

## **Dr. John Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 19.2, 2 Kings 5-6, 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 19.2, 2 Kings 5-6, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

Dr. Oswalt's lecture focuses on two connected stories from 2 Kings, chapters 5 and 6. The first narrative examines Gehazi's greed and dishonesty, contrasting it with Naaman's humility after experiencing God's grace. Oswalt emphasizes how Gehazi's actions brought consequences upon himself. The second story explores the floating ax head, where Elisha helps recover a lost tool, using it as a demonstration of God's provision and the possibility of finding what is lost. Oswalt connects the piece of wood Elisha uses to the cross, suggesting the Bible is a unified narrative, and through God, the impossible becomes possible. He highlights the importance of recognizing God as the ultimate supplier rather than material wealth.

**2. 14 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of  
Dr. Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 19.2 – 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  
on19\_2.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 19.2, 2 Kings 5-6, Part 2

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 5-6.

#### **Briefing Document: Dr. John Oswalt on 2 Kings 5-6**

**Source:** Excerpts from "Oswalt\_Kings\_EN\_Session19\_2.pdf" (Dr. John Oswalt, Kings, Session 19, Part 2)

#### **Main Themes and Ideas:**

- **The Juxtaposition of Gehazi's Greed and the Floating Ax Head:** Oswalt connects the story of Gehazi's sin to the account of the floating ax head, noting the lack of a chapter break in the Hebrew text, suggesting an intentional thematic link. He contrasts Gehazi's avarice and deceit with the humble need of the sons of the prophets.
- **The Corrupting Influence of Sin and the Allure of Worldly Wisdom:** Gehazi's actions highlight how sin blinds individuals to truth and distorts their perception. Oswalt emphasizes Gehazi's cleverness in devising a scheme to obtain wealth, but this worldly wisdom ultimately leads to his downfall. As Oswalt puts it, "Sin makes you dumb."
- **God as the Ultimate Provider and the Futility of Unsatisfied Desire:** The lecture underscores the idea that true fulfillment and provision come from God, not from material wealth. Gehazi's greed is contrasted with Naaman's experience of God's grace, which brings a proper perspective. Oswalt quotes the 23rd Psalm: "The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not be in want," and uses J.C. Penney's story to illustrate the insatiable nature of worldly desires.
- **Humility and Accessibility to God:** Oswalt points out that Elisha interacts directly with the sons of the prophets, unlike his interactions with Naaman or the Shunammite woman. This suggests that humility and a lack of pride create a closer relationship with God. He connects this to Isaiah's experience, stating, "Pride is the barrier. I'm all right. I don't need anything. And we cannot hear the life-giving voice of God."
- **God's Power to Restore What is Lost:** The story of the floating ax head is interpreted as a demonstration of God's power to restore what has been lost. The

borrowed ax head symbolizes something precious and essential that has been lost. The prophet's action of throwing a stick into the water and causing the iron to float is seen as a miraculous intervention.

- **The Symbolism of the Wood and the Cross:** Oswalt draws a parallel between the wood thrown into the water and the cross of Jesus Christ, suggesting that both represent a means of restoration and cleansing. "There's a stick that'll make it right. There's a piece of wood that'll make it right. It's called the cross." He posits that through the sacrifice of Jesus, what is unclean becomes clean, what is bitter becomes sweet, and what is lost is found.
- **The Importance of Action Following Divine Intervention:** Elisha often instructs those who have received a miracle to take action. In the case of the ax head, he tells the person to "take it up," emphasizing the need for personal involvement even after God's intervention.

#### Key Quotes:

- "My master has spared this Naaman, the Syrian, in not accepting from his hand what he has brought... By God, I'm going to run after him and get something from him." (Regarding Gehazi's greed)
- "When you have experienced the grace of God, the unmerited grace of God, it puts you in your proper perspective. It's not about you. It's about him." (On the transformative power of God's grace)
- "Sin makes you dumb." (On the effect of sin on our perception)
- "The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not be in want." (Quoting Psalm 23 to illustrate God's provision)
- "Pride is the barrier. I'm all right. I don't need anything. And we cannot hear the life-giving voice of God." (On the role of humility)
- "There's a stick that'll make it right. There's a piece of wood that'll make it right. It's called the cross." (Connecting the wood to the cross)
- "The text says the iron floated. The impossible is possible with our God. What is lost in your life can be found again." (On the power of God to restore)
- "Here's your son. Take him." (Illustrating the theme of action after divine intervention)

**Overall Significance:**

Oswalt's lecture provides a rich interpretation of 2 Kings 5-6, exploring themes of greed, humility, divine provision, and restoration. He connects these ancient narratives to contemporary life, urging listeners to examine their own desires, seek God's grace, and recognize His power to restore what has been lost. The lecture emphasizes that true satisfaction comes not from material wealth, but from a relationship with God.

