

Dr. Elaine Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 36, Prophets to the South 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 36, Prophets to the South, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This document is a lecture transcript from Dr. Elaine Phillips' Old Testament Literature course, specifically lecture 36 covering the post-exilic prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The lecture begins with administrative details, including final exam information and course evaluations. Phillips then transitions into an in-depth analysis of the three prophets, focusing on their historical context, key messages related to the rebuilding of the temple, and their relevance for contemporary audiences. She thoroughly explores Zechariah's apocalyptic visions, discussing the symbolic imagery and connections to New Testament themes. Finally, Phillips addresses Malachi's challenges to complacency and its connection to the New Testament, most especially to John the Baptist, thus ending the semester with a connection to the Gospels.

2. 18 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 36 – 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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3. Briefing Document: Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 36, Prophets to the South

Okay, here is a briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided excerpts of Dr. Elaine Phillips' lecture on Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

Briefing Document: Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi

Source: Excerpts from "ElainePhillips_OTL_EN_Lecture36.pdf"

Overview: Dr. Phillips' lecture focuses on the post-exilic prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The lecture provides historical context, analyzes key themes within each book, and highlights connections between these prophetic writings and the New Testament, particularly in relation to Jesus.

Key Themes and Ideas:

- **Historical Context:**
 - The lecture sets the stage by reviewing the decree of Cyrus (539 BC), the initial joyful attempt to rebuild the temple, and the subsequent opposition that halted the work.
 - Emphasis is placed on the reign of Darius I and his possible political motivations for supporting the temple's completion. Joshua and Zerubbabel are identified as key figures during this period, along with the prophetic voices of Haggai and Zechariah.
 - The Esther narrative is placed within the interval between the temple's completion and the arrival of Ezra and Nehemiah.
 - The rebuilding of the temple under Darius results in what is referred to as the "second temple."
 - "The temple that we're reading about under Darius is finished and has the same foundations... although it's called the second temple, all the way from 516 when it was completed, through its destruction in AD 70, when Herod the Great comes along and does this business here, he so monumentally changes it and expands it that in some ways it's really a third temple."
- **Haggai: Priorities and Temple Rebuilding:**

- Haggai's message is described as "stunningly contemporary": "Get your priorities straight." The prophet challenges the people for focusing on their own comfort ("paneled houses") while the temple remains in ruins.
- Haggai emphasizes the consequences of neglecting covenant obligations, leading to a lack of fulfillment ("You've planted much, but you've harvested little.").
- The lecture points out the priest's test in Haggai Chapter 2, highlighting the principles of contagiousness of sin and transferability of holiness.
- Haggai offers encouragement emphasizing the spirit: "My spirit remains among you. Verse five: don't fear."
- Promises for Zerubbabel: "I will take you, Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel. I will make you like a signet ring on my finger because I have chosen you."
- **Zechariah: Apocalyptic Visions and Eschatological Perspective:**
- Zechariah employs apocalyptic literature, characterized by a focus on the triumph of good over evil, fantastic imagery, and symbolic visions.
- The first part of Zechariah (chapters 1-6) features apocalyptic visions, bookended by horses and horsemen, illustrating God's sovereign control.
- The visions focus on Jerusalem, the temple and its personnel (Joshua the high priest, Zerubbabel), and the transformation of the people.
- The vision of Joshua the high priest in filthy clothes is interpreted as representing the bearing of sin. It also foreshadows a messianic figure, "See, I'm going to bring my servant, the branch."
- The lecture highlights the anointing by spirit in Zechariah and how it is not by might, nor by power, but by God's Spirit that things will be done: "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit."
- Zechariah chapters 7 and 8 stress the importance of truth and justice.
- Chapters 12-14 emphasize the restoration of Jerusalem based on God's sovereign design. Emphasis is put on how Jerusalem will be restored based on God's decree as a sovereign creator and master of the universe.
- Chapter 12 discusses the importance of the house of David "On that day, the Lord will shield those who live in Jerusalem so that the feeblest among them will be like David, and the house of David... will be like God."

- Chapter 14 talks about the Lord's return, which is said to happen on the Mount of Olives. "On that day, the Lord's feet will stand on the Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west."
- **Zechariah and the Gospels:**
- Dr. Phillips emphasizes the connections between Zechariah and the Gospels, particularly during Passion Week.
- Examples include: Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (Zechariah 9), Jesus' betrayal by Judas for 30 pieces of silver, the piercing of Jesus (John's Gospel), and the scattering of the disciples (Matthew).
- Specific quotes and allusions from Zechariah are identified in the Gospel narratives.
- **Malachi: Complacency and Covenant Love:**
- The name Malachi means "my messenger," and the book addresses complacency that arose after a period of revival.
- Malachi uses a challenge-response format, highlighting the people's lack of genuine worship and their neglect of proper sacrifices.
- The prophet challenges the people to do better than bringing God lame sacrifices "try bringing the lame and the crummy sacrifices to your employer, to your boss, to your governor. See if you can get by with that."
- Malachi 3 foretells the coming of a messenger to prepare the way (John the Baptist). "See, I will send my messenger... I'll send my messenger who's going to prepare the way before me."
- Malachi 4 references the law of Moses and the coming of Elijah.
- The book closes with a warning of destruction (herem) if the people remain rebellious.
- The book starts out with God's covenant love: "I've loved you, says the Lord. But you ask, how have you loved us?"

