

Dr. John Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 29.2, 2 Kings 22-23, 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 29.2, 2 Kings 22-23, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Oswalt's lecture explores the significance of King Josiah's encounter with the prophet Huldah after the discovery of the Book of the Law. He questions why Josiah consulted Huldah instead of using the Urim and Thummim to validate the book's authenticity. **Oswalt asserts that Josiah was more concerned with the consequences of the nation's sins, prompting Huldah's prophecy of impending disaster.** The lecture further investigates God's aversion to idolatry, which Oswalt argues is rooted in a false worldview that the cosmos is all there is, contrasting it with the biblical view of God existing outside of creation. **Oswalt concludes by suggesting that while Josiah made a covenant, the people merely observed it, failing to internalize its meaning and repudiate the sins of Manasseh, ultimately leading to future transgressions.**

2. 15 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 29.2 – 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).



**Oswalt_Kings_Sessi
on29_2.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 29.2, 2 Kings 22-23, Part 2

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from the provided excerpts of Dr. John Oswalt's session on 2 Kings 22-23, Part 2:

Briefing Document: Dr. John Oswalt on 2 Kings 22-23, Part 2

Main Themes:

- **Josiah's Inquiry and Huldah's Prophecy:** The session focuses on King Josiah's reaction to the discovered Book of the Law and his seeking guidance from the prophetess Huldah. The central question is not merely the authenticity of the book, but the implications of its content for Judah's future.
- **Idolatry as a Worldview:** Oswalt emphasizes that idolatry is not simply about worshipping idols, but represents a fundamentally flawed worldview antithetical to the biblical one. He argues that idolatry stems from a desire to manipulate the cosmos and control the divine, rejecting the need for trust, surrender, and a God outside of creation.
- **The Biblical Worldview vs. The "Other" Worldview:** Oswalt posits that there are only two fundamental worldviews: the biblical worldview (God is outside the cosmos) and the "other" worldview (God is the cosmos). He connects this "other" worldview to modern paganism, where people seek to meet their needs by manipulating the cosmos (e.g., through materialism).
- **The Superficiality of Josiah's Reform:** Oswalt suggests that Josiah's reforms, while admirable, did not deeply penetrate the hearts of the people. He argues that the people merely "stood in the covenant" instead of actively participating in it. This lack of genuine repentance and change allowed the sins of Manasseh (the dye in which the mold was then) to continue influencing the nation, ultimately leading to judgment.

Key Ideas and Facts:

- **Huldah as an "Alarm Clock":** Oswalt metaphorically describes Huldah as an "alarm clock," signaling impending disaster. Her prophecy reveals that God's anger will burn against Judah due to their idolatry. "I'm going to bring disaster on this place and its people according to everything written in the book the king of Judah has read because they have forsaken me and burned incense to other gods

and aroused my anger by all the idols their hands have made, my anger will burn against this place and will not be quenched."

- **Urim and Thummim:** Oswalt explains the Urim and Thummim as tools used to discern God's will (possibly dice). He highlights that Josiah went to Huldah rather than using the Urim and Thummim because he was seeking more than just a yes/no answer; he wanted to know if Judah would survive the consequences of their actions.
- **Idolatry and the Denial of Boundaries:** Oswalt links idolatry to the blurring of boundaries between God, humanity, and nature. He uses examples like bestiality, homosexual behavior, and incest to illustrate how this worldview denies divinely ordained distinctions. "Bestiality is a theological statement. There is no boundary between me and the cow. Homosexual behavior is a theological statement. There is no boundary between me and another male. Incest is a theological statement. There is no boundary between me and my daughter."
- **Modern Idolatry:** Oswalt argues that idolatry persists today in the form of materialism and the desire to manipulate the world to satisfy personal wants. "I can meet my needs by manipulating the cosmos. That's idolatry...A good covetousness which is idolatry. I want, and I can manipulate the world to satisfy my want. God hates idolatry."
- **Josiah's Weeping:** Oswalt notes that Josiah wept over the sins of the nation, not his own. He contrasts this with a potential lack of concern for the sins of one's own nation, possibly stemming from "extreme individualism."
- **The People's Passive Role in the Covenant:** Oswalt interprets the Hebrew text as suggesting that the people "stood in the covenant" (NIV, NLT says "pledged themselves to the covenant" and ESV and NRSV say, "joined in the covenant") meaning they passively observed Josiah's actions rather than actively participating in the covenant themselves. He concludes that the actions were done by the King and not the people. "The king stood by the pillar, and he cut a covenant with the Lord. Doesn't even say he cut a covenant on their behalf. It's simply that he swore. And they stood by and said that's nice."
- **Manasseh's Enduring Influence:** Oswalt believes that the sins of Manasseh, who promoted idolatry and wickedness, left a lasting impact on Judah that Josiah's reforms could not erase. The people never repudiated Manasseh's ways, leading to eventual judgment.

