Judah.
- **Bethel:** A significant religious site in the northern kingdom of Israel, associated with idolatry.
- **Gilead:** A region east of the Jordan River, often contested and subject to violence.
- **Edom:** A nation south of Israel, often in conflict with the Israelites.
- **Gomer:** Hosea's wife, who was a prostitute.
- **Adultery:** In the context of the prophets, it is the unfaithfulness of the Israelites to God, like a marriage partner with infidelity.

## 5. FAQs on Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 30, To the Fall of Jerusalem, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

### Prophets of the North: An FAQ

- **What is the overall significance of studying the Northern Prophets (like Jonah, Amos, Hosea, and Nahum)?**
- Studying these prophets provides insight into God's covenant relationship with Israel, particularly the Northern Kingdom, and how God addresses disobedience and injustice through his messengers. They highlight themes of divine sovereignty, social justice, repentance, and God's persistent love and compassion, even for Israel's enemies. They demonstrate how God uses historical circumstances to call people back to covenant faithfulness. In addition, New Testament writers cite these prophetic books which means that Christians see significance in the words of these prophets.
- **Why are the prophets referred to as "covenant enforcement mediators"?**
- The prophets were called by God to address specific historical situations where the people of Israel were being disobedient to the covenant. They served as God's messengers, warning the people about their violations of the covenant and calling them to repentance. Their role involved applying the principles of the covenant to the specific circumstances of their time.
- **What forms of communication did prophets use to convey their messages?**
- Prophets used various methods, including oracles (spoken pronouncements), symbolic actions (like Hosea marrying a prostitute), visions, and dreams. They also drew on the Torah and previous scriptures to support their messages and remind the people of God's established laws and commands.
- **What is the main message of the book of Jonah, and how does it demonstrate God's sovereignty?**
- The primary message of Jonah is to demonstrate God's sovereignty over all creation and people, including those outside of Israel. God's sovereignty is shown through his control over natural events (the storm, the great fish, the plant) and his ability to bring about repentance in Nineveh, even against Jonah's will. Ultimately, the book calls into question whether God is only sovereign over Israel, or over all people, including their enemies.

- **What are the main themes in the book of Amos, and how does he begin his prophecy?**
- Amos focuses heavily on social justice, condemning Israel for their mistreatment of the poor, complacency, and idolatry. He also introduces the concept of the "day of the Lord" as a time of judgment not just for Israel's enemies, but for Israel itself. Amos begins his prophecy by addressing the sins of the nations surrounding Israel (Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab), which initially gains the attention and approval of the Israelites before he turns to condemn Judah and then Israel itself.
- **How is Hosea's marriage to Gomer, a woman of prostitution, symbolic of God's relationship with Israel?**
- Hosea's marriage is a living metaphor for God's covenant relationship with Israel. Gomer's infidelity represents Israel's spiritual adultery through idolatry. God is portrayed as a wounded lover who, despite Israel's unfaithfulness, continues to pursue them with love and offers them a chance to return to him. The names of Hosea's children carry symbolic meaning related to God's judgment and potential restoration of Israel.
- **How does God respond to Israel's unfaithfulness and idolatry in the book of Hosea?**
- God responds with a complex mix of emotions, including anger, hurt, and a profound sense of betrayal. He expresses his desire for repentance and mercy rather than mere sacrifices and outward religious rituals. He also demonstrates a deep love and compassion for Israel, longing for their restoration and expressing his unwillingness to completely abandon them, even in the face of their repeated transgressions.
- **What is the message of the book of Nahum, and what does it reveal about God's character?**
- Nahum focuses on the impending destruction of Nineveh as a result of their extreme violence and cruelty. The book reveals a side of God's character that emphasizes vengeance and justice, particularly in response to the harm inflicted upon his people. While God is often presented as merciful and compassionate, Nahum highlights his role as a just judge who will ultimately hold the wicked accountable for their actions. The book emphasizes the sovereignty of God.