Quotes of Significance:

- **Haggai 1:4:** "Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?" (Priorities)

- **Haggai 2:5:** "My spirit remains among you. Do not fear." (Encouragement through God's spirit)
- **Zechariah 4:6:** "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord Almighty." (God's power source)
- **Zechariah 12:10:** "They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child." (Foreshadowing Jesus's crucifixion).
- **Malachi 1:2:** "I have loved you, says the Lord. But you ask, 'How have you loved us?'" (God's covenant love).
- **Malachi 3:1:** "See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me." (Foretelling the coming of John the Baptist).

Conclusion:

Dr. Phillips' lecture provides a comprehensive overview of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, emphasizing their historical context, key themes, and connections to the New Testament. The lecture highlights the importance of prioritizing God, trusting in His Spirit, and recognizing His covenant love.

4. Study Guide: Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 36, Prophets to the South

Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi: A Study Guide

Quiz

Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. What is the central message of Haggai, and how does it relate to the people's priorities at the time?
2. Describe the historical context in which Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi prophesied.
3. What are the key characteristics of apocalyptic literature, and how does Zechariah employ them in his prophecies?
4. Explain the significance of Joshua the high priest's filthy garments in Zechariah's vision.
5. What is the meaning of the statement in Zechariah, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit"?
6. Describe the series of challenges Malachi poses to the people and their responses.
7. How does Malachi address the issue of complacency among God's people after a period of revival?
8. What does Haggai mean when he prompts the people to give careful thought to their ways?
9. Explain how the book of Zechariah alludes to Jesus in the passion week?
10. How can we find an allusion of God's hesed in Malachi?

Quiz Answer Key

1. Haggai's central message is to prioritize rebuilding the temple. The people were focused on their own homes and comforts while neglecting God's house, indicating misplaced priorities.
2. These prophets prophesied during the post-exilic period, after the return from Babylonian exile. Haggai and Zechariah specifically encouraged the rebuilding of

the temple under Darius I, while Malachi addressed issues of religious complacency that arose later during the time of Nehemiah.

3. Apocalyptic literature features symbolic visions, fantastic imagery, and a focus on the triumph of good over evil in a time of great distress. Zechariah uses visions with horses, horns, and supernatural elements to convey messages about God's sovereignty and the future of Jerusalem.
4. Joshua's filthy garments symbolize the sin and impurity of the priesthood and the people, representing their need for cleansing and atonement. It also foreshadows the role of Christ in bearing the sins of humanity.
5. This statement emphasizes that the rebuilding of the temple and the restoration of Jerusalem will not be achieved through human strength or political power, but through the power and guidance of God's Spirit. It shows how God's spirit will empower them to do what needs to be done.
6. Malachi presents a series of challenges regarding the people's inadequate worship, such as offering blemished sacrifices. The people respond with questions like, "How have we despised your name?" prompting God to further explain their shortcomings.
7. Malachi addresses complacency by highlighting the people's lack of reverence for God and their half-hearted worship. He confronts them with their indifference and calls them to genuine repentance and renewed devotion.
8. Haggai prompts the people to give careful thought to their ways to make them realize the consequences of neglecting their covenant position and not prioritizing God's work. He prompts them to reflect on the fact that they are suffering as a result of their inaction and misplaced focus.
9. Zechariah alludes to Jesus during Passion Week by using references from the prophet's writings. Palm Sunday, the betrayal of Jesus by Judas for 30 pieces of silver, and the smiting of the shepherd with the scattering of the sheep, all echo the imagery of Zechariah's prophecies.
10. Malachi alludes to God's hesed when he claims that Jacob is loved and Esau is hated. This means that in God's absolute grace and mercy, he bestowed hesed (or non-failing covenant love) onto Israel as a people, contrasting with those outside of God's covenant.