Quotes:

- "Huldah's the alarm clock, if you will."
- "I'm going to bring disaster on this place and its people according to everything written in the book the king of Judah has read because they have forsaken me and burned incense to other gods and aroused my anger by all the idols their hands have made, my anger will burn against this place and will not be quenched."
- "Bestiality is a theological statement. There is no boundary between me and the cow. Homosexual behavior is a theological statement. There is no boundary between me and another male. Incest is a theological statement. There is no boundary between me and my daughter."
- "I can meet my needs by manipulating the cosmos. That's idolatry...A good covetousness which is idolatry. I want, and I can manipulate the world to satisfy my want. God hates idolatry."
- "The king stood by the pillar, and he cut a covenant with the Lord. Doesn't even say he cut a covenant on their behalf. It's simply that he swore. And they stood by and said that's nice."

Implications/Discussion Points:

- Oswalt's interpretation challenges the notion that outward reforms are sufficient without genuine inner transformation.
- His emphasis on worldview provides a framework for understanding the root causes of idolatry and its contemporary manifestations.
- His comments about America invite reflection on the potential for national judgment based on societal sin and a departure from biblical principles.
- The question of the people's participation in the covenant raises important issues about the nature of covenant and the responsibility of individuals within a community.

4. Study Guide: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 29.2, 2 Kings 22-23, Part 2

Josiah's Reforms: A Study Guide

Quiz: Short Answer Questions

1. Why did Josiah's representatives consult Huldah instead of using the Urim and Thummim?
2. According to Huldah, what is the consequence of Judah's actions?
3. What worldview is idolatry based upon, according to Oswalt?
4. Why is God so angered by idolatry, according to Oswalt?
5. What is the significance of Josiah tearing his robes?
6. What was Josiah weeping over, and what does Oswalt suggest about weeping over the sins of a nation?
7. What does it mean that Josiah will be spared the disaster that will fall on Judah?
8. Describe the covenant that Josiah makes with the Lord.
9. According to Oswalt, what is significant about the people "standing in" the covenant?
10. According to Oswalt, what is meant by the statement, "God would not forgive them for the sins of Manasseh?"

Quiz Answer Key

1. They consulted Huldah because Josiah wasn't simply asking if the book was authentic. He wanted to know if Judah would survive the consequences outlined in the book. Huldah could provide insight into the immediate consequences, which the Urim and Thummim could not.
2. According to Huldah, God is going to bring disaster on Judah because they have forsaken Him, burned incense to other gods, and aroused His anger with their idols. God's anger will burn against the place and will not be quenched.
3. Idolatry is based on the worldview that the cosmos is all there is, encompassing the human, natural, and divine, where everything is interconnected and can be

magically manipulated. This is in direct opposition to the biblical worldview, which sees God as separate and transcendent.

4. God is angered by idolatry because it expresses a false worldview, one where humans seek to control the divine and manipulate the cosmos for their own desires, rejecting God's authority and the need for trust and surrender.
5. Josiah tearing his robes signifies that Judah has sinned away her grace. It is an act of acknowledging the gravity of the nation's sin before God.
6. Josiah was weeping over the sins of the nation, not necessarily his own. Oswalt suggests that we should be brokenhearted over the sins of our people, as we are all part of one another, whether we like it or not.
7. Josiah will be spared the disaster because his heart was responsive, he humbled himself before the Lord, tore his robes, and wept in God's presence. Because of his actions, he will be gathered to his ancestors in peace before the disaster occurs.
8. Josiah made a covenant with the Lord to follow Him and keep His commands, statutes, and decrees with all his heart and soul, carefully guarding himself to adhere to these commandments. The covenant establishes the words written in the book discovered in the temple.
9. Oswalt suggests that the people "standing in" the covenant means they stood by and watched, as it was the king who explicitly made the covenant. He did not make it on their behalf, and they did not enter into it themselves.
10. Oswalt believes this means that the people never truly repudiated or rejected the sins and idolatry that Manasseh introduced to Judah. His influence became deeply ingrained in their culture, and even though Josiah's reforms were impactful, they never fully replaced the old ways.

