

Dr. John Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 4, 1 Kings 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 4, 1 Kings 2, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Oswalt's lecture dissects 1 Kings 2, exploring David's final instructions to Solomon. He analyzes David's charge to be strong and obedient, emphasizing the challenges of following God's path due to internal resistance. **The lecture examines the lives of Joab, Shimei, and Adonijah as examples of how character shapes destiny.** Oswalt questions if Solomon was justified in his actions against these men. **He concludes by prompting reflection on personal character development and the opportunity for change through God's grace and a redirection of one's choices.**

**2. 17 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 4 – 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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on04.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 4, 1 Kings 2

Okay, here's a briefing document summarizing the main themes and ideas from the provided excerpts of Dr. John Oswalt's session on 1 Kings 2:

Briefing Document: Dr. John Oswalt on 1 Kings 2

Overall Theme:

The session focuses on the themes of obedience, prosperity (in its truest sense), character development, and the consequences of our choices, as illustrated through the narrative of David's final instructions to Solomon and the subsequent actions of Solomon, Joab, Shimei, and Adonijah. It emphasizes that true success is aligned with God's will, not necessarily our own desires.

Key Ideas and Facts:

1. The Challenge of Obedience:

- David charges Solomon to be strong and act like a man by observing God's requirements as outlined in the law of Moses. Oswalt questions why obedience requires strength, linking it to Joshua 1:7.
- Walking in God's way isn't easy because of internal resistance and the need for discipline and attention: "There is a fifth column within us which, left to itself, says that God's way is not good. My way, on the other hand, oh, that's good. But God's way is not good."
- The repetition of "His decrees, His commands, His laws, His regulations" emphasizes the importance of understanding and adhering to God's will. The goal is to internalize God's desires so that they become our own, a "response of love, rather than the response of the slave."
- The "walk" with God is a process, a journey: "a relationship with God is a walk. That means progress. It means you're going from point A to point B. But it's not a dash."

1. The True Meaning of Prosperity:

- David tells Solomon that obedience will lead to prosperity, but Oswalt clarifies that "prosperity" (the Hebrew word having a broad meaning) can also mean wisdom, effectiveness, and success.

- Oswalt argues that success is not guaranteed according to our standards, but according to God's will: "You will succeed according to what He wants, not according to what you want." True prosperity lies within our souls.
- The example of Amy Carmichael illustrates that worldly "failure" can coexist with great spiritual success: "And yet God was at work in their lives, and they achieved great success in who they became." He poses the question of whether we will trust in God's promises even when they don't align with our understanding.

1. **David's Unfinished Business and Moral Ambiguity:**

- David instructs Solomon to deal with Joab and Shimei, raising questions about why David didn't address these issues himself during his reign.
- **Joab:** David wants Solomon to punish Joab for the murders of Abner and Amasa: "Deal with him according to your wisdom, but don't let his gray head go down to the grave in peace." Joab's actions were treacherous and deserve punishment, however, Oswalt points out David's delay in addressing them.
- **Shimei:** David wants Solomon to punish Shimei for cursing him, even though David spared Shimei's life. The text states, "I swore to him by the Lord, I will not put you to death by the sword. But now, do not consider him innocent. You're a man of wisdom, and you'll know what to do to him. Bring his gray head down to the grave in blood." Oswalt suggests that David's lingering resentment and possible dementia might play a role in these instructions.

1. **Solomon's Actions and Justifications:**

- The narrative presents complex moral questions about Solomon's actions.
- **Adonijah:** Adonijah's request to marry Abishag is seen as a veiled attempt to claim the throne. Solomon's response is swift and decisive, executing Adonijah. "King Solomon swore by the Lord, may God deal with me, be it ever so severely, if Adonijah does not pay with his life for that request."
- **Abiathar:** Abiathar is spared because he is "the Lord's anointed" and because he did not actively make himself guilty of conspiracy like Adonijah and Joab.
- **Joab:** Solomon orders the execution of Joab for his past murders, fulfilling David's instruction.
- **Shimei:** Solomon confines Shimei to Jerusalem, knowing his impulsive nature. When Shimei violates this restriction, Solomon has him executed.

- Oswalt argues that Solomon is acting faithfully and wisely, not simply eliminating rivals. The consequences for Joab and Adonijah were brought on themselves.

1. **Character as Destiny:**

- The session emphasizes that character, built through repeated choices, significantly shapes our destiny: "Over and over again, as we've seen here in the case of all three of these characters, the character is destiny."
- Examples of Joab's ambition, Adonijah's self-absorption, and Shimei's impulsiveness are used to illustrate this point.
- Despite this, Oswalt offers hope, stating that God can alter even long-established patterns of behavior through redemption. "Praise God, we know a God who can deliver. We know a God who can alter that pattern, even across 50, 60, 70 years."

