

# Dr. John Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 19.3, 2 Kings 5-6, Part 3 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 19.3, 2 Kings 5-6, Part 3, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Oswalt's lecture focuses on 2 Kings 6:8-23, exploring the theme of "Opened Eyes" through the story of Elisha and the Syrian army. He emphasizes the Syrians' blindness, both literal and figurative, to God's power and presence. **Oswalt highlights Elisha's prayer for his servant to see the divine protection surrounding them, and later, for the Syrian soldiers to recognize their captivity.** The narrative illustrates how God reveals both our helplessness and His grace, ultimately leading to a great feast and the cessation of Syrian raids. **He also contrasts this story with Ahab's condemnation for sparing a Syrian king, emphasizing the importance of discerning God's will in different situations.**

**2. 12 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 19.3 – 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\_3.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 19.3, 2 Kings 5-6, Part 3

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 5-6, part 3:

#### **Briefing Document: Dr. John Oswalt on 2 Kings 5-6 (Part 3) – "Opened Eyes"**

**Source:** Excerpts from "Oswalt\_Kings\_EN\_Session19\_3.pdf"

**Main Theme:** The central theme is the idea of spiritual blindness and the need for God to open our eyes to see both our own desperate situation and His power and provision. It explores the story of Elisha and the Syrian army to illustrate how easily we are deceived by our pride and fear, and how God's presence and power are often unseen but always available. The session emphasizes discerning God's will and acting according to His purposes, not our own desires or perceived best interests.

#### **Key Ideas and Facts:**

- **Spiritual Blindness:** The primary problem identified is the inability to see reality, both in terms of God's power and our own need. The King of Syria and his commanders are blind to the fact that Elisha knows their plans. Elisha's servant is blind to the fact that God's army surrounds the Syrian army. "We cannot see what is before our eyes because our pride blinds us."
- **God's Unseen Army:** Oswalt emphasizes the reality of God's presence and power, even when it's invisible. He references the statement, "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them," highlighting the importance of faith in the face of overwhelming odds. He cautions against the idea that the invisible world completely determines what happens, but affirms the presence and power of God's forces.
- **Fear and Anxiety:** Oswalt connects spiritual blindness to fear and anxiety, particularly in a contemporary context. He argues that fear can lead to irrational actions and poor decisions, referencing contemporary political anxieties "So many in our own country, I become anxious because I think so many of us are ruled by our fears...We don't have to be ruled by our fears. We don't have to have our fears ruling us in the election booth."
- **Elisha as "Man of God":** Oswalt stresses that Elijah and Elisha are most often called "man of God" in the Bible, rather than just "prophets." This emphasizes

their complete dedication and obedience to God's will as their primary role. "His profession is to belong to God. His profession is to be whatever God wants, wherever God wants, whenever God wants."

- **God's Purpose in Opening Our Eyes:** The purpose of God opening our eyes is not to make us feel worthless but to reveal His true character and provision for us. "No, he lets us see who we really are so that we can see who he really is for us."
- **Humility and Dependence:** The session underscores the importance of recognizing our own helplessness and dependence on God. "Help us to see how needy we are and how gracious you are. How often do we get it reversed? Well, I'm doing fine. I'm going to make it. No, you're not."
- **Discerning God's Will:** Oswalt highlights the need for discernment in understanding God's will in specific situations, contrasting the story in 2 Kings 6 with the story of Ahab letting Ben-Hadad go. It's not about what we want, but about what *God* wants. "What is God wanting to do here? Not what I want to do. Not what I think is best. But what do you want to do, God?"
- **Extending Grace to Enemies:** Elisha's instruction to feed the captured Syrian army exemplifies extending grace and blessing to those who are in our power, rather than seeking revenge or destruction. This contrasts with Ahab's situation, where Ben-Hadad was a deliberate enemy of God's people. "These people are helpless. They have been led here by God. And so, they're not God's captives. They're God's beneficiaries, if you will."

#### Quotes for Emphasis:

- "We cannot see what is before our eyes because our pride blinds us."
- "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."
- "His profession is to belong to God. His profession is to be whatever God wants, wherever God wants, whenever God wants."
- "No, he lets us see who we really are so that we can see who he really is for us."
- "Help us to see how needy we are and how gracious you are."
- "What is God wanting to do here? Not what I want to do. Not what I think is best. But what do you want to do, God?"

## **4. Study Guide: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 19.3, 2 Kings 5-6, Part 3**

### **Opened Eyes: A Study Guide to 2 Kings 6:8-23**

#### **Quiz:**

1. Why was the king of Syria troubled in 2 Kings 6:8?
2. How did the king of Syria discover that the Israelites were anticipating his raids?
3. What was Elisha's response to his servant's fear when they were surrounded by the Syrian army?
4. What did Elisha pray for regarding his servant? What was the result?
5. Where did Elisha lead the blinded Syrian army?
6. What did Elisha ask God to do once the Syrian army was inside Samaria?
7. How did the King of Israel respond to seeing the captured Syrian army, and what did Elisha instruct him to do instead?
8. According to Oswalt, why does God open our eyes?
9. How does Oswalt contrast the situation in this passage (2 Kings 6) with Ahab's situation with Ben-Hadad?
10. What does Oswalt suggest is the central theme or desire conveyed in the passage?

