

Dr. John Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 17.2, 2 Kings 1-2, 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 17.2, 2 Kings 1-2, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Oswalt's lecture explores the biblical narrative of Elijah and Elisha in 2 Kings 1-2. The lecture analyzes Elijah's repeated requests for Elisha to remain behind, suggesting it was a test of Elisha's commitment. **Oswalt also examines the role of the "sons of the prophets" as a support group for Elijah and Elisha during their ministry.** The discussion interprets Elisha's request for a "double portion" of Elijah's spirit, not as a desire for increased power, but as a plea to inherit Elijah's spirit and relationship with God. **The narrative highlights the transfer of ministry and the continuation of God's work through different individuals.** The lecture concludes by emphasizing the importance of seeking God's spirit above all else.

2. 15 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 17.2 – 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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on17_2.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 17.2, 2 Kings 1-2, Part 2

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

Briefing Document: Dr. John Oswalt on 2 Kings 1-2 (Elijah and Elisha)

Source: Excerpts from "Oswalt_Kings_EN_Session17_2.pdf" (Dr. John Oswalt, Kings, Session 17, Part 2)

Main Themes:

- **Commitment and Testing:** The narrative of Elijah's departure and Elisha's succession is presented as a test of Elisha's commitment to the prophetic ministry. Elijah's repeated requests for Elisha to stay behind are interpreted as a challenge to Elisha's dedication and willingness to persevere.
- **The Importance of Support:** The role of the "sons of the prophets" (a prophetic community or support group) is highlighted as essential for sustaining ministry, particularly in the face of opposition and burnout.
- **Reiteration of Israel's Story:** The journey from Gilgal to Bethel to Jericho to the Jordan is seen as a symbolic re-enactment of Israel's entry into the Promised Land, connecting Elijah to Moses and highlighting a restart of God's work.
- **Seeking the Spirit, Not Just Power:** Elisha's request for a "double portion" of Elijah's spirit is interpreted not as a desire for increased power, but as a desire for a deeper relationship with the Holy Spirit. The emphasis is on seeking the *person* of the Spirit, rather than just His gifts or abilities.
- **Seeing with Spiritual Vision:** The ability to see Elijah taken up is presented as evidence of Elisha's spiritual vision, his capacity to perceive the world as God sees it.

Key Ideas and Facts:

- **The Narrative:** The session focuses on 2 Kings 2:1-11, the story of Elijah's ascension and Elisha's succession.
- **Gilgal Location:** The precise location of Gilgal in the narrative is questioned, raising the possibility that it may not be the historical Gilgal of Joshua.

- **Elisha's Persistence:** Elisha refuses to leave Elijah, repeatedly declaring "As surely as the Lord lives and you live, I will not leave you." This demonstrates his unwavering commitment.
- **The Sons of the Prophets:** These groups appear primarily during the ministries of Elijah and Elisha, possibly serving as support networks in their conflict with the royal power of Israel. Oswalt suggests they highlight the importance of community in ministry: "You need a support group. You need someone with whom you can pray. You need someone to whom you can complain. You need someone who is at your back."
- **Symbolic Journey:** The journey from Gilgal to Bethel to Jericho to the Jordan River mirrors Israel's entry into the Promised Land.
- **Elijah as Reiteration of Moses:** Elijah is presented as a "reiteration of Moses," emphasizing a continuation or restarting of God's work.
- **Double Portion of the Spirit:** Elisha's request for a double portion of Elijah's spirit is not about seeking power, but about desiring the spirit itself and a deep connection with God. As Oswalt states, "Too often, we want the power of the spirit, or we want the gifts of the spirit, or we even want the fruit of the spirit, but we don't want the spirit." He emphasizes that "This thing of salvation is about a relationship. It's not about a position. It's not about standing. It's about a relationship."
- **Spiritual Vision:** Seeing Elijah taken up is interpreted as a sign of Elisha's spiritual vision, the ability to "see the world as God sees it."
- **The Mantle:** The cloak that Elijah leaves behind is a symbol of the continuation of the ministry.

