

Dr. John Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 23.3, 2 Kings 11-13, 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 23.3, 2 Kings 11-13, Part 3, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Oswalt's lecture focuses on the biblical books of 2 Kings 11-13, specifically examining the reigns of kings Joash and Jehoahaz and their flawed leadership. **Joash initially follows God under Jehoiada's guidance, but later succumbs to flattery and abandons the temple, even ordering the stoning of a prophet.** The lecture notes **King Joash's decision to plunder the temple to pay off King Hazael, showcasing a lack of faith.** Jehoahaz of Israel also displays a "divided heart," mixing Yahwism with idolatry, leading to oppression despite God's graciousness. **Oswalt underscores the dangers of a divided heart and the high cost of not being wholly devoted to God, urging listeners to examine their own hearts and ensure complete allegiance to God.**

2. 10 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 23.3 – 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).



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on23_3.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 23.3, 2 Kings 11-13, 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 11-13:

Briefing Document: Dr. John Oswalt on 2 Kings 11-13

Source: Excerpts from "Oswalt_Kings_EN_Session23_3.pdf"

Main Theme: The Danger of a Divided Heart and the Consequences of Half-Hearted Devotion

Key Ideas and Facts:

- **Joash's Initial Righteousness and Subsequent Fall:** Joash, King of Judah, initially "did what was right in the eyes of the Lord as long as Jehoiada instructed him." However, after Jehoiada's death, he succumbed to flattery and the influence of officials who encouraged him towards idolatry.
- Quote: "After the death of Jehoiada, the officials of Judah came and paid homage to the king, and he listened to them."
- **The Irony of the Temple Treasures:** Joash used the gold and sacred objects dedicated to the Lord and the refurbished temple to bribe Hazael, King of Aram, to prevent an attack on Jerusalem. This highlights the futility of outward religious displays without genuine inner devotion.
- Quote: "The temple and all the money spent to refurbish and redecorate the temple. And here it goes to Hazael."
- **The Murder of Zechariah:** When Zechariah, son of Jehoiada, prophesied against the people's disobedience, they plotted against him and stoned him to death in the temple courtyard, ordered by King Joash. This emphasizes Joash's complete departure from his initial righteousness and his ingratitude for Jehoiada's past service.
- Quote: "But they plotted against him. And by order of the king, they stoned him to death in the courtyard of the Lord's temple. King Joash did not remember the hesed Zechariah's father, Jehoiada, had shown him..."

- **The Weakness of the Northern Kingdom (Israel):** The northern kingdom was weakened due to the slaughter of Jehu, making them vulnerable to attacks from Aram (Syria) under Hazael.
- **The Divided Heart of Jehoahaz (King of Israel):** Jehoahaz, despite acknowledging Yahweh and seeking his favor, did not fully turn away from the sins of Jeroboam, resulting in continued oppression from Aram. God listened and was gracious but there was a price to pay.
- Quote: "So, the Israelites lived in their own homes as they had before, but they did not turn away from the sins of the house of Jeroboam. Divided heart. Will God listen to a person with a divided heart? Oh, yes, he's gracious, but there's a price to be paid."
- **God's Grace vs. Wholehearted Devotion:** Oswalt emphasizes that while God is gracious and may bless those with a divided heart, this should not be taken as a justification for half-hearted devotion. There are serious consequences for not being wholly devoted to God.
- Quote: "Just because we're enjoying the Lord's blessing for a time is no, no replacement for a heart that is wholly his, wholly his."
- **Personal Reflection:** Oswalt urges his audience to examine themselves and identify anything that hinders their complete devotion to God.
- Quote: "We here tonight open our hearts to you and say, Lord, is there any wicked thing? Is there anything that has a hold on us that would prevent us from leaping up at a moment's notice grabbing the baby, and running?"
- **The importance of understanding our own nature:** Oswalt highlights the importance of self-awareness and recognizing our capacity for sin.
- Quote: "The other side, it seems to me, is to take a long look in the mirror and say, I'm the guy that put Jesus on the cross. I'm the woman who put Jesus on the cross."

