

Dr. John Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 28.3, 2 Kings 20-21, 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 28.3, 2 Kings 20-21, Part 3, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Oswalt's lecture focuses on the biblical books of 2 Kings 20-21, specifically examining the reigns of Hezekiah, Manasseh, and Ammon. **He argues that Hezekiah's revival was fleeting, and Manasseh's extensive sins sealed Judah's fate, leading to eventual exile.** Oswalt highlights the people's complacency and lack of true devotion to Yahweh, suggesting their faith became superficial. **He contrasts Chronicles' account of Manasseh's repentance with Kings' omission, indicating that while personal repentance is possible, it may not alter national consequences.** The lecture underscores the need for a sustained, minute-by-minute trust in God, rather than relying on temporary emotional experiences or a mere adherence to tradition.

2. 14 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 28.3 – 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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3. Briefing Document: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 28.3, 2 Kings 20-21, Part 3

Okay, here's a briefing document summarizing the main themes and ideas from Dr. Oswalt's lecture on 2 Kings 20-21, focusing on Hezekiah, Manasseh, and the nature of genuine trust and revival.

Briefing Document: Oswalt on 2 Kings 20-21 (Session 28, Part 3)

Overview:

Dr. Oswalt's lecture centers on the reigns of Hezekiah, Manasseh, and Ammon, emphasizing the dangers of superficial religious experiences (revivals without lasting change) and the critical importance of continuous, moment-by-moment trust in God. He argues that Manasseh's profound evil formed a "die" or mold that shaped the nation's fate, leading to the exile, despite any later personal repentance. He also explores the potential for misplaced faith in the Davidic line itself, rather than in Yahweh.

Key Themes and Ideas:

- **The Illusion of Revival & The Danger of Superficial Religious Experiences:**
- Oswalt questions the lasting impact of Hezekiah's revival, suggesting it was merely a "blip on the screen." He states: "Hezekiah's revival is a good Hebrew word, a blip on the screen. When we see the description of Ahaz's sins and then the description of Manasseh's sins, they're essentially identical. Nothing has been learned."
- He argues that revivals can be "very dangerous because we overdose on the emotion and real change of behavior does not occur." He cites the example of Wales, where a great revival led to a spiritually hardened state.
- **The "Die" of Manasseh's Sin:**
- Oswalt uses the metaphor of a foundry die to illustrate how Manasseh's reign shaped the nation's destiny: "The die is being formed here. It's going to be 110 years before Jerusalem falls, 586, but what happens here with Manasseh forms the die that's going to be poured out 110 years later?" He highlights the severity of Manasseh's sins, including idolatry, child sacrifice, and divination, echoing the detestable practices of the Canaanites.
- He connects Manasseh's actions directly to the coming exile, arguing that by embracing the practices that led to the Canaanites' expulsion, Judah forfeited its

right to the land: "As long as you were not doing what those people did, you could have possession of the land. But now that you're just doing that same stuff, the land can't stand you."

- **The Importance of Continuous Trust:**
- Oswalt stresses that a single act of trust in a moment of crisis is insufficient. True faith requires constant dependence on God: "So, I say again, a one-shot trust is not enough. There has to be a life of trust." He advocates for living with the consciousness that "Lord, if you abandon me for a moment, all is lost."
- **The Nature of Manasseh's Sin & the Concept of "Toevah"**
- Oswalt emphasizes the abominable nature of Manasseh's sins, using the Hebrew word *toevah*. He explains, "That's a lovely Hebrew word, to-eh-vah, to-eh-vah. And it refers to something that is contrary to the creation order." He notes the land will not stand for these sins that are identical to those the Canaanites performed.
- **The Paradox of Manasseh's Repentance:**
- While Chronicles describes Manasseh's repentance in Assyria, Kings omits this detail. Oswalt reconciles these accounts by arguing that while Manasseh may have personally repented, it was "too late" to alter the trajectory he had set for the nation. God is gracious, but the die had already been set. "He perhaps saved his own neck. God is amazingly gracious, but he had set the die so that his personal repentance did not change the direction of the nation."
- **Misplaced Faith in the Davidic Line:**
- Oswalt suggests that the people of Judah may have become overly reliant on the Davidic dynasty itself, rather than on Yahweh. He questions the meaning of being "David-eyed," implying a superficial adherence to the lineage without genuine faith: "I rather suspect that their religion had become David. And I rather suspect that's why God took David away from him as a physical human king sitting on the throne in Jerusalem." The question is whether they "know anything about Yahweh?"
- **Ammon's Assassination and the People's Choice of Josiah:**
- The assassination of Ammon is seen as potentially driven by an anti-Assyrian faction. The subsequent elevation of the eight-year-old Josiah demonstrates the

people's continued (albeit perhaps superficial) commitment to the Davidic line, even in the face of political turmoil.

