

# Dr. John Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 30.3, 2 Kings 24-25, 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 30.3, 2 Kings 24-25, Part 3, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Oswalt's lecture analyzes the biblical books of Kings, focusing on the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem and its symbolic significance. He examines the historical context of the Babylonian conquest, including their three-step plan for subjugating nations. **The lecture emphasizes the detailed descriptions of the temple's destruction, contrasting it with its original glory as described in 1 Kings.** Oswalt posits that the temple's fate illustrates God's departure due to Israel's unfaithfulness, highlighting that God values people's hearts over physical structures. **He connects the end of Kings to the hope of a future kingdom not defined by earthly power, but by God's continued presence.** The lecture concludes by explaining the Deuteronomic view that covenant obedience leads to blessing, while disobedience leads to curses, thus shaping the narrative of the Kings.

**2. 21 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 30.3 – 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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on30\_3.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 30.3, 2 Kings 24-25, Part 3

Okay, here is a briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from the provided excerpts of Dr. John Oswalt's session on 2 Kings 24-25, Part 3.

#### Briefing Document: Dr. John Oswalt on 2 Kings 24-25, Part 3

##### Main Themes:

- **The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple as Divine Judgment:** The destruction of the temple, the royal palace, and the city of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar is presented as the culmination of a three-strike pattern of alliance, revolt, and ultimate devastation. This is directly tied to Israel's covenantal disobedience.
- **The Theology of the Temple:** Oswalt emphasizes the symbolic significance of the temple. Its destruction signifies God's departure due to Israel's unfaithfulness, highlighting that God desires a relationship with the people, their hearts, more than a physical structure. The beauty of the temple mirrors the potential beauty of human hearts dedicated to God, while its destruction reflects the horror of hearts turned away from Him.
- **Hope Beyond National Disaster:** Despite the utter devastation of Judah as an independent nation-state, the release of Jehoiakim from prison at the end of 2 Kings offers a glimmer of hope. This is not merely a historical postscript but a sign that God's plan continues, though in a way different from what the Israelites might have expected. The kingdom of God is not defined by earthly power or national boundaries.
- **Deuteronomistic Theology of History:** Oswalt highlights that the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings are written in the light of Deuteronomy's covenantal theology: obedience brings blessing, disobedience brings curses. The kings are judged based on their faithfulness to the covenant.
- **The Importance of Exclusive Devotion to Yahweh and Rejection of Idolatry:** Oswalt stresses the first and second commandments as foundational. He defines idolatry as capturing deity in the shape of anything created, manipulating and controlling God.

- **Treating Others with Kindness (Hesed, Ahav) and Respect (Mishpat):** Oswalt presents this as the culmination of the last six commandments, emphasizing generosity, affection, and a justice that reflects God's design for life.

#### **Key Ideas and Facts:**

- **Nebuchadnezzar's Destruction:** Nebuchadnezzar's commander of the Imperial Guard burned the temple, royal palace, and houses of Jerusalem, and broke down the walls. (p.1)
- **The Assyrian/Babylonian Three-Step Plan:** Alliance, revolt, destruction. (p.1)
- **Detailed Description of Temple Treasures:** The text highlights the detailed inventory of the temple's bronze pillars, sea, stands, pots, shovels, and gold/silver articles that were taken to Babylon. (p.1-2) This emphasizes the tragedy of losing what was dedicated to the Lord. Oswalt asks "Why didn't he just say he destroyed the temple and took all its stuff? Why this much of a detailed description?" (p.2)
- **God's Promise and Warning to Solomon (1 Kings 9:3-9):** God consecrated the temple but warned that if Israel turned away to other gods, He would reject the temple and Israel would become a byword and object of ridicule. This is presented as the fulfillment of that warning. "But if you or your descendants turn away from me, do not observe the commands and decrees I've given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them, then I will cut off Israel from the land I've given them and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my name." (p.2-3)
- **The Symbolic Nature of the Temple:** The temple represents the beauty God desires in human hearts, and its desecration symbolizes the horror of hearts turned from God. "This is all symbolism. How beautiful are our hearts to him? That beautiful. And what is the tragedy? When our hearts are no longer his. They're a horror. They're ugly. They're a disaster." (p.3)
- **The End of Chronicles and Malachi Focus on the Temple:** Chronicles ends with Cyrus's decree to rebuild the temple, while Malachi focuses on the corruption of the temple. (p.3-4)
- **The Release of Jehoiakim:** After 37 years in exile, Jehoiakim is released from prison by Awel Marduk, Nebuchadnezzar's successor, and given a seat of honor at the king's table. (p.4)

- **Significance of Jehoiakim's Release:** Although Judah as an independent nation-state is finished, the story isn't over. God's plan continues in a way they could not imagine. "But God's not done. And so, I'm confident that it's not just a postscript. It's really saying the story is going to go on. But it's going to go on in a different way than you can imagine. Because the kingdom of God is not the nation of Judah. And the son of David is not merely a human king." (p.5) It is a "candle flame" in the darkness. (p.5)
- **Deuteronomy's Philosophy of History:** Keep the covenant and experience blessing; break the covenant and experience the curse. (p.5)
- **Four Key Aspects of Keeping the Covenant:** 1) Exclusive devotion to Yahweh, 2) No idolatry, 3) Do not trust in anything other than Yahweh, 4) Treat others (especially those who cannot repay you) with kindness (hesed, ahav) and respect (mishpat). (p.6) "Whatever you trust in place of God will one day turn on you and destroy you." (p.6)