Supporting Arguments & Deeper Meanings:

- **The Allure of Flattery:** Oswalt points out the human tendency to be swayed by flattery and the importance of grounding one's identity in God rather than the approval of others. He uses the phrase "never to believe your press releases" to emphasize this.
- **The Dynasty of David:** Despite the failures of individual kings, the Judeans remained committed to the promise to David, indicating a deep-seated belief in God's covenant.
- Quote: "Whatever you say about the Judeans, that thing just ran through their DNA."
- **Analogies:** Oswalt draws parallels between the kings' failures and contemporary issues, such as evangelists who continue in sin despite experiencing outward success, emphasizing the dangers of hypocrisy. He also references Jesus pointing out, "The blood of the prophets is upon you from Abel to Zechariah."
- **A Divided Heart is a Universal Problem:** Oswalt describes the core problem as, "I want what God wants, and I want what I want. The result is disaster."

Conclusion:

Dr. Oswalt uses the narrative of 2 Kings 11-13 to illustrate the dire consequences of a divided heart and the importance of wholehearted devotion to God. He calls for self-examination and a commitment to prioritizing God's will above personal desires, warning against the dangers of hypocrisy and the illusion of security based solely on outward blessings.

4. Study Guide: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 23.3, 2 Kings 11-13, Part 3

2 Kings 11-13 Study Guide: Divided Hearts and Divine Hesed

I. Review of Key Concepts

- **Joash's Early Reign:** Review the circumstances surrounding Joash's ascension to the throne (2 Kings 11). Note the role of Jehoiada the priest in guiding Joash's early actions.
- **Temple Restoration:** Understand the significance of the temple restoration project initiated by Joash (2 Kings 12). Consider why this was important and how the funds were acquired and used.
- **The Downfall of Joash:** Analyze the factors that contributed to Joash's departure from righteousness after Jehoiada's death (2 Chronicles 24). Explore the influence of the officials of Judah and Joash's motivations for listening to them.
- **Idolatry and Judgment:** Understand the consequences of abandoning the temple and worshipping idols (Asherah poles) as described in 2 Chronicles 24.
- **The Death of Zechariah:** Analyze the significance of the stoning of Zechariah and its implications for Joash's legacy. Consider Zechariah's final words.
- **Hazael's Threat:** Understand the political and military situation with Hazael, king of Aram, and his impact on both Judah and Israel (2 Kings 12).
- **"Divided Heart" Theme:** Grasp the central theme of the "divided heart" as illustrated in the lives of Joash and Jehoahaz. Understand what it means to have a "divided heart" and its consequences.
- **Jehoahaz's Plea:** Review Jehoahaz's reign in the Northern Kingdom of Israel (2 Kings 13). Understand his relationship with Yahweh, his repentance, and God's response.
- **God's Hesed (Loving-Kindness):** Understand the concept of *hesed* and how it is demonstrated in God's dealings with both Judah and Israel, even when they are unfaithful.
- **The Danger of Complacency:** Reflect on the dangers of using God's blessings as a justification for sin. Understand the importance of a heart wholly devoted to God.

II. Quiz (Short Answer)

1. What action by King Joash directly contradicted his earlier efforts to restore the temple and honor God?
2. According to 2 Chronicles 24, what led to Joash turning away from God after a promising start to his reign?
3. What was the significance of the death of Zechariah in the temple courtyard?
4. How did King Joash attempt to appease Hazael, the king of Aram, and what is ironic about this action?
5. Explain the "divided heart" that Dr. Oswalt discusses. How did it manifest in the lives of Joash and Jehoahaz?
6. Despite the idolatry prevalent in Israel, how did Jehoahaz seek the Lord's favor, and what was the result?
7. What was the state of Jehoahaz's army following the oppression by the King of Aram?
8. How can one defend against the dangers of others "buttering you up?"
9. How can the story of Joash be used to demonstrate the dangers of complacency even when it appears God is blessing you?
10. How does the story of Zechariah relate to Jesus' statements about the blood of the prophets?

