

Dr. John Oswalt, Kings, Session 29, Part 2

2 Kings 22-23, Part 2

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So, they went to Huldah, and I've used the alarm clock here, Huldah's the alarm clock, if you will. Now, my question is, why did these guys go to Huldah anyway? Why didn't they just go up to the temple and get out the Urim and the Thummim, which we don't know exactly what they were. They were probably dice, they were cubes, and they probably had white faces and black faces on the various faces of the cube.

Probably, if you threw them down and got two whites, that was a yes, and if you got two blacks, that was a no, and if you got a black and a white, it was try again. We know that they did that with Ezra later on, so most of the references are earlier in the kingdom period in David and the late judges, but they could have done that. Is this a word of God? Bingo, yes.

Why did they go to Huldah? Notice what Huldah says; this is verse 16 and following. She doesn't just say, yeah, this is authentic. That's what they could have found out with the Urim and the Thummim.

What does she say that they wouldn't find out with Urim and Thummim? This is what the Lord says: 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. Whoa. So, what was Josiah really asking? He wasn't asking if this was really the word of God or not.

He had already made up his mind it was. What was he asking? Are we going to survive this? Okay, right. We have done wrong.

Tear my robes. What does that mean? What is the significance of that? And here comes the spirit of God saying the significance of it is Judah has sinned away her grace. I wonder what God would say about America today.

We know what he says about how life is to be lived. We know what he says about what is right and what is wrong. But what is the implication of that for us? We don't have any prophets that I know of.

Perhaps we don't need any. Perhaps the result is clear enough. Now he says through Huldah, I'm going to bring disaster on this nation because they have forsaken me, burned incense to other gods, and aroused my anger by all their idols their hands have made.

What is this hang-up on idolatry? Why is God so angered by idolatry? Think about worldview. What worldview is idolatry built upon? The world is not real. And this cosmos, including the real spiritual component, is all there is.

Why does an idol supposedly work? We've talked about this several times in the past but I only gave one more week with you It's built upon a world view that is absolutely opposite to the truth. It is built on the view that the cosmos is all there is. In the cosmos, there is human, there is nature, and there is divine.

Everything in here is connected with everything else. You do something to an animal, and you do it to God. You do something to the rain, and you do it to God.

It is all built upon the presupposition of magical manipulation. I don't want a God that I cannot control. I don't want a God that I have to trust.

I don't want a God that I have to surrender. So, the idol, that's an idol, believe it or not. The idol is in the shape of a human made of natural materials, and it is supposedly inhabited by a God.

Idolatry is the perfect expression of that false worldview. The truth is God is outside of the cosmos. He is not the cosmos.

This really argues that the deity is the world, and the world is a deity. There is a hard and fast boundary between humanity and nature, as there is a hard and fast boundary between God and us.

Nobody can go up into heaven and bring God down, said a famous person. Now this is going to become ugly, but you need to hear it. 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. Does that sound at all current? Precisely.

There's no boundary around the genders. There's no boundary around marriage. God says there are boundaries.

Boundaries that I have designed and created. You cannot have sex with an animal. You're a different order of being.

You can't have sex with your daughter. She is not your possession to use. Now, praise God, he can intersect his world at any point and does.

The boundary is one way, but there it is. So right through the Bible God despises idolatry. Because idolatry is the ultimate expression of that false worldview.

Now I've said it to you before said again. There are only two worldviews. The biblical one and the other one.

Either God is the world or God is not the world. Take your choice. Modern paganism has gotten rid of these statues.

But it is as idolatrous as anything that ever lived. I can meet my needs by manipulating the cosmos. That's idolatry.

That's the idolatrous attitude. I need to feel that I'm a real man. Good go out and buy a BMW.

I need to feel that I'm a real woman. Go buy a whole bunch of new clothes. See Paul has it right when he says idolatry.

A good covetousness which is idolatry. I want, and I can manipulate the world to satisfy my want. God hates idolatry.

Okay, getting carried away there. Now Huldah says that you, Josiah, are not going to see this result. Why not? Look at verse 19.

Your heart was responsive, and you humbled yourself before the Lord when you heard what I had spoken. You tore your robes and wept in my presence. Now I think it's fascinating.

What was he weeping over? The sins of the nation. He was not weeping over his own sins. He was a good godly man.

I wonder how often I ever weep over the sins of America. Or do I stand back and say na, na, na. Part of the problem is our extreme individualism.

Well, I'm not part of that. The Bible says oh yes, you are. We are part of one another like it or not.

And so to be truly broken-hearted over the sins of my people. So, he went and stood beside the altar and he cut a covenant. Verse 3. In the presence of the Lord.

Presumably, that means he cut a sacrificial animal in two. And he walked between those and said, God. I'm entering a covenant with you.

And you do so to me if I ever break these promises. Wow. To follow the Lord, this is verse 3. To keep his commands, statutes, and decrees with all his heart and all his soul.

Now, the word keep there is a strong word in Hebrew. It is to be careful to guard. I'm going to carefully guard myself in regard to these your commandments.

I'm going to carefully guard. I'm going to keep watch on myself with regard to these. And so I will establish the words of the covenant written in this book.

Now, this last sentence is something that came to me when I was working on the commentary on Kings. Because I'd never seen it before, this is what the NIV says.

And let's see. The NLT agrees with this, unfortunately. All the people pledged themselves to the covenant.

The ESV and the NRSV say all the people joined in the covenant. And ASB says entered into. The Hebrew says they stood in the covenant.

When I get to heaven, I'm going to ask about this, but I think it means they stood by and watched.

Notice it's the king who made the covenant. Very explicit in verse 3. 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. Now I'm going to, and our time is running out here.

And I'm going to show my hand quickly. When we go into his reforms in the next chapter, chapter 23, we will see that every one of these actions was performed by the king.

Not one time do we have the people who did so and so. I think this explains what happens next. With three sons.

Every one of whom we're told did evil in the sight of the Lord. I'm confident. And I mentioned this last time.

When the Bible says, God would not forgive them for the sins of Manasseh. Wow. No matter how good they were.

No matter how many covenants they made. God was going to get them. No, that's not what the text says.

I think what it's saying is they never repudiated the sins of Manasseh. Manasseh, as I said last time, was the dye in which the mold then. He was the mold in which the metal was poured.

They never chose anything else. So, this reform was a lovely thing, but it did not penetrate the nation.