1. **Application to Modern Life:**

- The session encourages self-reflection on our attitudes toward Jesus and those in positions of religious leadership ("the Lord's anointed").
- It challenges listeners to examine the implications of their requests to God and others.
- It calls for building a character of endurance, patience, and hope.

In essence, Dr. Oswalt uses the narrative of 1 Kings 2 to explore the complexities of faith, leadership, and the lifelong journey of character development.

4. Study Guide: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 4, 1 Kings 2

1 Kings 2: A Study Guide

Key Concepts and Themes

- **Success Redefined:** Understanding success not just in worldly terms (wealth, power) but in terms of spiritual growth and fulfilling God's purpose.
- **Obedience and Strength:** Recognizing that following God's commands requires inner strength and is not always easy or popular.
- **Character and Destiny:** Examining how character shapes one's destiny, but also recognizing the power of God to redeem and redirect.
- **David's Charge to Solomon:** Understanding the importance of David's final instructions to Solomon regarding obedience, justice, and dealing with past grievances.
- **The Significance of "The Lord's Anointed":** Discerning the importance of honoring those whom God has set apart, both in leadership positions and in everyday interactions.
- **Consequences of Bloodshed:** Acknowledging the serious and lasting consequences of bloodshed and the need for justice.
- **The Nature of Redemption:** Grasping how, when redemption comes, we can begin to make another cascade of choices that leads us to the right place.

Quiz

Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. According to Dr. Oswalt, why does walking in the Lord's way require strength and manliness?
2. How does the Old Testament use repeated words like "His decrees, His commands, His laws, His regulations" to reinforce a point?
3. How can one walk with God strongly, courageously, and determinately, and still not have a guarantee of success?
4. What was Amy Carmichael's experience, and what did it teach her and those around her?

5. Why did David instruct Solomon to deal with Joab, even after Joab had served David loyally for many years?
6. What does David's reaction to Shimei's cursing reveal about David's character, and how does it contrast with his later instructions to Solomon?
7. What was Adonijah's request of Bathsheba, and what were the potential implications of that request?
8. Why was Abiathar spared while Joab and Adonijah were killed?
9. How does the story of Shimei illustrate the concept that "character is destiny"?
10. According to Dr. Oswalt, to what degree is character the sum of all the choices we've been making, and how can redemption alter this?

Quiz Answer Key

1. Walking in the Lord's way requires strength because it's not always easy or popular, and there's a resistance within us that says God's way is not good. It takes discipline and attention to overcome this internal resistance and external pressures.
2. The Old Testament repeats words like "His decrees, His commands, His laws, His regulations" to emphasize the importance and comprehensive nature of God's instructions. This repetition serves to reinforce the need for constant attention and obedience to God's word.
3. Walking with God strongly doesn't guarantee success according to personal standards, but rather success according to God's will and purposes. It's about prospering in our souls and becoming the person God intends us to be, which may not align with worldly definitions of success.
4. Amy Carmichael, though deemed a misfit, dedicated her life to rescuing girls in India from temple prostitution. Despite becoming bedridden for twenty years, she authored 30 books of spiritual depth, demonstrating that success can be defined by who we become, rather than what we achieve.
5. David instructed Solomon to deal with Joab because Joab had murdered Abner and Amasa, shedding their blood in peacetime as if in battle. This was an act of injustice that David had failed to address and wished to be rectified after his death.

6. David's initial restraint in response to Shimei's cursing suggests a recognition that Shimei's words might be a form of divine punishment. However, his later instructions to Solomon to not consider Shimei innocent reveal a lingering resentment and desire for retribution.
7. Adonijah requested Bathsheba to ask Solomon for Abishag the Shunammite as his wife, but the request implied a claim to the throne, as Abishag had been intimate with the former king David. This made Solomon recognize Adonijah's continued ambition for the throne.
8. Abiathar was spared because he was a priest, and the Lord's anointed, while Joab and Adonijah had made themselves guilty. Their actions resulted in blood guiltiness for Joab and for Adonijah, not giving up scheming for the kingdom.
9. The story of Shimei, who was instructed to stay in Jerusalem but impulsively left to retrieve his runaway slaves, demonstrates that character is destiny. Shimei's rash and impulsive nature led him to disobey the king's command, resulting in his death, as it was his character that sealed his fate.
10. Dr. Oswalt states character is, to a large degree, the sum of all the choices we've been making. However, he emphasizes that redemption can alter this trajectory, allowing individuals to make a new series of choices that lead them to a different, more Godly, path.