Quotes:

- "Hezekiah's revival is a good Hebrew word, a blip on the screen."
- "Revivals can be very dangerous because we overdose on the emotion and real change of behavior does not occur."
- "The die is being formed here...what happens here with Manasseh forms the die that's going to be poured out 110 years later?"
- "Manasseh, king of Judah, has committed these abominable sins, these detestable sins. He has done more evil than the Amorites, that's the Canaanites, who preceded him and led Judah into sin with his idols."
- "As long as you were not doing what those people did, you could have possession of the land. But now that you're just doing that same stuff, the land can't stand you."
- "So, I say again, a one-shot trust is not enough. There has to be a life of trust."
- "He perhaps saved his own neck. God is amazingly gracious, but he had set the die so that his personal repentance did not change the direction of the nation."
- "I rather suspect that their religion had become David. And I rather suspect that's why God took David away from him as a physical human king sitting on the throne in Jerusalem."

Takeaway:

The lecture emphasizes the need for a consistent, moment-by-moment trust in God that permeates all aspects of life. Superficial religious experiences and misplaced faith in institutions or lineages are insufficient. The consequences of persistent sin, particularly when it mirrors the abominations that led to the expulsion of previous inhabitants, can be devastating and irreversible, even by later repentance. The question is whether "trust has to be a continued way of life. And if it is, God can be trusted."

4. Study Guide: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 28.3, 2 Kings 20-21, Part 3

Kings: Trust and Consequences - A Study Guide

Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. What is the "die" that Dr. Oswalt refers to in relation to Manasseh's reign, and what is its significance?
2. What is Dr. Oswalt's view on revivals, and what historical example does he provide to support this view?
3. What specific sins did Manasseh commit, as detailed in 2 Kings 21, that were considered "detestable"?
4. What is the connection between the sins of Manasseh and the potential exile of the Israelites from the land?
5. What does the book of Chronicles say about Manasseh and how does it contrast with 2 Kings?
6. Why does Dr. Oswalt speculate that Ammon was assassinated?
7. What does the fact that the "people of the land" installed Josiah, an eight-year-old, as king after Ammon's assassination suggest about their values?
8. According to Dr. Oswalt, what is the critical takeaway from the study of Kings?
9. What did Manasseh rebuild that his father Hezekiah had destroyed?
10. What is the meaning of the Hebrew word "to-eh-vah" and how does it relate to Manasseh's sins?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The "die" refers to the pattern or mold being formed by Manasseh's actions, which will ultimately determine the fate of Jerusalem. It signifies that his sins set in motion a course of events that would lead to the city's downfall 110 years later.
2. Dr. Oswalt views revivals with caution, suggesting they can be dangerous if they only involve emotion and don't lead to genuine behavioral change. He cites the

example of Wales, where a great revival led to religious over-saturation and a hardened spiritual state.

3. Manasseh committed numerous sins, including rebuilding high places, erecting altars to Baal and an Asherah pole, worshiping the starry hosts, sacrificing his own son in the fire, practicing divination, and consulting mediums and spiritists. These actions directly contradicted God's commands and defiled the temple.
4. The connection is that Manasseh led the Israelites back into the detestable practices of the Canaanites, who were originally driven out of the land for those very practices. The implication is that the land could no longer tolerate the Israelites' presence while they were engaging in such abominations.
5. Chronicles states that Manasseh repented late in life, while in captivity in Assyria, and removed the idols and restored worship in Jerusalem. Kings does not mention this repentance, likely because, although sincere, it did not alter the ultimate outcome for the nation.
6. Dr. Oswalt speculates that Ammon was assassinated because he was an Assyrian vassal, and the anti-Assyrian party in Judah gained power and killed him due to their hatred of Assyrian domination.
7. The people's decision to install Josiah suggests they still respected the Davidic promise, which stated that a descendant of David should always be on the throne of Judah.
8. The takeaway is that trust in God must be a continuous way of life, not just a one-time event in a moment of crisis.
9. Manasseh rebuilt the "high places" that his father Hezekiah had destroyed during his religious reforms.
10. The Hebrew word "to-eh-vah" means abomination and refers to something that is contrary to the creation order. It highlights the extreme nature of Manasseh's sins and their violation of God's intended design.