Essay Questions

1. Compare and contrast the messages of Haggai and Zechariah, focusing on their perspectives on the temple and its significance.
2. Discuss the role of apocalyptic literature in Zechariah, analyzing specific visions and their symbolic meanings.
3. Analyze Malachi's use of rhetorical questions and challenges to address the issues of religious complacency and moral decline among the people.
4. Explore the messianic themes in Haggai and Zechariah, examining how they foreshadow the coming of Christ and his role as priest and king.
5. Discuss the importance of historical context in understanding the messages of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, and how their prophecies relate to the specific circumstances of the post-exilic period.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Post-Exilic Period:** The period in Jewish history after the return from Babylonian exile (539 BCE onward).
- **Temple (Second Temple):** The temple rebuilt in Jerusalem after the return from exile, completed in 516 BCE.
- **Zerubbabel:** A Jewish leader and governor of Judah who played a key role in rebuilding the temple after the exile.
- **Joshua (High Priest):** The high priest who served alongside Zerubbabel during the rebuilding of the temple.
- **Darius I:** The Persian king who authorized the completion of the Second Temple.
- **Apocalyptic Literature:** A genre of writing characterized by symbolic visions, fantastic imagery, and a focus on the triumph of good over evil.
- **Messianic Prophecy:** A prophecy that refers to the coming of the Messiah, the future king and savior of Israel.
- **Malachi:** Means "my messenger." Prophet who challenged the complacency and moral decline of the post-exilic community.
- **Complacency:** A feeling of smug or uncritical satisfaction with oneself or one's achievements.
- **Hesed:** Hebrew term for covenant love, kindness, and mercy.
- **Eschatological:** Relating to the end of the world or the final events of human history.
- **Hasmonean dynasty:** The intertestamental period was marked by this particular family who became both kings and priests.
- **Herem:** Something that is devoted to destruction because it has been rebellious against God.
- **Adumbrations:** A vague or symbolic prefiguration.

5. FAQs on Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Session 36, Prophets to the South, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi: Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the primary message of Haggai, and how does it apply to contemporary life?

Haggai's core message is about prioritizing God's work. He challenges the people to rebuild the temple instead of focusing solely on their own comforts ("paneled houses"). This is relevant today because we often prioritize personal comforts, possessions, and security over serving God and His kingdom. Haggai's message urges us to examine our priorities and ensure that God's work isn't taking a back seat.

2. What is the significance of the temple in the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah?

The temple serves as a central focus in both Haggai and Zechariah, albeit with slightly different perspectives. In Haggai, the immediate concern is rebuilding the physical temple after it had been neglected. Zechariah takes a broader, more eschatological view. While he addresses the rebuilding of the temple, his prophecies also allude to the future temple to which Jesus would come, connecting the physical structure to deeper spiritual realities and the coming Messiah. The temple symbolizes God's presence among his people.

3. How does Zechariah use apocalyptic imagery in his prophecies?

Zechariah employs apocalyptic imagery, characterized by symbolic visions, fantastic imagery, and symbolic numbers, to convey messages about Jerusalem's present and future. These visions depict a time when good will triumph over evil, addressing a context of grim circumstances. Examples include the four horsemen, the four horns, the flying scroll, and the basket containing evil. These images underscore God's sovereign control and the ultimate victory of good.

4. Can you describe the structure of the apocalyptic visions in the first six chapters of Zechariah?

The apocalyptic visions in Zechariah 1-6 are bookended by visions of horses and horsemen. The inner visions focus on Jerusalem, then narrow in on the temple and personnel. The Visions regarding temple personnel involve Joshua the high priest, and Zerubbabel. Joshua's vision focuses on the need for purification, while the vision concerning Zerubbabel highlights the empowering of the Spirit. The final Visions illustrate the transformation of the people through the destruction of evil.

5. How do the prophecies about Joshua the high priest in Zechariah point towards the Messiah?

In Zechariah 3, Joshua the high priest, is symbolic of things to come. Dressed in filthy clothes, he represents the bearing of sin. God removes his filthy garments and replaces them with rich garments. The prophecy also speaks of "the Branch," a Messianic figure. Zechariah 6 further develops this theme, where Joshua is crowned and identified as the one who will build the temple and unite the roles of king and priest. These prophecies foreshadow Jesus Christ, who fulfills the roles of both high priest and king.

6. What is the significance of the statement, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit," in Zechariah 4?

This statement, directed towards Zerubbabel, emphasizes that the rebuilding of the temple and the restoration of Jerusalem will not be achieved through human strength or political influence, but through the power of God's Spirit. It highlights the importance of relying on God's empowerment rather than human efforts, particularly in the face of opposition and limited resources.

7. What are some of the key themes and challenges presented in the book of Malachi?

Malachi addresses the complacency and spiritual apathy of God's people after a period of revival. He challenges their lack of reverence for God, particularly in their offerings and sacrifices. Malachi highlights the importance of honoring God with their best, emphasizing that their half-hearted offerings are a sign of despising His name. He urges them to remember the law of Moses and anticipates the coming of Elijah as a forerunner of the Lord.

8. How does Malachi connect to the New Testament, particularly regarding John the Baptist and the theme of covenant love?

Malachi 3:1 prophesies the coming of a messenger who will prepare the way before the Lord. This is referenced in the Gospels as referring to John the Baptist, who prepared the way for Jesus. Malachi also closes the prophetic voice by directing the people to remember the law of Moses, and look for the coming of Elijah, in keeping with the promise that he "will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers." Malachi begins his book by describing the covenant love God has for the nation of Israel.