Quotable Moments:

- "As surely as the Lord lives and you live, I will not leave you." (Elisha's declaration of commitment)
- "Too often, we want the power of the spirit, or we want the gifts of the spirit, or we even want the fruit of the spirit, but we don't want the spirit." (Emphasis on relationship over power)
- "You need a support group. You need someone with whom you can pray. You need someone to whom you can complain. You need someone who is at your back." (Importance of community)
- "Are we going to use the present crisis to drive us into the arms of God? Are we going to use the present crisis to say, oh, I need your spirit, and I'll pay any price personally?" (Application to contemporary faith)
- "Don't look for power. Don't look for blessing. Don't even look for fruit. Look for him. Make him your goal, your desire, and allow him to do whatever he wishes to do in you." (The true goal should be God)

Overall Significance:

The excerpt emphasizes themes of commitment, support, spiritual vision, and the importance of seeking a genuine relationship with the Holy Spirit, rather than just His gifts or power. It connects the narrative of Elijah and Elisha to broader themes within the Old Testament and applies its lessons to contemporary Christian life.

4. Study Guide: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 17.2, 2 Kings 1-2, Part 2

Elijah and Elisha: A Study Guide

I. Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. Why does the text suggest Elijah might have been testing Elisha by asking him to stay behind?
2. Who were the "sons of the prophets," and what role might they have played in Elijah and Elisha's ministry?
3. What are the four locations Elijah and Elisha traveled to before Elijah's ascension, and what historical significance do these locations hold?
4. How does the speaker interpret Elisha's request for a "double portion" of Elijah's spirit?
5. According to the text, why is it significant that Elijah did not die but was taken up to heaven?
6. What does Elisha do immediately after Elijah is taken up to heaven, and what does this action signify?
7. What does Elisha say as he parts the Jordan River after Elijah's ascension, and why is this significant?
8. What are some of the benefits to having a support group in ministry?
9. How does the speaker portray Elijah as a reiteration of Moses?
10. According to the text, why do people need to see the world as God sees it?

II. Quiz - Answer Key

1. The speaker suggests Elijah was testing Elisha's commitment to the ministry and his willingness to persevere through challenges. Elijah wanted to know if Elisha truly understood that their two ministries were going to be welded into one.
2. The "sons of the prophets" were likely younger prophets or members of a prophetic class, not necessarily literal family members. They may have served as a

support group for Elijah and Elisha in their struggles against the royal power of Israel.

3. The locations were Gilgal (place of initial unity), Bethel (place where Jacob met God, now idolatrous), Jericho (site of first victory), and Jordan (site of first miracle of entering the land). The journey was intended to reiterate Israel's entry into the promised land.
4. The speaker interprets Elisha's request not as a desire to be twice as powerful as Elijah, but as a request to inherit the position of the firstborn son. This would give him the right to inherit the main portion of Elijah's spirit.
5. Elijah's translation suggests there is no end to the ministry. It also demonstrates how the ministries of Elijah and Elisha were a single unified ministry.
6. Elisha picks up Elijah's fallen cloak (mantle). This signifies his acceptance of the prophetic mantle and the continuation of Elijah's ministry.
7. Elisha says, "Where is Yahweh, the God of Elijah?" This demonstrates his belief that the same God who empowered Elijah can empower him, and it acknowledges that he is looking for God more than for power.
8. Benefits to having a support group in ministry include having someone to pray with, complain to, and provide encouragement and accountability. This helps prevent burnout and loneliness in ministry.
9. The speaker portrays Elijah as a reiteration of Moses because Elijah reiterates the story of the entry into the land. Just as God started the political and geographic nation with Moses, God is starting over again with Elijah.
10. People need to see the world as God sees it so that they can have spiritual vision and understand God's perspective on issues and people. This comes through being in the grip of God's spirit.

III. Essay Questions

Consider the following questions and formulate well-supported essays.

1. Explore the significance of the locations Elijah and Elisha visited before Elijah's ascension. How do these locations reflect the history and identity of Israel, and what message might their journey convey?
2. Discuss the role and importance of community and support in ministry, drawing on the example of the "sons of the prophets." How can ministers today build and maintain healthy support systems, and what are the potential consequences of isolation?
3. Analyze the symbolism of Elijah's cloak and Elisha's act of picking it up. What does this gesture represent in terms of prophetic succession, spiritual inheritance, and the continuation of God's work?
4. Examine the contrast between seeking the power/gifts/fruit of the Holy Spirit versus seeking the Spirit Himself. Why does the speaker emphasize the importance of relationship over position or power?
5. Explore the significance of Elijah's translation into heaven, and how it connects to the broader themes of ministry, succession, and spiritual inheritance.

IV. Glossary of Key Terms

- **Ascension/Translation:** Being taken up to heaven without experiencing death. Refers to Elijah being taken up to heaven in a whirlwind.
- **Bethel:** A city in Israel. It was originally a place where Jacob met God, but later became associated with idolatry.
- **Double Portion:** The inheritance given to the firstborn son in ancient Israelite tradition, consisting of twice the share of the other heirs. In the context of the text, refers to Elisha asking to inherit the main part of Elijah's spirit.
- **Elijah:** A major prophet in the Old Testament, known for his confrontations with idolatry and his eventual ascension into heaven.
- **Elisha:** Elijah's successor and a prophet in his own right, who requested and received a "double portion" of Elijah's spirit.

