

Dr. John Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 11.2, 1 Kings 12-13, Part 2 Resources from NotebookLM

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

1. Abstract of Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 11.2, 1 Kings 12-13, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Oswalt's lecture focuses on Jeroboam's apostasy in 1 Kings 12-13, highlighting the establishment of a sinful pattern for future Northern Kingdom rulers. Jeroboam, fearing the loss of his kingdom if the people continued to worship in Jerusalem, chose to create his own religious system. **This involved creating bull idols, altering the festival calendar, and appointing unauthorized priests.** Oswalt emphasizes that Jeroboam didn't seek God's guidance, but instead acted out of fear and human wisdom. **The lecture connects Jeroboam's actions to the earlier idolatry of the golden calf in the wilderness, illustrating how early choices can establish detrimental patterns.** The consequences of these choices impacted not just Jeroboam, but all subsequent rulers and the people they influenced.

2. 12 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 11.2 – 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 → Historical Books → Kings).



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on11_2.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 11.2, 1 Kings 12-13, Part 2

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from the provided excerpt of Dr. John Oswalt's lecture on 1 Kings 12-13, focusing on Jeroboam's apostasy:

Briefing Document: Dr. John Oswalt on 1 Kings 12-13 (Jeroboam's Apostasy)

Source: Excerpts from "Oswalt_Kings_EN_Session11_2.pdf"

Main Theme: The lecture focuses on Jeroboam's deliberate choice to disobey God, driven by fear and a reliance on human wisdom, and the devastating consequences of his actions in establishing a sinful pattern that would define the Northern Kingdom for the next 200 years. It also emphasizes the importance of seeking God's will and guarding one's choices because of the influence they have on others.

Key Ideas and Facts:

- **Jeroboam's Sinful Legacy:** Jeroboam's actions established a pattern of apostasy that every subsequent king in the Northern Kingdom followed. Oswalt emphasizes the weight of this responsibility, stating, "There was not going to be a king in the Northern Kingdom who would walk any path other than the path of Jeroboam." He uses this to illustrate the impact of one person's choices on future generations.
- **Fear as the Root of Sin:** The driving force behind Jeroboam's decisions was fear. He feared that if the people continued to worship in Jerusalem, they would return their allegiance to Rehoboam. Oswalt asserts, "How often fear is the mother of sin? How often do we take counsel of our fears and rush off to solve the problem in our own foolish wisdom and justify disobeying God?"
- **Reliance on Human Wisdom vs. Seeking God's Will:** Jeroboam made critical decisions without seeking God's guidance. Oswalt contrasts this with the need to cultivate the habit of asking, "God, what do you want to do?" He notes, "Human wisdom is virtually always flawed. And if it's not flawed, it's inadequate."
- **The Golden Calves/Bulls:** Jeroboam's decision to create golden calves/bulls in Bethel and Dan was a direct act of idolatry and a rehash of Israel's past sins (Exodus 32). Oswalt suggests the bulls might have been intentionally large and impressive, symbols of power and vitality, to make them more appealing. He also

connects this back to a distorted view of Yahweh, imagining Him as a powerful "bull." "So, I'm going to put it right there in Bethel, just about eight miles north of Jerusalem. I'm going to put a big golden bull and tell the people that's your God."

- **Altering Worship:** Jeroboam didn't just create idols; he also changed the worship calendar, established unauthorized priests (not Levites), and built altars in unauthorized places. This indicates a complete disregard for God's commands. Oswalt emphasizes the repeated phrase "he had made" to highlight Jeroboam's self-determination in these matters, contrasting it with actions ordained by God.
- **Importance of Early Choices and Guarding One's Actions:** Oswalt underscores the lasting impact of choices, especially early in life. He connects Jeroboam's actions back to Israel's history and Solomon's choices. "Oh, guard your choices early in life. You can set a pattern that will dog you the rest of your days. That's what happened to Israel." He emphasizes the need to "guard your choices" so that you don't begin living in sin and be tempted to stray further.
- **Influence on Others:** Oswalt extends the lesson beyond Jeroboam to the listeners/readers, reminding them that their actions also have consequences for others. "There are people who are watching you. There are people who will follow you... For their sakes, be true to God."