#### **Quiz Answer Key:**

1. The king of Syria was troubled because the Israelite army always seemed to be waiting for his raiding parties, thwarting his attacks.
2. One of his servants revealed that Elisha, the prophet in Israel, was informing the king of Israel about the Syrian king's plans, even the words spoken in his bedchamber.
3. Elisha told his servant not to be afraid, reassuring him that those who were with them were more numerous than those who were against them.
4. Elisha prayed that God would open his servant's eyes so that he may see the Lord's armies surrounding the Syrian armies. After the prayer, the servant could see the armies of heaven.

5. Elisha led the blinded Syrian army to Samaria, the capital city of Israel.
6. Once they were in Samaria, Elisha asked God to open the eyes of the Syrian soldiers so that they would see where they were.
7. The King of Israel asked Elisha if he should kill them all, but Elisha told him to set out bread and water, to eat and drink, and to send them home to their master.
8. According to Oswalt, God opens our eyes not to show us how worthless we are but to help us see who *He* really is for us.
9. Oswalt contrasts this situation by saying that Ben-Hadad was trying to destroy God's people, casting himself in the role of God's enemy, whereas the Syrians in 2 Kings 6 were helpless captives whom God wanted the Israelites to bless.
10. Oswalt suggests that the central theme is "opened eyes," a desire for discernment and wisdom to understand what God wants to do in any given situation, rather than focusing on personal desires or perceived best courses of action.

### **Essay Questions:**

1. Explore the theme of "blindness" in 2 Kings 6:8-23, as discussed by Oswalt. How does physical blindness reflect spiritual or perceptual blindness in the passage?
2. Analyze Oswalt's interpretation of Elisha's actions in 2 Kings 6, particularly his decision not to kill the captured Syrian army. How does this relate to a broader understanding of God's mercy and justice?
3. Discuss the significance of the phrase "man of God" in relation to Elisha, as highlighted by Oswalt. How does this title shape our understanding of Elisha's role and authority?
4. Examine Oswalt's comments regarding the presence of God's armies in the invisible world. How does Oswalt's interpretation affect our understanding of the unseen forces at work in our lives?
5. Using Oswalt's analysis as a starting point, discuss the modern-day relevance of the themes in 2 Kings 6:8-23, particularly regarding fear, discernment, and responding to enemies.

## Glossary of Key Terms:

- **Elisha:** A prophet in the Northern Kingdom of Israel, successor to Elijah. Known for his miracles and prophetic insights.
- **Syria:** An ancient kingdom to the northeast of Israel, frequently at war with the Northern Kingdom.
- **Dothan:** A city north of Samaria, where Elisha was located when the Syrian army surrounded him.
- **Samaria:** The capital city of the Northern Kingdom of Israel.
- **Ben-Hadad:** A common name for the king of Syria, referenced in relation to Ahab's disobedience in an earlier conflict.
- **Opened Eyes:** A metaphor for spiritual discernment, wisdom, and the ability to perceive God's will and the true nature of circumstances.
- **Man of God:** A title frequently used to describe Elijah and Elisha, emphasizing their devotion to God and their role as His representatives.
- **Discernment:** The ability to distinguish between truth and falsehood, and to understand God's will in a given situation.
- **Blindness:** A condition that obscures vision, but which can also be used as a metaphor for a lack of spiritual perception or understanding.
- **Jezreel:** A valley in northern Israel, an important geographical feature for military movements in the region.

## 5. FAQs on Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 19.3, 2 Kings 5-6, Part 3, [Biblicalelearning.org](http://Biblicalelearning.org) (BeL)

### FAQ on Oswalt's "Opened Eyes" (2 Kings 6:8-23)

- **Why does the King of Syria become concerned in 2 Kings 6:8-23?**
- The King of Syria is troubled because his military raids against Israel are consistently failing. The Israelite army seems to be aware of his plans in advance, leading him to suspect a spy within his ranks.
- **How does the King of Syria discover the source of Israel's intelligence?**
- One of the king's servants informs him that the prophet Elisha in Israel is the one revealing his plans to the King of Israel, even knowing the words spoken in the king's bedchamber.
- **What is significant about Elisha being called the "man of God?"**
- The title "man of God," emphasizes Elisha's primary role as someone wholly dedicated to God's will, rather than simply being a "prophet." It highlights his commitment to serving God's purposes in any capacity, at any time, and in any place.
- **How does Elisha respond to his servant's fear when the Syrian army surrounds Dothan?**
- Elisha calmly tells his servant not to be afraid, reassuring him that "those who are with us are more than those who are with them," indicating a belief in the presence of a greater, unseen power.
- **What does Elisha pray for in regards to his servant and the Syrian army?**
- Elisha prays that the Lord will open the eyes of his servant so he can see the divine protection surrounding them. He then prays that the Lord will strike the Syrian army with blindness.
- **How does Elisha manipulate the blind Syrian army, and what is the result?**
- Elisha leads the blind Syrian army to Samaria, the capital of Israel, by claiming that they are on the wrong path and that he will lead them to the man they seek. Once they are in Samaria, Elisha prays for their sight to be restored, revealing their capture.

- **Why does Elisha prevent the King of Israel from killing the captured Syrian soldiers?**
- Elisha intervenes because these Syrians are now helpless captives, not combatants in a battle. He argues that they should be treated with mercy and kindness, reflecting God's grace, and not be killed as enemies.
- **What is the ultimate outcome of this encounter with the Syrian army?**
- After the King of Israel feeds the captured Syrian soldiers a great feast, Elisha sends them back to their master, and the Syrians cease their raids on Israel. This demonstrates that kindness and mercy can be more effective than violence in ending conflict.