III. Quiz Answer Key

1. Joash took all the sacred objects and gold from the temple and royal treasury and sent them to Hazael, king of Aram, effectively undoing his efforts and funding the enemy with resources meant for God.
2. After Jehoiada's death, the officials of Judah came and paid homage to Joash, buttering him up and leading him to abandon the temple and worship idols.
3. The death of Zechariah, ordered by King Joash, represented a betrayal of the *hesed* (loving-kindness) shown to Joash by Zechariah's father and underscored the depth of Joash's apostasy.
4. Joash attempted to appease Hazael by giving him the sacred objects and gold from the temple and royal treasury, but it is ironic because the temple had just been refurbished with great cost and effort.

5. A "divided heart" refers to a person who wants to follow God but also desires worldly approval or indulges in sin, leading to inconsistency and ultimately negative consequences as seen in Joash and Jehoahaz.
6. Jehoahaz sought the Lord's favor through prayer and repentance, and as a result, God listened to him and provided a deliverer to alleviate the oppression by the king of Aram.
7. Jehoahaz's army was significantly reduced by the king of Aram, leaving only 50 horsemen, 10 chariots, and 10,000-foot soldiers, indicating the severity of God's judgment.
8. The defense is two-fold: First, get your identity from God and no one else; and second, take a long look in the mirror and say, "I'm the one that put Jesus on the cross."
9. Joash had a good start, but his heart wasn't wholly God's. Similarly, those who have an incomplete walk with God may seem blessed, yet they must not assume their sin is somehow justified by their blessings.
10. The text highlights the parallel in that Zechariah was the last prophet to be killed. Jesus refers to the blood of all prophets from Abel to Zechariah, signifying the culmination of righteous bloodshed rejected by God's people.

IV. Essay Questions

1. Discuss the role of leadership (both positive and negative) in the reigns of Joash and Jehoahaz. How did the influence of others shape their decisions and ultimately their relationship with God?
2. Explore the theme of God's *hesed* (loving-kindness) as it is demonstrated in the narratives of Joash and Jehoahaz. How does God's grace intersect with human accountability and the consequences of sin?
3. Analyze the significance of the temple in the lives of the kings and people of Judah. How did their attitude towards the temple reflect their relationship with God?
4. Compare and contrast the reigns of Joash and Jehoahaz. What similarities and differences can be identified in their approaches to kingship and their relationship with God?
5. How does the concept of a "divided heart," as presented in this lesson, apply to contemporary Christian life? Provide specific examples and suggest strategies for cultivating a heart that is wholly devoted to God.

V. Glossary of Key Terms

- **Aram:** An ancient region and kingdom located northeast of Israel, often in conflict with both Israel and Judah.
- **Asherah Poles:** Wooden poles or idols associated with the Canaanite goddess Asherah, often erected in places of worship, which were forbidden by the Law of Moses.
- **Baal:** A Canaanite god of fertility and rain, whose worship was often in direct opposition to the worship of Yahweh.
- **Coup d'etat:** A sudden, violent, and illegal seizure of power from a government.
- **Divided Heart:** A state of being where one's loyalty and devotion are split between God and other worldly desires or influences, leading to inconsistency and spiritual compromise.
- **Gath:** A major Philistine city, located southwest of Jerusalem.
- **Hazael:** King of Aram during the reigns of Jehoram, Jehu, Jehoahaz, and Joash.
- **Hesed:** A Hebrew word referring to God's loving-kindness, mercy, grace, and faithfulness, often demonstrated through covenantal loyalty.
- **Idolatry:** The worship of idols or false gods, a direct violation of the first commandment.
- **Jehoahaz:** King of Israel, son of Jehu.
- **Jehoiada:** A priest who played a crucial role in saving Joash from Athaliah and guiding his early reign as king.
- **Jeroboam:** The first king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel after the kingdom divided, known for establishing idol worship and rival religious centers.
- **Joash (Jehoash):** King of Judah, saved as an infant from Athaliah's purge, initially reigned righteously under the guidance of Jehoiada but later turned away from God.
- **Temple of the Lord:** The central place of worship for the Israelites in Jerusalem, built by Solomon, and a symbol of God's presence among His people.
- **Zechariah:** Son of Jehoiada the priest, who was stoned to death in the temple courtyard for calling the people to repentance.