## 4. Study Guide: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 19.2, 2 Kings 5-6, Part 2

### Kings: Divine Provision, Sin, and Restoration

#### Study Guide

This study guide is designed to help you review and deepen your understanding of 2 Kings 5-6, focusing on the themes explored in the provided excerpts from Dr. John Oswalt's lecture.

#### Key Themes

- **Divine Provision vs. Material Want:** Explore the contrast between relying on God's provision and the insatiable desire for material wealth.
- **The Consequences of Sin:** Analyze the narrative of Gehazi and its implications for understanding the effects of disobedience and greed.
- **Grace and Humility:** Compare Naaman's transformation through grace with Gehazi's downfall due to pride and deception.
- **God's Active Presence:** Examine the stories as illustrations of God's active involvement in human affairs, providing for needs and restoring what is lost.
- **Fellowship and Access to God:** Understand how pride erects a barrier to hearing God's voice and enjoying fellowship with Him.
- **Symbolism and Interpretation:** Consider the potential symbolic meaning of the floating ax head story, particularly in relation to the cross.

#### Review Questions

1. What is the significance of the chapter break in English Bibles between 2 Kings 5 and 6, and how does it differ from the Hebrew text?
2. Describe Naaman's transformation after experiencing God's grace. How does his perspective change?
3. How does Gehazi attempt to deceive Naaman? What motivations drive his actions?
4. What does Elisha mean when he says to Gehazi, "Did not my heart go with you?"
5. What does the story of Gehazi reveal about the nature and consequences of sin?

6. According to Oswalt, how does one determine what "enough" is in life?
7. What is the connection between pride and the ability to hear God's voice, as suggested by Oswalt?
8. What are the key differences in the way Elisha interacts with Naaman, the Shunammite woman, and the sons of the prophets?
9. What is the significance of the water of the Jordan River in the narrative?
10. How does Oswalt connect the story of the floating ax head to the concept of the cross?

### Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. Why does Gehazi lie to Naaman about the two young men visiting Elisha?
2. Explain how Naaman's actions demonstrate a transformed perspective after his healing.
3. What does Elisha's question, "Is this a time to accept money and garments...?" reveal about Gehazi's motivations?
4. According to Oswalt, why is wealth insufficient to satisfy human want?
5. What does the story of the floating ax head suggest about God's involvement in everyday needs?
6. How does Elisha's interaction with the sons of the prophets differ from his interaction with Naaman? What might this indicate?
7. What symbolic interpretation does Oswalt offer for the piece of wood Elisha uses in the floating ax head story?
8. How does Gehazi's story end? What is the result of his deceitful actions?
9. What does Oswalt suggest about the world we live in, drawing from the imagery of the Jordan River?
10. How does Elisha involve the person who has experienced the miracle of the floating ax head?

## Quiz Answer Key

1. Gehazi lies to Naaman to obtain money and goods for himself, feigning that Elisha desires a gift for visiting prophets. This deception highlights Gehazi's greed and willingness to exploit his position for personal gain.
2. Naaman's actions after his healing, such as getting down from his chariot to meet Gehazi and willingly giving him the silver, demonstrate humility and a recognition that his healing came from God's grace, not his own merit or status. He no longer needs to be in the position of power.
3. Elisha's question reveals that Gehazi is prioritizing personal enrichment over spiritual matters and exploiting a moment of divine grace for selfish gain. It demonstrates the ill-timing of Gehazi's greed.
4. Oswalt argues that wealth cannot satisfy human want because human desires are insatiable without God. True contentment comes from a relationship with God, who provides true fulfillment beyond material possessions.
5. The story of the floating ax head suggests that God is concerned with and involved in even the most ordinary, practical needs of people. It illustrates God's willingness to restore what is lost and provide for those who seek Him.
6. Elisha interacts with the sons of the prophets directly, without using Gehazi as an intermediary, unlike his interaction with Naaman. This might indicate a greater level of openness, humility, and fellowship among the prophets.
7. Oswalt suggests the piece of wood could symbolize the cross, through which what is unclean becomes clean, what is bitter becomes sweet, and what is lost is found again. He admits this may not be the explicit intent of the story, but argues that it aligns with the Bible's overarching narrative.
8. Gehazi's story ends with him being afflicted with Naaman's leprosy, which will cling to him and his descendants forever. This serves as a stark consequence of his deceit, greed, and disobedience to God's will.
9. Oswalt suggests the world is both beautiful and life-giving, represented by the Jordan River's cleansing waters, but also death-dealing and capable of swallowing one up, highlighting the need for God's hand to navigate its dangers and experience its blessings.
10. Elisha, in response to the miracle, asks the person to take the ax up. Elisha often gives the person something to do in response to a miracle.

