

## Dr. John Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 30.2, 2 Kings 24-25, Part 2 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 30.2, 2 Kings 24-25, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

**Dr. Oswalt's lecture focuses on the events described in 2 Kings 24-25**, specifically the reigns of Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah, and the lead up to Jerusalem's fall to Babylon. **The lecture explores Jehoiakim's initial rebellion against Babylon**, the subsequent siege of Jerusalem, and Jehoiachin's surrender, leading to his exile along with many leaders. **A key point emphasizes Zedekiah's rebellion**, despite a covenant with Nebuchadnezzar, and the tragic consequences, including the execution of his sons and his blinding. **Oswalt highlights the importance of covenant keeping**, contrasting Zedekiah's fate with Jehoiakim's due to the presence, or lack thereof, of an oath to Babylon. **The lecture closes by examining Zedekiah's character**, painting him as a leader who lacked loyalty to his people, ultimately demonstrating the consequences of his actions.

**2. 10 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 30.2 – 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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on30\_2.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 30.2, 2 Kings 24-25, Part 2

Okay, here's a briefing document summarizing the main themes and ideas from the provided excerpts of Dr. John Oswalt's lecture on 2 Kings 24-25, Part 2.

#### Briefing Document: Dr. John Oswalt on 2 Kings 24-25, Part 2

##### Main Themes:

- **Covenant and Consequences:** The lecture heavily emphasizes the importance of covenants and the consequences of breaking them. Zedekiah's fate is directly tied to his violation of a covenant made with Nebuchadnezzar. "Whether it was a good covenant or not, Zedekiah made a covenant with the king of Babylon. I will serve you. If you'll put me on the throne, I'll serve you. And now, listening to the polls, the people don't want to be Babylonians anymore. He's decided to revolt, to break his covenant." Oswalt stresses that God takes covenants seriously.
- **Leadership and its Impact:** The lecture analyzes the leadership styles and choices of Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and particularly Zedekiah, highlighting the impact of their decisions on Judah. Oswalt questions why Zedekiah modeled himself after Jehoiakim instead of his father and points out that this might have been because the big brother can have more influence than the father: "Zedekiah followed Jehoiakim... the big brother can have a lot more influence than the father, especially if the father, as in that situation, is removed from direct day-to-day contact with his sons." He contrasts Zedekiah's fate with that of Jehoiachin, who surrendered, suggesting that Zedekiah's rebellion, fueled by bad advice and a broken covenant, led to a far harsher outcome.
- **The Fall of Jerusalem and Babylonian Strategy:** The lecture explains the political context surrounding the fall of Jerusalem, including Babylonian strategies for controlling conquered territories. The Babylonians took valuable people into exile: "Verse 14, he carried all Jerusalem, that's not everybody, but everybody that counts, into exile... the officers, fighting men, skilled workers, and artisans. Why were those people taken? They had value. He could use them in Babylon as he did Daniel, for example, others." Meanwhile, the poor were left behind to maintain the land and provide tribute.

- **Personal Responsibility and Influence:** Oswalt connects the biblical narrative to contemporary life, urging listeners to consider the example they set for others. He asks "Who's following you?", and he provides a personal anecdote about his son following in his footsteps in the snow, underscoring the impact, both positive and negative, that individuals can have on those around them.
- **The Temptation of the Path of Least Resistance:** Oswalt warns against choosing the easy path, drawing on George Barna's observation that religious practice in the United States is often defined by being "easy, simple, convenient." He implies that Zedekiah's choice to follow Jehoiakim might have been a similar instance of choosing the easier, though ultimately disastrous, path.

