

Dr. John Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 17.1, 2 Kings 1-2, Part 1 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 17.1, 2 Kings 1-2, Part 1, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Oswalt's lecture provides an in-depth analysis of 2 Kings 1-2, focusing on the transition from 1 Kings and the intertwined narratives of Elijah and King Ahaziah. The session examines Ahaziah's idolatry, specifically his turn to Baalzebub, and contrasts it with the worship of Yahweh. Elijah's encounters with Ahaziah's captains demonstrate the power and authority of God. Oswalt emphasizes the importance of recognizing Yahweh's Lordship and the consequences of rejecting Him. He connects these ancient events to the contemporary need for repentance and belief.

**2. 13 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 17.1 – 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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on17_1.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 17.1, 2 Kings 1-2, Part 1

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

Briefing Document: Oswalt on 2 Kings 1-2 (Part 1)

Subject: Analysis of 2 Kings 1-2 (Part 1) - The conflict between Yahweh and Baal, the reign of Ahaziah, and the ministry of Elijah.

Source: Excerpts from "Oswalt_Kings_EN_Session17_1.pdf"

Main Themes and Ideas:

- **The Unity of 1 and 2 Kings:** Oswalt emphasizes that the division between 1 and 2 Kings is artificial. The story of Ahaziah begins at the end of 1 Kings and continues seamlessly into 2 Kings, demonstrating the books were originally intended as a single narrative. "As I think I may have mentioned in the last session, the clearest evidence that these are really one book is seen in the fact that the account of Ahaziah, king of Israel, the northern kingdom, starts at the very end of First Kings, chapter 22, begins there at verse 51, and then the story continues on into chapter 2, excuse me, book 2, and chapter 1, and we have the conclusion of Ahaziah's story in chapter 1, verse 18. So, the separation of the two is purely mechanical, nothing to do with content."
- **Ahaziah's Sin: Escalation of Idolatry:** While previous kings of Israel (like Jeroboam) are condemned for worshipping Yahweh in an idolatrous way (using golden calves), Ahaziah's sin is more severe. He follows the ways of his father and mother (Ahab and Jezebel) by actively displacing Yahweh with Baal. "He did evil in the eyes of the Lord because he followed the ways of his father and mother and of Jeroboam, son of Nebat. So, there's a new element added here. What was the sin of Ahaziah's father and mother, Ahab and Jezebel? It was, in fact, not merely to worship Yahweh in an idolatrous way. It was, in fact, to displace Yahweh and bring in that God, the Canaanite God of fertility, the God Baal."
- **The Central Conflict: Yahweh vs. Baal:** The ministry of Elijah and Elisha is centered around the question of whether Yahweh will be completely replaced by Baal worship in Israel. This is not simply about how Yahweh is worshipped, but about His very existence and relevance in the land. "As I've said to you, the ministry of Elijah and Elisha, a single ministry in two phases, was focused on this

question: Is Yahweh, in fact, going to be displaced? Not merely dragged into this world, but in fact, dragged out of this world, put on the shelf the crisis that is here with us."

- **Ahaziah's Fall and Consultation of Baalzebub:** After falling and being injured, Ahaziah sends messengers to Baalzebub, the god of Ekron (a Philistine city), to inquire about his recovery. This highlights the extent to which Israel has turned away from Yahweh. "Ahaziah sends to Baalzebub, the god of Ekron. Ekron is one of the Palestine, one of the Philistine cities. So, this is not merely the Canaanite god Baal, and it's the Canaanite god Baal in a Philistine city. So, he is not sending to a prophet of Yahweh in Israel. He's sending to a prophet of Baal in Philistia."
- **Elijah's Confrontation:** Elijah intercepts Ahaziah's messengers and rebukes them for seeking guidance from a foreign god when there is a God in Israel. This emphasizes the omnipresence and unavoidable nature of Yahweh. "Elijah meets them and says, is there no God in Israel? Do you have to go to a foreign god in a foreign nation to ask for wisdom?" Oswalt connects this to a later example with King Ahaz and Isaiah to underline the point: "You cannot avoid Yahweh. You may think you've avoided him in this life, but in the end, you will meet him."
- **The Significance of "Man of God":** Elijah is repeatedly referred to as "man of God" rather than just a prophet, highlighting his character, nature, and relationship with Yahweh. The conflict between Elijah and Ahaziah is therefore also framed as a conflict between two kings, one earthly and one divine. "Right through the Elijah, Elisha narrative, these two men are almost always referred to as the man of God. Only rarely are they called prophets... It's the issue of their character, their nature, and their relationship. Who is this person? He's a man of God."
- **The Divine Judgement:** Ahaziah's refusal to acknowledge Yahweh's Lordship leads to his death, which is prophesied by Elijah. The fire from heaven that consumes the first two groups of soldiers sent to capture Elijah demonstrates Yahweh's power and judgment. Ahaziah's death is a direct consequence of turning away from Yahweh: "Because you have not consulted Yahweh, you're going to die."
- **The Call to Repentance and Belief:** Oswalt connects the story of Ahaziah to a broader message of repentance and belief in Yahweh as the path to salvation. He draws a direct parallel to Jesus' message in Mark 1:15. "Surely, it is when we are confronted with clear evidence that Yahweh is God. That's the time. Two things.