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the concept of "success" as presented in 1 Kings 2, contrasting worldly success with spiritual success. How does the example of Amy Carmichael illustrate this distinction?
2. Analyze David's instructions to Solomon regarding Joab and Shimei. What do these instructions reveal about David's character and his understanding of justice?
3. Explore the theme of "character is destiny" as illustrated by the lives of Adonijah, Joab, and Shimei. How did their individual character traits contribute to their ultimate fates?
4. Examine the significance of honoring "the Lord's anointed" as discussed in the context of Shimei's actions. How does this principle apply to contemporary relationships and interactions?

5. Discuss the impact of bloodshed in the Old Testament, particularly in relation to Joab's actions. How does the concept of shed blood relate to the New Testament and the sacrifice of Jesus?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Prosper:** In the context of 1 Kings 2, it means not only material wealth but also wisdom, effectiveness, and success in fulfilling God's purposes.
- **The Lord's Anointed:** Refers to individuals chosen and set apart by God for a specific purpose, such as kings, priests, or prophets; it implies a need for respect and reverence.
- **Character:** The sum of one's choices and habits, shaping their disposition and influencing their actions.
- **Destiny:** The course of events that are predetermined or influenced by one's character and choices.
- **Redemption:** The act of being saved from sin, error, or evil; in this context, it refers to the transformative power of God to change one's character and destiny.
- **Obedience:** Compliance with an order, request, or law; in a religious context, it refers to following God's commands and will.
- **Discernment:** The ability to judge well, to distinguish between truth and falsehood, right and wrong.
- **Blood Guilt:** The state of being responsible for bloodshed, often carrying consequences and requiring atonement.
- **Fifth Column:** A group within a larger group that is working against it, often secretly; in this context, it refers to the internal resistance to God's way.
- **Relationship with God (as a walk):** This refers to making progress from point A to point B, one step at a time.

5. FAQs on Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 4, 1 Kings 2, Biblelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions: 1 Kings 2

1. Why does Dr. Oswalt emphasize the need for strength and manliness when referring to walking in obedience to God?

Walking in God's way, according to Dr. Oswalt, requires strength because it is not always easy. It takes discipline and attention, going against our natural inclinations and the resistance within us that often favors our desires over God's will. It's not the popular choice, requiring a conscious effort to exercise our spiritual muscles.

2. How does Dr. Oswalt explain the relationship between God's commands and our desires as believers?

Dr. Oswalt suggests that the goal of the Holy Spirit in our lives is to align our desires with God's desires. Ideally, we move from obeying God's commands out of obligation (like a slave) to willingly embracing them out of love and a desire to please our Father. He pictures a relationship with God as a walk, a constant and steady movement toward a closer relationship.

3. What does "prosper" mean in the context of 1 Kings 2, and is it a guarantee?

The Hebrew word often translated as "prosper" encompasses a broad range of meanings, including being wise, effective, and successful. Dr. Oswalt argues that it's not a guarantee of worldly or material success based on our personal desires. Instead, success is defined by achieving what God wants for us, particularly prosperity within our souls, even if it means failing according to the world's standards.

4. Why does David instruct Solomon to deal harshly with Joab, despite Joab's past loyalty?

Joab, while loyal to David, was also responsible for the murders of Abner and Amasa, two commanders of Israel's armies. David considered these acts as shedding innocent blood in peacetime, a violation of God's law. While Joab was loyal to David, David understands that Joab must face justice for his actions, even if it means tasking Solomon with carrying it out.

5. What is the significance of David's instructions to Solomon regarding Shimei, who cursed David?

Shimei cursed David, the Lord's anointed, a grave offense. While David initially spared Shimei's life upon his return, he instructed Solomon not to consider him innocent. The takeaway for us is how we treat one another as the Lord's anointed. We should not treat another casually, lightly or destructively and how easily we cut one another down quietly and in secret.

6. What was Adonijah's motive for requesting Abishag the Shunammite as his wife, and what did it reveal about his character?

Adonijah's request to marry Abishag, who had attended to David in his old age, suggests a continued ambition for the throne. It revealed a shifty and dumb character who did not learn anything about David and Solomon's response to his earlier power grab. His character has not changed since his earlier attempt to become King, so Solomon knows that Adonijah will continue to scheme and never give up trying to take back the kingdom.

7. What does the story of Adonijah, Joab, and Shimei suggest about the relationship between character and destiny?

Dr. Oswalt emphasizes that "character is destiny." In each of these cases, their character traits ultimately led to their downfall. Adonijah's ambition and self-absorption, Joab's ruthlessness, and Shimei's impulsiveness all contributed to their respective fates. Their actions were rooted in who they were, and those actions had consequences.

8. How does the lecture suggest we can change our character and destiny, even later in life?

Despite the strong influence of past choices on character, Dr. Oswalt stresses that through redemption and the grace of God, we can actively choose to change. By consistently making different choices aligned with God's will, we can begin a new "cascade of choices" that leads us to a different, more desirable destiny. It's not easy, but it is possible with God's help.