- **Gilgal:** Historically, the location where the tribes camped during the receiving of the land in Joshua.
- **Jericho:** The city where Joshua led the Israelites in their first victory in receiving the land.
- **Jordan River:** A significant river in the Bible, symbolizing new beginnings and divine intervention, as seen in the parting of the waters.
- **Mantle/Cloak:** A symbol of prophetic authority and ministry, passed from Elijah to Elisha.
- **Moses:** The leader who politically and geographically started the nation of Israel.
- **Prophetic Succession:** The passing of prophetic authority and ministry from one individual to another, as exemplified by Elijah and Elisha.
- **Sons of the Prophets:** Communities of prophets, possibly younger or less experienced, who supported Elijah and Elisha.
- **Support Group:** A community of people who provide encouragement, accountability, and prayer support for those in ministry.
- **Reiteration:** Saying, performing, or doing something again; in this case, the speaker uses the word to convey that the story of Elijah is a repetition of the story of Moses.
- **Yahweh:** God's name.

5. FAQs on Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 17.2, 2 Kings 1-2, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

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

FAQ: Elijah and Elisha in 2 Kings 1-2

- **Why did Elijah repeatedly tell Elisha to stay behind at Gilgal, Bethel, and Jericho?**
- The Bible doesn't explicitly state the reason. One interpretation suggests it was a test of Elisha's commitment to the ministry. Elijah may have been assessing Elisha's determination and understanding of the significance of the transition of prophetic leadership. Elisha's persistence in staying with Elijah demonstrated his unwavering commitment.
- **Who were "the sons of the prophets," and what role did they play in the ministry of Elijah and Elisha?**
- The "sons of the prophets" were likely a community or support group of younger or less experienced prophets associated with Elijah and Elisha. They appear primarily during the ministries of these two prophets. The speaker suggests they were given to Elijah and Elisha as a support system in their challenging ministry against the royal power of Israel, providing companionship, prayer, and mutual encouragement.
- **How does the journey from Gilgal to Bethel, Jericho, and the Jordan River relate to Israel's history?**
- The journey mirrors key moments in Israel's entry into the Promised Land. Gilgal represents the initial gathering place for receiving the land, Bethel recalls Jacob's encounter with God, Jericho signifies the first victory under Joshua, and the crossing of the Jordan River represents the miraculous entry into the land. The journey effectively reiterates the story of the nation's beginning and suggests a restart or renewal of God's work in Israel through Elijah and Elisha.

- **In what ways is Elijah presented as a reiteration of Moses?**
- Elijah's ministry parallels that of Moses in significant ways. Just as Moses was instrumental in the political and geographic establishment of Israel, Elijah's ministry, followed by Elisha's, represents a restarting or re-establishment of God's work within the nation. The fact that Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus at the transfiguration also suggests the link between these men.
- **What did Elisha mean when he asked for a "double portion" of Elijah's spirit?**
- Elisha was not asking to be twice as powerful as Elijah. The "double portion" refers to the inheritance rights of the firstborn son in ancient Israelite culture, who received twice the share of the father's estate compared to other children. Elisha was asking to be recognized as Elijah's successor, inheriting the primary responsibility and authority of the prophetic ministry.
- **What is the significance of Elisha's emphasis on inheriting Elijah's *spirit* rather than his *power*?**
- The distinction highlights the importance of a personal relationship with God, not simply the acquisition of spiritual gifts or abilities. Elisha desired to be connected to the same Spirit that empowered Elijah. The focus shifts from seeking outward manifestations of power to desiring a deep, personal connection with the Holy Spirit.
- **Why was Elijah taken up to heaven without dying?**
- The Bible doesn't explicitly answer why. One interpretation is that Elijah's translation demonstrates that there is no end to the ministry, or that the ministries of Elijah and Elisha are one continuous ministry.
- **What is the significance of Elisha's question, "Where is Yahweh, the God of Elijah?" after Elijah was taken up?**
- Elisha's question demonstrates faith that the same God who empowered Elijah was still present and active. By asking this question and then striking the water with Elijah's cloak, Elisha was testing and affirming that the power and spirit of God were now upon him. This act, followed by the parting of the waters, served as a confirmation to himself and others that he was indeed Elijah's successor.