Repent and believe... As a result, he died. So for you and me, the word is repent and believe, and you shall be saved."

- **The Nature of Idolatry:** Oswalt stresses that idolatry is not just about making statues. It is about dragging the creator into the world and thus denying his transcendence and the possibility of salvation. "It is you drag the creator into this world and make him a part of the purposeless, salvationless character of this creation, or you allow him to be absolutely other than this world. And in His great divine purpose, bring the possibility of transformation upon us."

Key Quotes:

- "So, the separation of the two is purely mechanical, nothing to do with content."
- "He did evil in the eyes of the Lord because he followed the ways of his father and mother and of Jeroboam, son of Nebat."
- "Is Yahweh, in fact, going to be displaced? Not merely dragged into this world, but in fact, dragged out of this world, put on the shelf the crisis that is here with us."
- "Is there no God in Israel? Do you have to go to a foreign god in a foreign nation to ask for wisdom?"
- "Right through the Elijah, Elisha narrative, these two men are almost always referred to as the man of God."
- "Because you have not consulted Yahweh, you're going to die."
- "Repent and believe, and you shall be saved."
- "It is you drag the creator into this world and make him a part of the purposeless, salvationless character of this creation, or you allow him to be absolutely other than this world."

Implications:

This section of 2 Kings highlights the dangers of idolatry, the importance of recognizing Yahweh's authority, and the need for repentance and faith. It provides a historical context for understanding the conflict between true worship and paganism, and draws parallels to the New Testament call to salvation through Jesus Christ. The lecture encourages listeners to reflect on their own relationship with God and to turn away from anything that might displace Him in their lives.

4. Study Guide: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 17.1, 2 Kings 1-2, Part 1

2 Kings 1-2 Study Guide

Quiz

Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. What makes it clear that 1 and 2 Kings are actually one book?
2. What was the sin of Jeroboam, son of Nebat, and why was it so significant?
3. How did Ahaziah's sin differ from that of Jeroboam?
4. Why was it significant that Ahaziah sought counsel from Baalzebub, the god of Ekron?
5. What does "Baal Zevuv" mean, and what possible significance does that have?
6. How does the story of Ahaziah and Elijah illustrate the idea that one cannot ultimately avoid God?
7. When confronted by Elijah, what actions did Ahaziah take, and what do these actions reveal about his character?
8. Why is Elijah referred to as a "man of God" throughout the narrative?
9. What was the significance of fire falling from heaven in the conflict between Elijah and Ahaziah's men?
10. According to the passage, what two actions should one take when confronted with clear evidence that Yahweh is God?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The clearest evidence that 1 and 2 Kings are one book is the continuous narrative regarding Ahaziah, king of Israel, which begins at the end of 1 Kings 22 and concludes in 2 Kings 1. The story is separated into two books purely for mechanical reasons, having nothing to do with content.
2. Jeroboam's sin was idolatry, specifically worshipping Yahweh in an idolatrous way by building golden idols representing power and fertility in Bethel and Dan. This was significant because it dragged the transcendent creator, Yahweh, into the finite world and made him a part of the purposeless character of creation.

3. Ahaziah's sin went beyond Jeroboam's idolatry; he followed the ways of his father and mother, Ahab and Jezebel, who sought to displace Yahweh altogether by bringing in Baal, the Canaanite god of fertility. This represented a new crisis, not merely distorting Yahweh, but trying to erase Yahweh.
4. Seeking counsel from Baalzebub in Ekron was significant because it demonstrated how far Israel had drifted from Yahweh. Ahaziah chose a foreign god in a Philistine city over consulting a prophet of Yahweh in Israel, showing a complete disregard for the God of Israel.
5. "Baal Zevuv" means "lord of the flies." This may suggest that he was associated with death, as flies often gather around corpses, indicating a connection to the underworld or the power of death.
6. The story shows that even if Ahaziah ignored or didn't think about Yahweh, God still confronted him through Elijah's prophecy. Ahaziah's attempts to avoid Yahweh only led to a direct confrontation and a judgment he could not escape.
7. When confronted by Elijah, Ahaziah sent military troops to capture and kill him, demonstrating his defiance and unwillingness to submit to Yahweh's authority. Instead of repenting, he sought to eliminate the messenger of God.
8. Elijah being referred to as a "man of God" emphasizes his character, nature, and relationship with Yahweh. The title highlights that he represents Yahweh's authority and power, making his message carry divine weight.
9. The fire falling from heaven is reminiscent of the conflict on Mount Carmel and demonstrates Yahweh's power and superiority over other gods. It served as a clear sign of Yahweh's judgment, illustrating his ultimate authority and kingship in the face of Ahaziah's defiance.
10. When confronted with clear evidence that Yahweh is God, one should repent (turn away from sin and recognize Yahweh's authority) and believe (trust in the good news of God's kingdom and salvation). These actions reflect a submission to Yahweh's lordship and acceptance of his grace.

