

Dr. John Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 24.3, 2 Kings 13-14, 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 24.3, 2 Kings 13-14, Part 3, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Oswalt's lecture focuses on 2 Kings 13-14, specifically during Jeroboam II's reign in Israel. He notes that Assyrian aggression lessened during this time, leading to Israel's prosperity and expansion. **Despite Jeroboam II's success, the lecture emphasizes that Kings evaluates leaders based on their devotion to God, which Jeroboam lacked.** The lecture uses Amos 5 to illustrate that Israel attributed their good fortune to their own merit rather than to God's grace and covenant. **Oswalt highlights that outward signs of prosperity and religious observance are meaningless without genuine justice and righteousness.** The lecture concludes with a prayer asking for forgiveness for being easily distracted from God.

2. 16 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 24.3 – 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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on24_3.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 24.3, 2 Kings 13-14, Part 3

Okay, here's a briefing document based on the provided excerpts from Dr. John Oswalt's session on 2 Kings 13-14:

Briefing Document: Dr. John Oswalt on 2 Kings 13-14, Part 3

Subject: Analysis of 2 Kings 13-14, focusing on the reigns of Jehoram and Jeroboam II, Assyrian influence, and God's grace amidst Israel's sin.

Source: Excerpts from "Oswalt_Kings_EN_Session24_3.pdf" (Dr. John Oswalt, Kings, Session 24, Part 3)

Date: October 26, 2024

Executive Summary: Dr. Oswalt's lecture examines the historical context of the reigns of Jehoram and especially Jeroboam II in the Northern Kingdom of Israel, emphasizing the period of reduced Assyrian aggression that allowed for Israel's expansion and prosperity. However, he underscores that despite this prosperity, Jeroboam II continued in the sins of Jeroboam I, highlighting the contrast between God's gracious provision and Israel's unfaithfulness. The lecture connects this historical period to the prophetic messages of Jonah and Amos, illustrating God's desire for repentance and justice, not merely religious ritual.

Key Themes and Ideas:

1. The Historical Context of Assyrian Influence:

- From 930 BC (end of Solomon's kingdom) to approximately 800 BC, Assyria was in a period of consistent expansion, putting pressure on surrounding regions.
- Around 800-745 BC, Assyrian aggression subsided under two unnamed monarchs, creating a window of opportunity for Israel. Oswalt suggests this period aligns with the ministry of Jonah. "From about 790 to 745, the pressure's off."

1. The Reign of Jeroboam II:

- Jeroboam II's reign coincided with this period of reduced Assyrian pressure, leading to a time of significant prosperity and territorial expansion for Israel. "It's apparent this is a time of great prosperity. It's a time of peace. It's a time of expansion."

- He regained territories lost during Syrian conflicts, extending Israel's borders "from Labo Hamath, that's up in the north, to the Dead Sea."
- Despite his success, Kings (2 Kings) evaluates Jeroboam II negatively due to his continued adherence to the sins of Jeroboam I. "He did evil in the eyes of the Lord and did not turn away from any of the sins of Jeroboam I, son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit."
- Oswalt points out the brevity of the biblical text covering Jeroboam II's 41-year reign (only seven verses), suggesting a focus on theological evaluation rather than historical detail.

1. **God's Grace and the Hope of Repentance:**

- Despite Jeroboam II's unfaithfulness, God blessed Israel. Oswalt emphasizes that this blessing was not necessarily *for* Jeroboam, but for the nation of Israel, reflecting God's enduring covenant and desire for their repentance. "Since the Lord had not said he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam, son of Jehoash."
- The lecture stresses that God's judgment is tempered with the hope of repentance, and his grace is extended with the same hope. "He's willing to bring judgment upon them, but with what hope? The hope that they'll do what? Turn back to him."
- This is a recurring theme: God's actions are ultimately about bringing his people back to him. "Once again, it's not about King Jeroboam, 41 years... It's about God, about God's grace."

1. **The Prophetic Critique of Empty Religious Ritual (Amos):**

- Oswalt connects the prosperity of Jeroboam II's reign to the prophetic message of Amos, specifically Amos 5, which criticizes Israel's complacency and empty religious practices. "Clearly, the people of Israel are saying, wow, wow. We haven't had it so good since Solomon. Obviously, God is blessing us. That's great."
- Amos denounces their superficial desire for "the day of the Lord" without genuine repentance and justice.
- Amos condemns their religious festivals and offerings because they are not accompanied by justice and righteousness. "I hate, I despise your religious festivals. Your assemblies are a stench to me."

- Amos emphasizes the importance of justice and righteousness as evidence of a genuine covenant relationship with God. "Let justice roll on like a river. Righteousness is like a never-flowing, ever-flowing stream."

1. **Complacency and Materialism:**

- The lecture highlights Amos's critique of the wealthy elite in Israel, who indulged in luxury and extravagance while ignoring the suffering of the nation.
- Amos condemns their complacency and failure to grieve over the "ruin of Joseph" (the Northern Kingdom). "You lie on beds made of ivory...You dine on choice lambs and fattened calves...you do not grieve over the ruin of Joseph."