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the significance of Manasseh's reign in 2 Kings. How did his actions contribute to the eventual exile of Judah?
2. Analyze Dr. Oswalt's critique of revivals. Do you agree with his assessment? Use examples from the text and your own knowledge to support your argument.
3. Compare and contrast the accounts of Manasseh in 2 Kings and Chronicles. What are the potential reasons for the differences in these accounts?
4. Examine the theme of "trust" as presented by Dr. Oswalt. How does the story of Hezekiah and Manasseh illustrate the importance of consistent, lifelong trust in God?
5. How did the people's continued respect for the Davidic line influence the events in 2 Kings, even during times of apostasy and political turmoil?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Die:** A mold or pattern used in a foundry to shape molten metal. In this context, it represents the pattern of sin set by Manasseh that shaped the future of Judah.
- **High Places:** Elevated sites, often used for pagan worship and idol worship, which were condemned in the Old Testament.
- **Asherah Pole:** A wooden pole or tree trunk representing the Canaanite goddess Asherah, often placed near altars of Baal.
- **Divination:** The practice of seeking knowledge of the future or the unknown through supernatural means.
- **Omens:** Events or signs believed to foretell the future.
- **Mediums and Spiritists:** People who claim to communicate with the spirits of the dead.
- **Abomination (to-eh-vah):** Something that is detestable and contrary to God's moral order.
- **Coup de Gras:** French term for a decisive blow or action, often in politics, leading to a change in power.
- **Davidic Promise:** God's promise to King David that his descendants would always rule over Israel.
- **Assyrian Vassal:** A ruler who is subservient to the Assyrian Empire and pays tribute to them.
- **Revival:** A period of renewed religious fervor and spiritual awakening within a community or nation.
- **Burned-Over District:** A term used to describe upstate New York due to the intense revivals that occurred there during the Second Great Awakening.

5. FAQs on Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 28.23, 2 Kings 20-21, Part 3, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ on 2 Kings 20-21

1. What is the significance of Manasseh's reign in relation to the eventual fall of Jerusalem?

Manasseh's reign, marked by widespread idolatry and detestable practices mirroring the Canaanites, formed the "die" or mold that shaped Judah's fate. While the actual fall of Jerusalem occurred 110 years later, Manasseh's actions established a trajectory towards divine judgment, suggesting that his reign sealed the nation's doom. He undid the reforms his father Hezekiah had done and led the nation into deeper sin than the Canaanites had even done.

2. What does the speaker mean by the statement that revivals can be "dangerous"?

The speaker suggests that revivals can be "dangerous" if they are primarily emotional experiences without resulting in genuine, lasting changes in behavior and character. There can be an "overdose" of emotion with no true change in behavior. The example of Wales is used to illustrate this point, where a great revival occurred but the land ultimately became a difficult mission field due to a superficial embrace of religion. The speaker also references the burned-over district as another case of this.

3. Why did God allow Manasseh to reign for 52 years despite his wickedness?

While the speaker acknowledges this as a question he would ask God, he speculates that Manasseh's long reign was a consequence of the people's own desires and contentment with his evil rule. It is posited that a people often get the kind of government they deserve and that God gave them what they wanted.

4. What was particularly egregious about Manasseh's sins?

Manasseh's sins were particularly egregious because they mirrored the detestable practices of the Canaanites whom God had driven out of the land. He rebuilt pagan altars, worshiped idols, sacrificed his own son, and consulted mediums and spiritists. These actions were considered "abominable" (to-eh-vah in Hebrew), representing practices contrary to the creation order and directly violating God's commands.

5. What is the connection between the sins of the people and the land being unable to "stand" them?

The connection lies in the covenant relationship between God and the Israelites. As long as the Israelites avoided the detestable practices of the Canaanites, they could possess the land. However, by engaging in those same practices, the land itself could no longer tolerate their presence, leading to their eventual exile. It is as if the land itself vomited the people out for defiling it.

6. How do the books of Kings and Chronicles differ in their portrayal of Manasseh?

Kings focuses on Manasseh's wickedness and its impact on the nation's fate, omitting any mention of his repentance. Chronicles, on the other hand, includes a story of Manasseh's repentance while in Assyrian captivity. The speaker suggests that Kings emphasizes the irreversible consequences of Manasseh's actions, while Chronicles highlights the possibility of repentance and restoration for those in exile, though it was too late to change the course of the nation.

7. Why was Ammon assassinated, and what does the people's reaction to his assassination reveal?

Ammon was likely assassinated due to his close ties to the Assyrians, who were losing power at the time. His assassination was probably the work of an anti-Assyrian party. The people's reaction to the assassination—installing Josiah, an eight-year-old, on the throne instead of a strong leader—demonstrates their continued adherence to the Davidic promise and their desire to maintain the Davidic line, even if their commitment to Yahweh was questionable.

8. What is the primary "takeaway" or lesson from the passage?

The primary takeaway is that trust in God must be a continuous way of life, not just a one-time event or emotional response. A moment of revival is not enough to sustain you, there must be a daily surrender and dependence on God. Only through consistent trust can individuals and nations experience God's faithfulness and avoid the consequences of straying from His path.