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the significance of idolatry in the context of 1 and 2 Kings, and analyze how the actions of Jeroboam and Ahaziah exemplify different aspects of this sin.
2. Analyze the character of Ahaziah as presented in 2 Kings 1, focusing on his interactions with Elijah and the choices he makes. What does this character reveal about the state of Israel at the time?
3. Explore the theme of divine judgment in 2 Kings 1, considering both Ahaziah's fate and the fate of the captains and their men. What does this episode reveal about the nature of Yahweh's justice?
4. Examine the role of Elijah as a prophet and "man of God" in 2 Kings 1, focusing on his interactions with Ahaziah and his representatives. How does Elijah's character and actions challenge the authority of the king?
5. Discuss the meaning and implications of the phrase "repent and believe" in the context of 2 Kings 1. How does the story of Ahaziah serve as a cautionary tale against failing to heed this call?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Ahaziah:** King of Israel who reigned briefly and sought counsel from Baalzebub after an injury.
- **Elijah:** A prophet of Yahweh who confronted Ahaziah for consulting a foreign god and predicted his death.
- **Baalzebub:** The god of Ekron, also known as "lord of the flies," consulted by Ahaziah after his fall.
- **Jeroboam:** The first king of the northern kingdom of Israel, known for establishing idolatrous worship practices with golden calves.
- **Idolatry:** The worship of idols or false gods, a sin that represented a distortion or displacement of Yahweh.
- **Transcendence:** The quality of being beyond or above the material universe; in the context of Yahweh, his existence outside of and prior to creation.
- **Yahweh:** The personal name of the God of Israel.
- **Man of God:** A title used to describe Elijah, emphasizing his character, nature, and relationship with Yahweh.
- **Repent:** To turn away from sin and acknowledge Yahweh's authority.
- **Believe:** To trust in the good news of God's kingdom and salvation.

5. FAQs on Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 17.1, 2 Kings 1-2, Part 1, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

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

What is significant about the transition from 1 Kings to 2 Kings regarding the story of Ahaziah?

The story of Ahaziah begins at the very end of 1 Kings (22:51) and concludes in 2 Kings (1:18). This continuity serves as evidence that the division between 1 and 2 Kings is artificial and that they were originally intended as one continuous narrative.

How did Ahaziah's sin differ from that of Jeroboam?

While Jeroboam's sin involved worshipping Yahweh through idolatry (golden idols), Ahaziah went further. He not only practiced idolatry but also displaced Yahweh by worshipping Baal, the Canaanite god of fertility, thereby escalating the crisis of faith in Israel.

Why did Ahaziah seek guidance from Baalzebub, the god of Ekron, after his fall?

Ahaziah's decision to consult Baalzebub, the god of a Philistine city, rather than a prophet of Yahweh in Israel demonstrates the extent to which the kingdom had drifted away from Yahweh under the influence of Ahab and Jezebel. It signifies a complete disregard for the God of Israel.

What is the significance of Baalzebub's name and what might it represent?

"Baal Zevuv" translates to "lord of the flies." While the exact meaning is uncertain, it's speculated that Baalzebub could be associated with death, as flies are often found around corpses. In the New Testament, the name Beelzebub becomes associated with Satan.

What does Elijah's encounter with Ahaziah's messengers reveal about the nature of God?

Elijah's confrontation with Ahaziah's messengers highlights that God cannot be avoided. Even if one consciously ignores or rejects God, God will still make Himself known. This underscores God's omnipresence and sovereignty.

What is the central conflict illustrated in the story of Elijah and the captains of fifty?

The conflict between Elijah and the captains represents a clash between two kings: Yahweh and Ahaziah. The question is whether Yahweh, represented by Elijah, is the true authority, or whether Ahaziah holds ultimate power. The fire that consumes the first two groups of soldiers demonstrates Yahweh's power and authority.

What is the significance of Elijah being called a "man of God"?

Throughout the Elijah and Elisha narratives, they are frequently referred to as "men of God" rather than simply prophets. This emphasizes their character, nature, and relationship with God, highlighting that their authority comes from their close connection with Yahweh.

What is the main lesson or application for believers today from the story of Ahaziah's demise?

The story of Ahaziah emphasizes the importance of repentance and belief when confronted with clear evidence of Yahweh's Godship. Ahaziah's failure to repent and acknowledge Yahweh's sovereignty led to his demise. The lesson is to turn to God, acknowledge His Lordship, and embrace the good news of His kingdom of salvation.