Important Quotes:

- "From about 790 to 745, the pressure's off." (Regarding the period of reduced Assyrian aggression)
- "It's apparent this is a time of great prosperity. It's a time of peace. It's a time of expansion." (Describing Jeroboam II's reign)
- "He did evil in the eyes of the Lord and did not turn away from any of the sins of Jeroboam I, son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit." (Kings' evaluation of Jeroboam II)
- "Since the Lord had not said he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam, son of Jehoash." (God's grace despite Israel's sin)
- "He's willing to bring judgment upon them, but with what hope? The hope that they'll do what? Turn back to him." (God's desire for repentance)
- "I hate, I despise your religious festivals. Your assemblies are a stench to me." (Amos's condemnation of empty ritual)
- "Let justice roll on like a river. Righteousness is like a never-flowing, ever-flowing stream." (Amos's call for justice)
- "You lie on beds made of ivory...You dine on choice lambs and fattened calves...you do not grieve over the ruin of Joseph." (Amos's critique of the wealthy elite)
- "We don't need Elisha. We don't need victory. We don't need prosperity. We need the Lord." (Oswalt's application to contemporary believers)

Conclusion:

Dr. Oswalt's lecture offers a nuanced understanding of 2 Kings 13-14, contextualizing the historical events within the broader narrative of God's covenant relationship with Israel. He emphasizes that outward success and prosperity do not necessarily equate to spiritual faithfulness and that God's grace is always extended with the hope of repentance and a return to justice and righteousness. The connection to Amos provides a powerful critique of complacency and empty religious ritual, challenging listeners to examine their own hearts and prioritize a genuine relationship with God.

4. Study Guide: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 24.3, 2 Kings 13-14, Part 3

2 Kings 13-14 Study Guide

Quiz

Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. What was the geopolitical situation in the ancient Near East like before Jeroboam II's reign, and how did it change?
2. How does the book of Kings typically evaluate the reigns of kings, and how does Jeroboam II measure up based on this criterion?
3. According to the source, what was God's motivation for blessing Israel during Jeroboam II's reign, despite Jeroboam's wickedness?
4. What is Amos's message to the people of Israel in Amos 5, and how does it relate to their perception of the "day of the Lord"?
5. What specific sins does Amos condemn in the wealthy Israelites of his time, and what consequences does he predict for them?
6. How do the sins of the Northern Kingdom as described by Amos relate to their covenant with God?
7. What is the significance of Amos mentioning the exile "beyond Damascus"?
8. According to the source, how easily can people be distracted from their relationship with God?
9. How does the source describe people's reactions when things are going well versus when things are going badly?
10. What is the main point of the speaker's prayer at the end of the passage?

Quiz Answer Key

1. For 130 years before Jeroboam II, Assyria had been steadily expanding in all directions, putting pressure on surrounding kingdoms. However, around 800 BC, this expansion stopped, creating a period of relative peace that allowed Jeroboam II to consolidate and expand Israel's territory.

2. The book of Kings evaluates kings based on their faithfulness and obedience to the Lord. Jeroboam II, despite his capable leadership, is judged negatively because he continued in the sins of Jeroboam I and did evil in the eyes of the Lord.
3. God blessed Israel during Jeroboam II's reign not because of Jeroboam's merit, but because God had compassion on the suffering people of Israel. He hoped this grace would lead them to turn back to him.
4. Amos rebukes the people for their insincere worship and lack of justice and righteousness, warning them that the "day of the Lord" will not be a blessing for them. Instead it will be a day of judgment.
5. Amos condemns their complacency, false religion, luxury, and indifference to the suffering of the Northern Kingdom. He predicts exile and an end to their feasting and lounging.
6. The sins of the Northern Kingdom, particularly their mistreatment of the poor and needy, demonstrated that they had broken the covenant by failing to live justly and righteously. Their sacrifices were therefore unacceptable to God.
7. The exile "beyond Damascus" signifies a more distant and severe exile than earlier ones. It highlights the severity of God's judgment due to the depth of Israel's sins.
8. According to the source, people can be very easily distracted from their relationship with God, especially when things are going well or badly. When things are going well, they may become complacent and think they don't need God; when things are going badly, they may blame God and feel abandoned.
9. When things are going well, people tend to become complacent and feel they can get along without God. Conversely, when things are going badly, they often cry out to God and question why they have been abandoned.
10. The speaker prays for help in truly believing that all we need is God, not just saying it as an easy phrase. They ask for mercy and understanding to keep our eyes fixed on God, regardless of our circumstances.