### Key Ideas and Facts:

- **Historical Context:** In 601 BC, Babylon suffered a setback against Egypt, leading Jehoiakim to rebel.
- Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem in approximately 599 BC.
- Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were taken to Babylon as hostages in 605 BC.
- Jehoiachin surrendered and was taken into captivity in 598 BC, along with the royal family and other leaders. Ezekiel also went into exile at this time.
- **The Fate of Zedekiah:** Zedekiah was installed as king by Nebuchadnezzar but rebelled, leading to severe consequences. His sons were killed before his eyes, he was blinded, and taken to Babylon in shackles. "They killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes. Then they put out his eyes, bound him with bronze shackles, and took him to Babylon. The last thing he would ever see was the death of his sons."
- **Ezekiel's Prophecy:** Ezekiel, writing from Babylon, condemned Zedekiah's rebellion and warned of the consequences of breaking covenants. Ezekiel says, "The king of Babylon came to Jerusalem, took away her king and princes, and brought them to Babylon. He made a treaty with a member of the royal family and forced him to take an oath of loyalty."
- **Zedekiah's Character:** Oswalt describes Zedekiah as cowardly, pointing to his attempt to flee Jerusalem as it fell, abandoning his army. "Rather than stand in the last hour with those that he had led, who had led into this mess, he runs."

- **The Role of False Prophets:** Jeremiah warned against listening to false prophets who claimed that Babylon would not conquer Jerusalem, emphasizing that they were lying in God's name. Jeremiah says, "Do not listen to the false prophets who keep telling you the king of Babylon will not conquer you. They are liars... I've not sent these prophets. They're telling you lies in my name."

#### Quotes:

- "We're told, interestingly, and again, I think it's fascinating how accurate the scripture can be. In verse 2, the Lord sent Babylonian, Aramean, Moabite, and Ammonite raiders against him to destroy Judah."
- "Covenants are really important to God."
- "Don't be too sure. What example are you setting? That somebody is walking in."
- "Isn't it tough to follow in the footsteps of Jehoiakim?"
- "The road is narrow and it's steep. And let's stay on it. Let's stay on it."
- "They did not realize that nature was in subjection to them because they were in subjection to God. And when they broke their subjection to God, nature broke its subjection to us." (Referring to C.S. Lewis's idea about Adam and Eve)

## 4. Study Guide: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 30.2, 2 Kings 24-25, Part 2

### The Fall of Judah: A Study Guide

#### Review of Key Concepts

- **Timeline:** 605 BC (Daniel and others taken captive), 601 BC (Babylonian setback against Egypt), 599 BC (Babylonian army returns), 598 BC (Jehoiachin surrenders, Ezekiel exiled), 586 BC (Jerusalem falls, Zedekiah captured).
- **Jehoiakim:** Rebelled against Babylon after initial submission. His actions led to initial raids and siege. Died before the final fall of Jerusalem.
- **Jehoiachin:** Briefly reigned after his father Jehoiakim. Surrendered to Babylon and was taken into exile.
- **Ezekiel:** A priest taken into captivity in 598 BC. Became a prophet in Babylon, prophesying against Jerusalem and urging repentance.
- **Zedekiah:** Installed as king by Nebuchadnezzar. Rebelled against Babylon, breaking his oath of loyalty. Suffered a brutal fate after Jerusalem fell.
- **The Importance of Covenants:** God takes covenants seriously. Zedekiah's breaking of his covenant with Nebuchadnezzar was a significant factor in Judah's downfall.
- **Babylonian Strategy:** The Babylonians strategically deported key segments of the population (leaders, skilled workers) while leaving behind the poor to maintain the land and pay tribute.
- **False Prophets:** Claimed God would protect Jerusalem, contradicting Jeremiah and Ezekiel's warnings.
- **Leadership and Influence:** Examined through the examples of Josiah, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah. The influence of older siblings and the importance of setting a good example.
- **Zedekiah's Character:** His cowardice and lack of realism are highlighted by his attempt to flee Jerusalem during the final siege.

#### Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. What event in 601 BC prompted Jehoiakim to consider rebelling against Babylon, and what followed in the next couple of years?
2. Explain why Daniel and his companions were taken into captivity in 605 BC. What purpose did they serve for Nebuchadnezzar?
3. Describe the circumstances surrounding Ezekiel's exile to Babylon. What significant event coincided with his 30th year?
4. Explain the Babylonian strategy regarding deportation and leaving the poor behind in Judah. Why did they deport certain people, and why did they leave others?
5. Contrast the fates of Jehoiachin and Zedekiah. Why was Zedekiah treated so much more harshly?
6. Summarize Ezekiel's message to the people in Jerusalem regarding Zedekiah's rebellion. How did he use the metaphor of the eagles to illustrate his point?
7. Why did both Ezekiel and Jeremiah consider Zedekiah's actions a grave offense against God?
8. According to the lecture, what could have influenced Zedekiah's decision to emulate his brother Jehoiakim rather than follow the example of his father, Josiah?
9. What does Zedekiah's attempted escape from Jerusalem during the siege reveal about his character and leadership?
10. According to C.S. Lewis, what was the relationship between Adam and Eve's subjection to God and nature's subjection to them?

### **Quiz Answer Key**

1. The Babylonian army suffered a setback at the borders of Egypt in 601 BC, leading Jehoiakim to believe he could break free from Babylonian rule. This led to local warlords raiding Judah, followed by the return of the Babylonian army to besiege Jerusalem.
2. Daniel and his companions were taken as hostages in 605 BC to ensure Jehoiakim's loyalty to Babylon. Their lives were collateral to ensure Jehoiakim kept his covenant with Nebuchadnezzar.

3. Ezekiel was exiled to Babylon in 598 BC along with Jehoiachin and other leaders. In his 30th year, the year he would have begun his priestly duties, he was called by God to be a prophet instead.
4. The Babylonians deported leaders, skilled workers, and artisans to utilize their talents and prevent future rebellions. They left the poor behind because they could not afford to feed them and they needed them to maintain the land and produce tribute.
5. Jehoiachin was simply taken into exile, while Zedekiah's sons were killed before his eyes, he was blinded, and then taken to Babylon in shackles. Zedekiah was treated more harshly because he broke a covenant of loyalty he made with Nebuchadnezzar.
6. Ezekiel warned the people that Zedekiah's rebellion against Babylon would lead to destruction. He used the metaphor of the eagles to illustrate how Zedekiah had broken his oath and would suffer the consequences.
7. They considered it a grave offense because Zedekiah broke a sworn covenant. Covenants were considered extremely important to God, and breaking one had serious consequences.
8. Zedekiah may have emulated his brother Jehoiakim due to the latter's greater influence and constant presence. He likely spent more time with his older brother, especially with his father removed from daily life.
9. It reveals his cowardice and lack of concern for his people. It suggests he was not loyal to those he led and was primarily concerned with his own survival.
10. C.S. Lewis argued that nature was in subjection to Adam and Eve because they were in subjection to God. When they broke their subjection to God, nature broke its subjection to them.

## Essay Questions

1. Analyze the factors contributing to the fall of Judah, emphasizing the roles of Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. How did their individual decisions impact the nation's fate?
2. Discuss the significance of covenants in the context of 2 Kings 24-25 and the provided lecture. How did the breaking of covenants contribute to Judah's downfall, and what does this suggest about God's view of promises?
3. Examine the Babylonian strategy of deportation and its long-term effects on Judah. What were the strategic advantages of this policy, and how did it impact the remaining population?
4. Compare and contrast the prophetic messages of Ezekiel and Jeremiah during the reign of Zedekiah. How did their messages align, and what does this reveal about the nature of true prophecy?
5. Explore the theme of leadership as presented in 2 Kings 24-25 and the lecture material. What qualities of leadership were lacking in Zedekiah, and how did his actions impact the loyalty of his people?



## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Jehoiakim:** King of Judah who rebelled against Babylon.
- **Jehoiachin:** Son of Jehoiakim, briefly reigned and was taken into exile.
- **Zedekiah:** Installed as king by Nebuchadnezzar, rebelled and suffered a brutal fate.
- **Nebuchadnezzar:** King of Babylon.
- **Ezekiel:** A priest exiled to Babylon who became a prophet.
- **Jeremiah:** Prophet in Jerusalem who warned of the impending destruction.
- **Covenant:** A formal agreement or treaty, often with religious significance.
- **Babylonian Exile:** The deportation of Jewish leaders and skilled workers to Babylon.
- **Tribute:** Payment made by one state or ruler to another as a sign of submission.
- **False Prophets:** Those who claimed to speak for God but delivered false messages.
- **Siege:** The surrounding and blockading of a city or town by an army attempting to capture it.
- **Araba:** The valley that the Jordan runs in.

## **5. FAQs on Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 30.2, 2 Kings 24-25, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)**

### **Frequently Asked Questions: 2 Kings 24-25**

#### **1. What led to the initial Babylonian siege of Jerusalem?**

In 601 BC, the Babylonians experienced a setback against Egypt, prompting King Jehoiakim of Judah to break his covenant with Babylon and cease paying tribute. In response, Nebuchadnezzar sent raiding parties of Babylonians, Arameans, Moabites, and Ammonites to harass and weaken Judah. Eventually, Nebuchadnezzar returned with his army to besiege Jerusalem around 599 BC.

#### **2. What happened to Daniel and his companions during Jehoiakim's reign?**

In 605 BC, when Jehoiakim made a covenant with Babylon, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were taken as hostages to ensure Jehoiakim kept his treaty with Nebuchadnezzar. Although Jehoiakim broke his covenant, Daniel and his three companions were spared.

#### **3. What were the key differences in the treatment of Jehoiachin and Zedekiah by Nebuchadnezzar?**

Jehoiachin surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar and was taken into exile in Babylon along with his family, officers, fighting men, and skilled workers. Zedekiah, on the other hand, was installed as a puppet king by Nebuchadnezzar, but later rebelled. As a result, after being captured, Zedekiah was forced to watch his sons being killed before his eyes, had his eyes gouged out, and was taken to Babylon in bronze shackles. Jehoiachin was treated better because he surrendered, while Zedekiah broke his covenant with Nebuchadnezzar.

#### **4. Why did Nebuchadnezzar exile certain groups of people from Jerusalem, and who was left behind?**

Nebuchadnezzar exiled the officers, fighting men, skilled workers, and artisans because they had value to him and could contribute to Babylon. He left the poor people behind because he could not afford to feed them, and they were needed to maintain the land and grow crops to pay tribute to Babylon.

**5. What was Ezekiel's role during this period, and what message did he convey?**

Ezekiel, who was about to begin his priestly duties, was taken into exile in Babylon along with Jehoiachin. There, God called him to be a prophet. He prophesied to the people in Jerusalem, who believed they were safe, that Jerusalem would fall because King Zedekiah had broken his covenant with Babylon.

**6. What covenant did Zedekiah break, and why was this significant?**

Zedekiah broke the covenant of loyalty he had made with Nebuchadnezzar, who had installed him as king of Judah. This was significant because covenants were viewed as sacred and binding agreements before God, so his actions were viewed as betrayal that would be punished.

**7. What does Zedekiah's behavior during the final siege of Jerusalem reveal about his character?**

Zedekiah's decision to flee the city at night, even though it was surrounded by the Babylonian army, demonstrates a lack of loyalty and leadership. Instead of standing with his people and his army, he tried to save himself, revealing a cowardly and unrealistic attitude.

**8. What lessons can be learned from the events surrounding the fall of Jerusalem and the kings who reigned during that time?**

We learn about the importance of loyalty and covenant keeping. Zedekiah's tragic fate underscores the consequences of breaking covenants and failing to lead with integrity. We should consider the examples we set for others, and strive to stay on the right path, even when it's difficult.