Quotes:

- "There was not going to be a king in the Northern Kingdom who would walk any path other than the path of Jeroboam."
- "Human wisdom is virtually always flawed. And if it's not flawed, it's inadequate."
- "How often fear is the mother of sin? How often do we take counsel of our fears and rush off to solve the problem in our own foolish wisdom and justify disobeying God?"
- "So, I'm going to put it right there in Bethel, just about eight miles north of Jerusalem. I'm going to put a big golden bull and tell the people that's your God."
- "Oh, guard your choices early in life. You can set a pattern that will dog you the rest of your days. That's what happened to Israel."
- "There are people who are watching you. There are people who will follow you... For their sakes, be true to God."

Conclusion:

Dr. Oswalt uses Jeroboam's story as a cautionary tale, highlighting the dangers of prioritizing personal fears and human wisdom over seeking God's will. The lecture serves as a call to self-examination, urging listeners to recognize the potential impact of their choices on others and to strive for faithfulness.

4. Study Guide: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 11.2, 1 Kings 12-13, Part 2

The Apostasy of Jeroboam: A Study Guide

Quiz

Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. What was the main problem Jeroboam faced after becoming king of the Northern Kingdom regarding worship?
2. What was Jeroboam's solution to the problem of people going to Jerusalem to worship?
3. What was Jeroboam's motivation for setting up alternative worship sites and idols?
4. Why were golden calves (or bulls) chosen as the idols for worship?
5. In what ways did Jeroboam alter the established religious practices?
6. What does Oswalt mean when he says Jeroboam "took counsel of his fears"?
7. According to Oswalt, what could Jeroboam have done differently when faced with his dilemma?
8. How did Jeroboam's actions set a pattern for future kings of the Northern Kingdom?
9. What lesson does Oswalt draw from Jeroboam's actions for the reader's own life?
10. How does the author feel about Jeroboam's actions?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The problem Jeroboam faced was that the men of the 10 tribes were expected to travel to the temple in Jerusalem three times a year to worship, which he feared would lead them back to Rehoboam, king of Judah. Jeroboam worried they would kill him and return to Rehoboam.
2. Jeroboam's solution was to create alternative worship sites in Bethel and Dan, each with a golden calf (or bull) idol. He wanted to prevent his people from going to Jerusalem.

3. Jeroboam's motivation was fear; he was afraid that if his people continued to worship in Jerusalem, they would return their allegiance to Rehoboam. To secure his reign, he created a new religious system that would keep his people loyal.
4. The choice of golden calves (or bulls) as idols likely referenced the incident in the wilderness with the golden calf at Mount Sinai, linking back to an earlier instance of Israelite apostasy. It may also have been intended to portray Yahweh in the form of a bull.
5. Jeroboam altered the worship calendar by instituting a festival on the 15th day of the 8th month instead of the 7th month. He also appointed priests from anyone he could find, rather than using only Levites, and built shrines to his "idolatrous Yahweh."
6. When Oswalt says Jeroboam "took counsel of his fears," he means that Jeroboam allowed his anxieties and insecurities to dictate his decisions, rather than seeking guidance from God or acting in accordance with God's commands. His decisions were motivated by what he feared would happen, not what God desired.
7. Oswalt suggests that Jeroboam should have sought God's guidance and wisdom on how to manage the worship of the ten tribes. Jeroboam never asked God how to solve his dilemma, and Oswalt believes he should have.
8. Jeroboam's actions of setting up alternative worship sites and idols set a pattern of apostasy for all subsequent kings of the Northern Kingdom. Every king after him "walked in the path of Jeroboam," perpetuating the sin of idolatry.
9. Oswalt draws the lesson that individual choices matter because they can have a lasting impact on others who may follow their example. He urges readers to be true to God, because others are watching them and may follow their example.
10. The author clearly disapproves of Jeroboam's actions, portraying them as a grave mistake rooted in fear and disobedience. He uses strong language, such as "chilling," "apostasy," and "totally off the rails," to express his negative assessment.