Essay Questions

1. Analyze the significance of Huldah's prophecy in the context of Josiah's reforms. How does her message shape Josiah's actions and the overall trajectory of Judah?
2. Compare and contrast the biblical worldview with the worldview underlying idolatry, as described by Oswalt. How does each worldview impact one's understanding of God, humanity, and the cosmos?
3. Discuss the role of repentance and covenant in the narrative of Josiah's reforms. How do these elements contribute to or detract from the ultimate outcome for Judah?
4. Evaluate the effectiveness and the lasting impact of Josiah's reforms, considering Oswalt's interpretation of the people "standing in" the covenant and the subsequent actions of Josiah's sons.
5. Drawing on Oswalt's discussion of idolatry and worldview, analyze potential modern-day expressions of idolatry in contemporary society and their implications for faith and morality.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Urim and Thummim:** Objects, possibly dice or cubes with different colored faces, used for divination in ancient Israel to determine God's will.
- **Huldah:** A prophetess consulted by Josiah's representatives to interpret the newly discovered book of the Law.
- **Idolatry:** The worship of idols or false gods; according to Oswalt, it represents a worldview where the cosmos is all there is and can be manipulated.
- **Worldview:** A fundamental set of beliefs and assumptions about the world, shaping one's understanding of reality, God, humanity, and morality.
- **Covenant:** A binding agreement or promise, often between God and humanity, establishing specific obligations and expectations.
- **Repentance:** A sincere remorse for one's sins and a turning away from them; a change of heart and mind that leads to changed behavior.
- **Manasseh:** A previous king of Judah known for his wickedness and idolatry, whose sins had a lasting negative impact on the nation.
- **Cosmos:** The universe or world, especially when viewed as an ordered and harmonious system.
- **Sacrificial Animal:** An animal that is sacrificed to the deity as part of religious ritual.
- **Bestiality:** Sexual contact between a human and an animal.

5. FAQs on Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 29.2, 2 Kings 22-23, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Here is an 8-question FAQ based on the provided source:

FAQ

- **Why did King Josiah's people consult the prophet Huldah instead of using the Urim and Thummim to authenticate the discovered book of the law?**
- While the Urim and Thummim could confirm the book's authenticity, Huldah provided a deeper insight. Josiah wasn't merely asking if the book was truly God's word; he was seeking to understand the consequences for Judah, specifically whether they would survive the impending disaster described in the book, given their past sins. Huldah revealed the gravity of God's anger and the coming judgment.
- **What is the root cause of God's anger towards idolatry, as explained in the text?**
- God's anger toward idolatry stems from the false worldview it represents. Idolatry assumes the cosmos (including the divine, human, and natural realms) is all there is and that these elements are interconnected and manipulatable. This contrasts with the biblical worldview, where God is separate from and transcends creation. Idolatry seeks to control the divine, rather than trust and surrender to God.
- **How does the text connect idolatry to modern behaviors and attitudes?**
- The text argues that idolatry isn't limited to physical statues. It manifests as the desire to manipulate the world to satisfy personal needs and desires. Examples given include seeking validation through material possessions (like buying a BMW to feel like a "real man") or excessive consumerism. Covetousness, according to Paul, can be a form of idolatry. Essentially, anything that replaces God as the ultimate source of fulfillment is considered idolatrous. The text also connects it to the erasure of boundaries such as between humans and animals, as well as the corruption of gender roles and marriage.

- **Why was Josiah spared from witnessing the disaster prophesied by Huldah?**
- Josiah was spared because of his genuine repentance and humility. He tore his robes and wept upon hearing the words of the book, demonstrating a responsive heart and sorrow over the sins of the nation. God recognized Josiah's sincere remorse and promised he would not witness the impending judgment.
- **What was the significance of Josiah tearing his robes?**
- The tearing of robes symbolized Josiah's profound grief and recognition of the nation's sin. It was a physical expression of his remorse, not just for his personal failings, but for the collective sins of Judah. This act of humility moved God and led to the promise that Josiah would not see the coming disaster.
- **What is the meaning of "standing in the covenant" and why is it important?**
- The text contrasts different translations of the phrase. Most translate the text as the people pledging, joining, or entering *into* the covenant. The text suggests, however, that they "stood in" the covenant, implying they were merely witnesses, not active participants. Only the king made the covenant. This distinction is important because it suggests that Josiah's reforms were not deeply internalized by the people, which could explain their later backsliding and the eventual judgment.
- **Why was God unyielding on punishing the people despite Josiah's covenant?**
- The text suggests God's "unyielding" punishment was due to the people's failure to truly repudiate the sins of Manasseh. Manasseh's influence had deeply ingrained idolatrous practices and attitudes into the nation, and the people never genuinely rejected them. Josiah's reforms were largely external and imposed from the top down, without a corresponding change in the hearts and minds of the people.
- **What is the significance of boundaries as referenced in the text?**
- The text emphasizes the importance of boundaries, ordained by God. These include boundaries between humanity and nature, and between God and humanity. God has designed and created these boundaries, and actions like bestiality, homosexual behavior, and incest are theological statements that violate these boundaries. These actions reflect a worldview where the cosmos is all there is, and where distinctions between different orders of being are blurred or erased. God's love can intersect at any time, but the boundaries remain in place.