

## Dr. John Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 26.1, 2 Kings 17, Part 1

### 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 26.1, 2 Kings 17, Part 1, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Oswalt's lecture focuses on the biblical book of 2 Kings, specifically chapter 17, and Isaiah 28. He examines the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel, highlighting King Hoshea's revolt against Assyria and the spiritual state of the nation. **Oswalt emphasizes the consequences of persistent sin and the inability to fully repent.** He draws parallels to contemporary issues, questioning the Christian's role in relation to the state and the nature of submission to authority. **The lecture examines the concept of "spiritual drunkenness" as a metaphor for a lack of judgement and self-indulgence, relating it to Isaiah's critique of the leadership in Ephraim.**

**2. 13 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 26.1 – 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  
on26\_1.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 26.1, 2 Kings 17, Part 1

Okay, here's a briefing document summarizing the main themes and ideas from the provided excerpts from Dr. John Oswalt's session on 2 Kings 17.

#### **Briefing Document: Dr. John Oswalt on 2 Kings 17**

**Subject:** Analysis of 2 Kings 17 and its relevance to Christian thought and individual behavior.

**Source:** Excerpts from "Oswalt\_Kings\_EN\_Session26\_1.pdf" (© 2024 John Oswalt and Ted Hildebrandt)

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

This session focuses on the downfall of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, specifically looking at the reign of Hoshea and the events leading up to the Assyrian conquest. However, the discussion quickly moves beyond a historical analysis to explore broader themes of sin, repentance, authority, and the Christian's relationship to the state.

1. **The Inevitability of Consequences:** The session emphasizes that prolonged sin can lead to a point where repentance becomes exceedingly difficult, even if not impossible. Oswalt states, *"You can sin, and sin, and sin, and finally decide, well, I think I'll back off of that a little bit, and it's too late. Not that God will not forgive, not that God cannot forgive, but simply that we get ourselves into a position where we really cannot repent."* This echoes the concept of a hardening heart, as exemplified by Pharaoh. "That's what the hardening of Pharaoh's heart is all about. It's not that God says to a nice, kindly man, no, you're not going to let them go. No, he's a man who'd been God all his life, and the thought that somebody claiming some other God would tell him what to do was not possible."
2. **The Rebellious Nature of Humanity and Distrust of God:** Oswalt explores the motivations behind Hoshea's revolt against Assyria, even when facing overwhelming odds. He connects it to a fundamental human tendency to reject submission and resist trusting God. *"At the very bottom line of humanity, there it stands. I belong to me. And I will have my way and nobody is going to tell me what to do because we're afraid of God. We will not trust him."* He presents this as a universal struggle, even within a Christian context, where individuals might struggle to fully surrender their will to God.

3. **Christianity and Civil Authority:** The session raises complex questions about the Christian's role in relation to the state. It uses the example of the American Revolution and discusses the tension between obedience to authority and the potential justification for revolt, particularly when religious freedom is at stake. *"So, I simply throw this out for us to think about because it is a continual issue of how we as Christians relate to the state and what our obligations as Christians call us to."* Oswalt does not provide easy answers, instead urging listeners to contemplate the issue deeply.
4. **The Importance of Personal Submissiveness and Trust in God:** Oswalt challenges listeners to examine their own hearts and motivations, questioning whether their submission to authority (including God) is genuine or merely superficial. *"The old, old story of the little boy whose father said sit down. No. Sit down. No. Either you sit down or I'm going to make it for you hard to sit down. The little boy sat down. I'm sitting down on my outside but on my inside I'm standing up."* He emphasizes the need for constant self-reflection to ensure a truly trusting and submissive attitude towards God. He asks, *"Am I truly trusting God? Or do I have my fingers crossed all the time?"* He connects personal submissiveness to a broader sense of Christian responsibility and action. He alludes to Romans 12, and injustice against others, and Jesus overturning the tables in the temple.
5. **Spiritual Drunkenness and Lack of Judgment:** Oswalt uses Isaiah 28 to illustrate the spiritual decay of the Northern Kingdom's leadership. He connects the physical drunkenness described by Isaiah to a broader "spiritual drunkenness" characterized by a loss of judgment, self-indulgence, lack of balance, and blindness to reality. *"So, what's he describing? Now very probably, it was like Berlin in the winter of 1945 when there were huge, huge orgies when they figured, well, we better clean out this wine cellar before the Russians get here. So, there may have been literal drunkenness, but what's Isaiah saying about them? What's their condition? A lack of judgment."* This spiritual drunkenness is seen as a consequence of ignoring the truth of God over many years.
6. **The Role of Suffering and "Starting Over":** Oswalt notes that the Assyrian conquest is God's way of starting over with his people, forcing them to remember their origins and depend on Him again. He makes a comment about relearning in the first grade, and how the foreign tongue of the Assyrians can drive them back to God. *"God says you haven't heard me. Maybe you'll hear the Assyrians, and they will drive you back. Start at the beginning. We are in captivity. We are oppressed as we were in Egypt. Who will deliver us?"*

**Overall Message:**

The excerpts highlight the dangers of unchecked sin, the complexities of living as a Christian in a world of imperfect authorities, and the importance of cultivating a truly submissive and trusting relationship with God. It also underscores the dire consequences of spiritual complacency and the need for constant self-examination. The speaker uses historical narrative as a springboard for examining the human condition and the challenges of Christian living.