## Essay Questions

1. Analyze the characters of Naaman and Gehazi. How do their responses to Elisha and the events in 2 Kings 5 reveal contrasting spiritual attitudes, and what lessons can be drawn from their respective outcomes?
2. Explore the theme of divine provision in 2 Kings 5-6, contrasting the earthly pursuit of wealth with the contentment found in God. How do the stories of Gehazi and the floating ax head illustrate this theme, and what implications does it have for contemporary society?
3. Discuss the significance of Elisha's interactions with different individuals in 2 Kings 5-6. What does the change in Elisha's manner of interacting with the people reveal about the relationship between humility, fellowship, and access to God?
4. Examine the symbolism of the floating ax head story and its potential connections to the cross. How might this narrative be interpreted as a foreshadowing of the redemptive work of Christ, and what does it suggest about God's power to restore what is lost?
5. "Sin makes you dumb." In what ways does the story of Gehazi illustrate this statement? How does the narrative demonstrate the blinding effects of sin, and what lessons can be learned about the importance of truth and integrity?



## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Gehazi:** Elisha's servant who attempts to profit from Naaman's healing and is subsequently punished with leprosy.
- **Naaman:** Commander of the Syrian army who is healed of leprosy after humbling himself and obeying Elisha's instructions.
- **Elisha:** A prophet of God who performs miracles and guides the people of Israel.
- **Leprosy:** A chronic infectious disease causing disfigurement and disability. In the Bible, it's often associated with ritual impurity and sin.
- **Jordan River:** A significant river in the Bible, often associated with cleansing and new beginnings.
- **Sons of the Prophets:** A group of disciples or followers of a prophet, living in community.
- **Divine Provision:** God's act of supplying the needs of his people, both material and spiritual.
- **Grace:** Unmerited favor or love from God.
- **Humility:** A modest or low view of one's own importance; freedom from pride or arrogance.
- **Iron Age:** The period following the Bronze Age, characterized by the use of iron for tools and weapons.

## 5. FAQs on Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 19.2, 2 Kings 5-6, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

### Frequently Asked Questions About 2 Kings 5-6

- **What is the significance of the placement of the story of Gehazi's sin and the floating ax head in 2 Kings?**
- The Hebrew text doesn't have a chapter break between the story of Gehazi's greed (2 Kings 5) and the account of the floating ax head (2 Kings 6). This suggests a deliberate connection between the two narratives. Both stories illustrate different attitudes towards God's provision and the consequences of choosing a path apart from Him. Gehazi's greed stands in stark contrast to the humble need of the prophets who lost the ax head.
- **What does Gehazi's actions reveal about the impact of sin?**
- Gehazi's pursuit of wealth after Elisha refused Naaman's gifts demonstrates the blinding and corrupting nature of sin. He was willing to lie and deceive Naaman, and believed he could deceive Elisha. Sin makes people foolish, blinding them to the truth and preventing them from seeing God's presence and working in their lives. Gehazi was physically close to Elisha, but spiritually distant.
- **What is the significance of Naaman's reaction when Gehazi approached him?**
- Naaman's willingness to stop and inquire about Gehazi's sudden appearance highlights the transformative power of experiencing God's grace. Having been healed of leprosy, Naaman was humbled and his perspective shifted from self-centeredness to concern for others. He demonstrates the fruit of grace, contrasted with Gehazi's actions.
- **What does the story of Gehazi teach us about contentment and God's provision?**
- The story of Gehazi illustrates that material wealth never satisfies. Despite having the opportunity to acquire significant riches, Gehazi's greed ultimately led to his downfall and the curse of leprosy. It is a reminder that true contentment comes from knowing God as our provider, understanding that true wealth is not found in material possessions.

- **What is the significance of Elisha's mild initial response to Gehazi's lie?**
- Elisha's gentle questioning of Gehazi mirrors God's approach to those on the verge of sin. Instead of immediately condemning, Elisha offers Gehazi a chance to confess and turn away from his actions. This is akin to God's warning to Cain that sin is crouching at the door.
- **How does the story of the floating ax head demonstrate God's care and provision?**
- The floating ax head illustrates God's concern for the seemingly insignificant details of our lives. The loss of a borrowed ax head was a practical problem that could have had serious consequences for the poor prophet. Elisha's miraculous intervention demonstrates that God cares about our needs, even the small ones, and is willing to provide for us.
- **What is the connection between the stick thrown into the water and the cross of Christ?**
- The stick that Elisha threw into the water to make the ax head float can be seen as a symbol of the cross. Just as the piece of wood restored what was lost, the cross of Christ restores what was lost through sin. Through Jesus' sacrifice, what is unclean becomes clean, what is bitter becomes sweet, and what is lost is found.
- **What is the significance of Elisha telling the prophet to pick up the ax head?**
- After performing the miracle, Elisha instructs the prophet to "take it up." This highlights the importance of our participation in receiving God's blessings. God often requires us to take action and receive what He has provided. It is a reminder that God's grace does not negate our responsibility.