5. FAQs on Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 23.3, 2 Kings 11-13, Part 3, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ on 2 Kings 11-13 and the Theme of a Divided Heart

- **Why did Joash, king of Judah, give the temple treasures to Hazael, king of Aram, after they had been dedicated to the Lord?**
- According to 2 Chronicles 24:17, after the death of Jehoiada, influential officials of Judah influenced King Joash, he turned away from worshipping the Lord, forsaking the temple of the Lord, the God of their ancestors, and worshiping Asherah poles and idols. Hazael attacked Gath and advanced toward Jerusalem, Joash used the treasures to bribe him to withdraw, revealing a lack of genuine faith and a willingness to compromise his commitment to God in a moment of crisis.
- **What was the significance of the officials of Judah paying "homage" to King Joash after Jehoiada's death?**
- Paying "homage" implied worship and flattery. These officials likely sought to gain influence and favor with the king, leading him away from the monotheistic worship of the Lord. King Joash, susceptible to flattery, listened to them, abandoning the temple and its true worship. This highlights the danger of seeking approval from people rather than God and the corrupting influence of power.
- **What does the text suggest is a defense against being swayed by flattery and losing focus on God?**
- The text implies two main defenses: first, grounding one's identity firmly in God, recognizing one's inherent worth as someone "worth the death of the prince of heaven." Secondly, maintaining a realistic self-awareness, acknowledging one's own capacity for sin and failure (the "I'm the guy that put Jesus on the cross" mentality), which makes one less susceptible to pride and the allure of praise.
- **What was the consequence of Joash's apostasy (abandoning his religion) and divided heart?**
- As a result of abandoning the temple of the Lord, Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, was stoned to death at the order of King Joash in the court of the Lord's temple. Joash did not remember the *hesed* (loving-kindness) that Zechariah's father, Jehoiada, had shown him.

- **How does the story of Jehoahaz, king of Israel, illustrate the concept of a "divided heart"?**
- Jehoahaz, like Jehu and his sons, worshipped Yahweh but also tolerated idolatry, maintaining the sins of Jeroboam. Although the Lord showed him grace and delivered Israel from the oppression of Aram after Jehoahaz sought the Lord's favor, the people did not turn away from their sinful practices. This demonstrates a superficial repentance and a failure to fully commit to God, resulting in continued hardship and divine judgment.
- **What were the consequences for Israel of Jehoahaz's "divided heart" and incomplete commitment to the Lord?**
- Although the Lord listened to Jehoahaz because of the severe oppression by Aram and provided a deliverer, Israel did not fully turn away from the sins of Jeroboam. This resulted in the decimation of Jehoahaz's army, leaving them weakened and vulnerable. It underscores the idea that while God may show grace, a truly changed heart is necessary for complete and lasting restoration.
- **What is the overarching message about the nature of God's grace in relation to a "divided heart"?**
- God is gracious, slow to anger, and willing to bless even those with imperfect devotion. However, the text warns against taking advantage of this grace or using it as a justification for continued sin. God's blessing is not a substitute for a heart wholly devoted to Him, and there is a "price to be paid" for a divided heart, including diminished blessings and potential judgment.
- **What is the practical application of the theme of a "divided heart" for contemporary believers?**
- The story is a call to genuine, wholehearted devotion to God, avoiding superficial repentance or a compartmentalized faith. It encourages believers to examine their hearts, identify any areas of compromise or divided loyalty, and strive for complete surrender to God's will. It serves as a warning against self-deception and the dangers of prioritizing personal desires over God's commands, and instead urges us to pursue a faith without limits or rivals.