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the long-term consequences of Jeroboam's apostasy on the Northern Kingdom of Israel. How did his choices impact the religious and political landscape for generations to come?
2. Explore the role of fear in Jeroboam's decision-making. How did his anxieties influence his actions, and what alternative approaches could he have taken?
3. Analyze the symbolism of the golden calves (or bulls) and their connection to the wilderness narrative. What did these idols represent, and why were they a particularly problematic choice for Jeroboam?
4. Compare and contrast Jeroboam's actions with the example of King David. How did their leadership styles differ, and what lessons can be learned from their contrasting approaches to faith and governance?
5. Reflect on Oswald's warning about guarding one's choices. How can individuals apply this lesson to their own lives, and what strategies can they use to avoid making choices that lead to sin and negative consequences?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Apostasy:** The abandonment or renunciation of a religious or political belief or principle.
- **Idolatry:** The worship of idols or images as if they were gods.
- **Levites:** Members of the tribe of Levi, who were traditionally designated for priestly service in the Israelite religion.
- **Bethel:** An important religious site in the Northern Kingdom of Israel, where Jeroboam established one of his golden calf shrines.
- **Dan:** The northernmost tribe of Israel, where Jeroboam also established a golden calf shrine to prevent people from worshiping in Jerusalem.
- **Rehoboam:** The son of Solomon and king of Judah, against whom Jeroboam rebelled, leading to the division of the kingdom.
- **Northern Kingdom (Israel):** The kingdom formed by the ten northern tribes that seceded from the united kingdom of Israel after Solomon's death.
- **Southern Kingdom (Judah):** The kingdom consisting of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which remained loyal to the Davidic dynasty after the split.
- **High Places:** Elevated sites, often on hills or mounds, used for religious worship, sometimes associated with idolatrous practices.
- **Tabernacles (Feast of):** The Feast of Tabernacles (also known as Sukkot) is a major Jewish festival celebrated in the autumn, commemorating the Israelites' dwelling in temporary shelters during their Exodus from Egypt.

5. FAQs on Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 11.2, 1 Kings 12-13, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions about Jeroboam's Apostasy

- **What was Jeroboam's main problem after becoming king of the Northern Kingdom?**

Jeroboam's primary concern was the potential loss of his kingdom to Judah. He feared that if the people of the Northern Kingdom continued to travel to the temple in Jerusalem (located in Judah) to worship, they would eventually return their allegiance to Rehoboam, the king of Judah, and possibly kill Jeroboam.

- **Why is Jeroboam's reign considered so significant (and negative) in the history of the Northern Kingdom of Israel?**

Jeroboam's reign is viewed negatively because he established a pattern of apostasy (rejection of faith) that was followed by every subsequent king of the Northern Kingdom. He chose to prioritize his own political security over obedience to God, leading the nation into idolatry.

- **What specific actions did Jeroboam take to prevent the people from going to Jerusalem to worship?**

Jeroboam took several deliberate steps to deter his people from worshiping in Jerusalem. He created two golden calves (or bulls) and placed them in Bethel and Dan, designating these as places of worship. He also altered the religious calendar, changing the date of the festival of Tabernacles to the 15th day of the 8th month instead of the 7th. Furthermore, he appointed priests from outside the Levitical priesthood to serve at the high places he established.

- **Why did Jeroboam choose to create golden calves (or bulls) for worship?**

The text suggests that Jeroboam's choice of golden calves (or bulls) was likely a reference to the golden calf incident in the wilderness during Moses' time. It reflects a distorted perception of Yahweh as a powerful, virile force, similar to a bull. It's a return to a previously rejected form of worship.

- **What was Jeroboam's biggest mistake in dealing with the challenge of divided loyalties?**

Jeroboam's most significant error was his failure to seek God's guidance in addressing the issue of divided loyalties. Instead of asking God how to maintain his kingdom while honoring God's commands, Jeroboam relied on his own human wisdom and fears, which led him to disobey God and establish a false system of worship.

- **What is the significance of the phrase "he had made" in relation to Jeroboam's actions?**

The repetition of the phrase "he had made" emphasizes that Jeroboam's actions were based on his own decisions and innovations, not on God's instructions. This underscores the man-made nature of his religious system and its deviation from true worship.

- **What lesson does the passage offer about the impact of our choices?**

The passage emphasizes the significant impact of our choices, not only on our own lives but also on the lives of those who come after us. Just as Jeroboam established a negative pattern that influenced generations of kings in the Northern Kingdom, our actions and decisions can set examples that others will follow, for good or for ill.

- **How does fear play a role in Jeroboam's sin, and what warning does this offer for contemporary readers?**

Fear is presented as the primary motivator behind Jeroboam's actions. He was afraid of losing his kingdom, and this fear led him to disobey God and establish a false religion. This serves as a warning that when we allow fear to dictate our decisions, we are likely to compromise our values and disobey God. The passage encourages readers to cultivate faith and seek God's wisdom rather than succumbing to fear.