## 4. Study Guide: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 26.1, 2 Kings 17, Part 1

### 2 Kings 17: A Study Guide

#### Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. What is the significance of 2 Kings 17 in the broader narrative of the books of Kings?
2. What is notable about the assessment of King Hoshea in 2 Kings 17:2?
3. According to the lecture, what is the underlying reason for Hoshea's revolt against Assyria?
4. What are some of the difficulties Christians face regarding obedience to a secular state?
5. What is Isaiah's assessment of the leadership in the northern kingdom (Ephraim) during this period?
6. How does Isaiah describe the leaders of Ephraim in Isaiah 28, and what does he say will happen to them?
7. According to the lecture, what are the key characteristics of spiritual "drunkenness"?
8. What is the relationship between physical and spiritual drunkenness as described in the lecture?
9. What does Oswalt mean when he talks about being submissive on the outside and standing on the inside?
10. How can the destruction of Samaria in 2 Kings 17 serve as a cautionary tale for Christians today?

#### Quiz Answer Key

1. 2 Kings 17 marks the end of the northern kingdom of Israel and explains why they were exiled. This fulfills the warnings given by prophets throughout the preceding narrative and emphasizes the consequences of disobedience. It showcases the end of a long downward spiral, highlighting the culmination of accumulated sins.

2. Hoshea is said to have done evil in the eyes of the Lord, but *not* like the kings who preceded him. This is because he did not follow the ways of Jeroboam. While the details are unclear, it suggests a possible (though insufficient) attempt to distance himself from some of the worst idolatrous practices of his predecessors.
3. While strategic or political reasons may have been at play, the lecture suggests a deeper reason for the revolt: a fundamental human rejection of submission to anyone but oneself. This stems from a lack of trust in God's will and a desire to remain in control, even when facing certain destruction. This "I belong to me" mindset is the reason for revolt.
4. Christians must grapple with the tension between obedience to earthly authorities and their ultimate allegiance to God. There are times when civil laws may conflict with Christian principles, forcing difficult decisions about whether to comply or resist, as well as weighing the consequences of each action.
5. Isaiah views the leadership of the northern kingdom as spiritually "drunk" and lacking in judgment. He sees their self-indulgence and pride as blinding them to the impending consequences of their actions, ultimately leading to their downfall. In other words, they are all drunk.
6. Isaiah describes the leaders of Ephraim as drunkards, reeling with wine and lacking in judgment, which will lead to them being trampled underfoot by the Assyrians. The description implies a loss of vision and an inability to lead the nation properly due to their state of spiritual and/or physical intoxication. Their crowns will be trodden underfoot.
7. Spiritual "drunkenness" includes an inability to make correct judgments, a focus entirely on one's own enjoyment, a loss of balance, and blindness to reality. It also involves dulled senses and a lack of spiritual awareness.
8. The lecture suggests that physical drunkenness can be a metaphor for spiritual "drunkenness." Just as physical intoxication impairs judgment and distorts reality, spiritual self-indulgence can blind individuals and nations to God's will and the consequences of their actions. They both share an inability to see.
9. Oswalt is describing the hypocrisy of outward obedience without genuine inner submission to authority. It's a situation where someone complies with rules outwardly but remains rebellious and unwilling to submit in their heart and mind. Essentially, it's a situation where people obey with their bodies, but not their hearts.

10. The destruction of Samaria serves as a reminder of the dangers of spiritual complacency, self-indulgence, and disobedience to God. It highlights the importance of remaining spiritually alert and vigilant, constantly examining one's own heart and actions to ensure they align with God's will and prevent their own destruction.

## Essay Questions

1. Explore the parallels between the downfall of the Northern Kingdom in 2 Kings 17 and contemporary societal challenges. How can the lessons learned from this historical account be applied to address modern issues such as political corruption, social inequality, and spiritual apathy?
2. Analyze the complex relationship between religious faith and political authority as presented in the lecture. How should Christians navigate their responsibilities as citizens while maintaining their allegiance to God's law? Discuss the ethical dilemmas that arise when these two loyalties conflict.
3. Examine the concept of "spiritual drunkenness" as described in Isaiah 28 and discuss how it manifests in individual lives and within communities of faith. What are the signs of spiritual intoxication, and what steps can be taken to cultivate sobriety and clear-headedness?
4. Discuss the role of leadership in both the rise and fall of the Northern Kingdom. What qualities and characteristics are essential for effective leadership, and how did the failings of the leaders in 2 Kings 17 contribute to the nation's demise?
5. Considering the warning about the dangers of trusting ourselves over God, how can we cultivate a deeper, more authentic faith that leads to true submission and obedience? How can we identify and overcome the tendency to "cross our fingers" and rely on our own understanding instead of God's guidance?

## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Samaria:** The capital city of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. By the time of 2 Kings 17, it represented almost all that was left of the Northern Kingdom.
- **Assyria:** A powerful empire that conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel and exiled its inhabitants.
- **Hoshea:** The last king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel.
- **Ahaz:** King of Judah, known for his apostasy and submission to Assyria.
- **Hezekiah:** Son of Ahaz and later king of Judah, known for his reforms and reliance on God.
- **Jeroboam I:** The first king of the divided Northern Kingdom of Israel, who established idolatrous worship centers with golden calves.
- **Ephraim:** The major tribe in the Northern Kingdom of Israel; often used synonymously with the Northern Kingdom itself.
- **Isaiah:** A prophet in the Southern Kingdom of Judah, whose prophecies addressed both Judah and Israel.
- **Spiritual Drunkenness:** A state of being characterized by a lack of judgment, self-indulgence, loss of balance, and blindness to reality, often leading to moral and spiritual decline.
- **Submission:** The act of yielding to authority or the will of another, often associated with trust and obedience.



## 5. FAQs on Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 26.1, 2 Kings 17, Part 1, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

### FAQ on 2 Kings 17 and Related Themes

- **Why is 2 Kings 17 considered a "dark chapter" in the history of Israel?**
- 2 Kings 17 marks the culmination of a long period of decline and disobedience in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. It details the fall of Samaria and the exile of its people by the Assyrians, effectively ending the Northern Kingdom. This represents a significant judgment for the Israelites' persistent idolatry and rejection of God's covenant.
- **What is significant about the statement in 2 Kings 17:2 that Hoshea, the king of Israel, "did evil in the sight of the Lord, but not as the kings of Israel who preceded him"?**
- This verse is intriguing because it suggests that Hoshea's reign might have involved some deviation from the complete disregard for God's laws that characterized previous Northern kings, who were said to have followed the way of Jeroboam, likely referring to the golden calves. However, the text doesn't specify the nature of this difference, leaving room for speculation about whether Hoshea might have been showing slight signs of repentance or fear of the Assyrian threat.
- **Why did Hoshea revolt against Assyria despite the kingdom's weakened state?**
- Hoshea's revolt, though seemingly illogical given the Assyrian empire's overwhelming power and Israel's diminished territory, speaks to a deep-seated human tendency to reject submission, even in the face of certain destruction. This can be attributed to a desire for self-determination and a reluctance to fully trust in God's provision and protection.
- **What does the text suggest about the possibility of repentance after prolonged sin?**
- The text implies that while God's forgiveness is always possible, prolonged sin can lead to a state where genuine repentance becomes exceedingly difficult. This is because persistent sinful behavior can harden the heart and create a disposition that resists turning back to God, illustrated by the hardening of Pharaoh's heart.

- **What does the text suggest about how Christians should respond to civil authority?**
- The text raises the complex question of how Christians should relate to the state and its authority. While submission to authority is generally encouraged, there may be circumstances where resistance or even revolution is justifiable, particularly when fundamental religious principles or the well-being of others are at stake. However, the text acknowledges that there are no easy answers and emphasizes the need for discernment and a careful examination of one's own motives and attitudes towards authority.
- **According to Isaiah 28, what was the state of leadership in the Northern Kingdom of Israel at the time of its downfall?**
- Isaiah 28 paints a scathing picture of the leadership in the Northern Kingdom, portraying them as drunkards and self-indulgent individuals who lacked judgment and vision. This spiritual and moral decay contributed significantly to the kingdom's vulnerability and its inability to resist the Assyrian advance.
- **What is the relationship between physical drunkenness and spiritual drunkenness, according to the text?**
- The text draws a parallel between physical drunkenness and spiritual drunkenness, highlighting the common characteristics of impaired judgment, self-centeredness, loss of balance, and blindness to reality. Just as physical drunkenness distorts perception and hinders rational decision-making, spiritual drunkenness, caused by a persistent disregard for God's truth, leads to a similar state of moral and spiritual disorientation.
- **What is the significance of Isaiah's message of God using "people of strange lips and foreign tongue" (the Assyrians) to discipline Israel?**
- Isaiah's message emphasizes that God will use even foreign nations to bring about judgment and correction when His people refuse to listen to His voice. The Assyrians, with their unfamiliar language and culture, served as a harsh wake-up call for Israel, forcing them to confront the consequences of their disobedience and to recognize their need for repentance. This reflects a theme of God using unconventional means to accomplish His purposes.