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the tension between God's grace and judgment as portrayed in the context of Jeroboam II's reign. How does the book of Kings balance these two aspects of God's character?
2. Analyze Amos's critique of Israelite society during the reign of Jeroboam II. What were the key social and religious problems, and how did they reflect a broken covenant relationship with God?
3. Explore the significance of the "day of the Lord" theme in Amos 5. How did the Israelites misunderstand this concept, and what was Amos's corrective message?
4. Compare and contrast the evaluation of Jeroboam II in 2 Kings with the prophetic critique of the same period found in the book of Amos. How do these two sources provide different perspectives on the king and his era?
5. Discuss the dangers of complacency and self-reliance as highlighted in both the narrative of 2 Kings and the prophetic message of Amos. How can these themes be applied to contemporary society?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Assyria:** A major empire in the ancient Near East that exerted significant influence over Israel and surrounding nations.
- **Jeroboam II:** King of the Northern Kingdom of Israel during a period of prosperity and territorial expansion.
- **Sins of Jeroboam I:** The idolatrous practices introduced by the first King Jeroboam, including worshiping golden calves, which became a standard of negative evaluation in Kings.
- **Jonah:** A prophet whose ministry, according to Oswalt, may have contributed to a period of less aggressive Assyrian expansion, indirectly benefiting Israel.
- **Amos:** A prophet who condemned the social injustice and religious hypocrisy prevalent in Israel during the reign of Jeroboam II.
- **Day of the Lord:** A prophetic theme referring to a time of divine judgment and restoration.
- **Complacency:** A state of self-satisfaction and lack of awareness of potential danger or need for change, often associated with spiritual decline.
- **Covenant:** A binding agreement or relationship, particularly between God and his people, involving mutual obligations and responsibilities.
- **Exile Beyond Damascus:** A future exile predicted by Amos as a consequence of Israel's persistent sin and disregard for the covenant.
- **Justice and Righteousness:** Ethical principles emphasizing fairness, equity, and moral integrity, which God expects of his people as evidence of their covenant relationship.

5. FAQs on Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 24.3, 2 Kings 13-14, Part 3, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

What was the state of Assyria during the reigns of certain kings mentioned in 2 Kings, and how did this impact the Northern Kingdom of Israel?

- From 930 BC until about 800 BC, Assyria was steadily expanding in all directions, putting pressure on surrounding regions, including the Northern Kingdom. Around 800 BC, this aggressive expansion halted, which lasted from approximately 790 BC to 745 BC. During this period of reduced Assyrian pressure, the Northern Kingdom, particularly during the reign of Jeroboam II, experienced a time of peace, prosperity, and expansion.
- **How is Jeroboam II evaluated in the book of Kings, despite his political and military successes?**
- Despite Jeroboam II's accomplishments, such as recovering lost territories and leading a powerful kingdom for 41 years, Kings evaluates him negatively because "he did evil in the eyes of the Lord and did not turn away from any of the sins of Jeroboam I, son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit." The primary criterion for evaluating kings in Kings is their faithfulness to the Lord.
- **Why does the Lord bless Israel during Jeroboam II's reign, even though Jeroboam II was a sinner?**
- The Lord's blessing of Israel during Jeroboam II's reign is not necessarily an endorsement of the king's actions but rather an expression of God's persistent hope for the nation's repentance. God was unwilling to completely abandon Israel, hoping that His grace would lead them to turn back to Him. It demonstrates a willingness to be gracious to them in the hope that they will return to him.
- **What was the spiritual state of the people of Israel during this time of peace and prosperity under Jeroboam II?**
- Despite the apparent blessing of peace and prosperity, the people of Israel were spiritually complacent and self-assured. They mistakenly believed that God's blessing meant they were in good standing with Him, and they even looked forward to the "day of the Lord" without genuine repentance or a change in their behavior.

- **How does the prophet Amos critique the religious practices and social injustices of the people of Israel?**
- Amos strongly condemns the superficial religious practices of the Israelites, expressing God's hatred and rejection of their festivals, offerings, and music because they were not accompanied by justice and righteousness. He highlights their social injustices, such as mistreating the poor and complacent living, as evidence of their broken covenant with God.
- **What specific social injustices and luxurious living are condemned by Amos?**
- Amos condemns the Israelites for their complacency, false sense of security, and luxurious living. Specific examples include lying on beds made of ivory, lounging on couches, dining on choice lambs and fattened calves, strumming harps, drinking wine by the bowlful, and using the finest lotions, all while failing to grieve over the ruin of Joseph (the Northern Kingdom).
- **What warning does Amos give to the complacent and self-assured Israelites?**
- Amos warns the Israelites that their complacency and luxurious living will lead to exile. He tells them they will be among the first to go into exile, and their feasting and lounging will end. He reminds them that other cities, such as Calneh and Hamath, have already been captured by the Assyrians, implying that Israel will face a similar fate due to their sins.
- **What is the key takeaway regarding the relationship between prosperity, faith, and obedience to God?**
- The key takeaway is that outward prosperity is not necessarily an indicator of God's favor or a substitute for genuine faith and obedience. The Israelites became easily distracted and thought they could get along without God when everything was going well. True faith requires a constant awareness of one's need for God, regardless of circumstances, and a commitment to justice and righteousness in all aspects of life.