#### Quotes:

- "This temple will become a heap of rubble. All who pass by will be appalled and will scoff and say, why has the Lord done such a thing to his land and to this temple? People will answer because they have forsaken the Lord, their God, who brought their ancestors out of Egypt, and have embraced other gods worshiping and serving them. That is why the Lord brought all this disaster on them." (p.3)
- "It's darkness. Joachim? Who knows? Who knows? He lifted up his head. And on the other side of David's psalm, chapter 3, where he said, God is my head. Of my head. Yeah." (p.5)
- "Whatever you trust in place of God will one day turn on you and destroy you." (p.6)

**Potential Discussion Points:**

- The implications of viewing the destruction of the temple as primarily symbolic.
- The balance between divine judgment and hope in the narrative.
- The relevance of Deuteronomy's covenantal theology to contemporary life.
- The meaning of "exclusive devotion to Yahweh" in a modern context.
- How the principles of hesed, ahav, and mishpat can be applied in daily life.

## 4. Study Guide: Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 30.3, 2 Kings 24-25, Part 3

### A Study Guide to 2 Kings 24-25 (Oswalt)

#### Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. According to Oswalt, what is the three-step plan used by the Assyrians and Babylonians when dealing with rebellious nations?
2. What specific structures in Jerusalem were destroyed by the Babylonian army, according to 2 Kings 25?
3. What details are given regarding the bronze pillars that were removed from the temple and what previous chapter gives additional information about these items?
4. What is the theological significance of the detailed description of the temple's destruction and the items taken away?
5. How does Oswalt connect the destruction of the temple to the idea of the "temple of the heart"?
6. What is the significance of Cyrus's decree at the end of 2 Chronicles, and how does it relate to the themes explored in Kings?
7. What makes the ending of 2 Kings "mysterious" and how does Oswalt explain the release of Jehoiakim from prison?
8. What is Deuteronomy's "philosophy of history," and how does it relate to the evaluation of kings in the books of Kings?
9. What are the four key components of keeping the covenant, according to Oswalt's interpretation of Deuteronomy?
10. What is the significance of the Hebrew words *hesed* and *ahav* and how do they relate to Deuteronomy?

#### Quiz Answer Key

1. The three-step plan involves: (1) offering an alliance with a tribute; (2) besieging the city after revolt, followed by surrender and increased tribute, placing a native

king on the throne; and (3) complete destruction of the city and its walls after another revolt to prevent future rebellions.

2. The Babylonian army set fire to the temple of the Lord, the royal palace, and all the houses of Jerusalem, destroying every important building. They also broke down the walls all around Jerusalem.
3. Each pillar was 18 cubits high with a bronze capital of three cubits decorated with a network and pomegranates of bronze around it. Additional details about the pillar can be found in 1 Kings 7.
4. The detailed description highlights the tragedy of destroying what had been dedicated to the Lord, which was designed for His service. It emphasizes the loss and desecration of something God had once consecrated.
5. Oswalt connects the temple's destruction to the idea that God cares more about people's hearts than buildings. He suggests the temple symbolizes the beauty of hearts devoted to God, and its destruction symbolizes the horror of hearts turned away from Him.
6. Cyrus's decree, commissioning the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, suggests a restoration and continuation of God's relationship with His people. It points toward a new beginning and a renewal of the divine presence.
7. The ending is mysterious because it unexpectedly describes Jehoiakim's release from prison and elevation to a position of honor, which seems out of place given the preceding destruction and exile. Oswalt interprets this as a sign that God's plans are not finished, even though the nation of Judah is over.
8. Deuteronomy's philosophy of history is that obedience to the covenant leads to blessing, while breaking the covenant leads to a curse. The books of Kings evaluate each king based on whether they kept or broke the covenant.
9. The four key components are: (1) absolute exclusive devotion to Yahweh; (2) no idolatry; (3) do not put your trust in anything other than Yahweh, especially other nations; and (4) treat others with kindness, generosity (*hesed* and *ahav*) and respect (*mishpat*).
10. *Hesed* refers to choosing to do right for another person, while *ahav* is a more affectionate love. Both terms describe how people are to treat others, especially those who cannot repay them, reflecting God's design for life in Deuteronomy.

## Essay Questions

1. Discuss the significance of the temple in the books of Kings. How does its construction, destruction, and symbolism contribute to the overall message of the book?
2. Explain how the book of Deuteronomy informs the narrative of 2 Kings. Provide specific examples of how Deuteronomic theology is reflected in the evaluation of the kings of Israel and Judah.
3. Analyze the ending of 2 Kings. Is the release of Jehoiakim a sign of hope, or simply a historical postscript? Support your argument with evidence from the text and Oswalt's lecture.
4. How does Oswalt's interpretation of the temple relate to the New Testament concept of believers as the "temple of the Holy Spirit"?
5. Explore the concept of covenant faithfulness in the context of 2 Kings. How does the covenant shape the experiences of blessing and curse for the kings and the people of Israel and Judah?



## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Nebuchadnezzar:** The king of Babylon who conquered Jerusalem and destroyed the temple.
- **Jehoiakim:** The king of Judah who was exiled to Babylon and later released from prison, according to the end of 2 Kings.
- **Deuteronomy:** A book of the Bible that outlines the covenant between God and Israel, emphasizing obedience and blessing, as well as disobedience and curses.
- **Covenant:** A binding agreement between God and His people, outlining the terms of their relationship and the consequences of obedience and disobedience.
- **Idolatry:** The worship of idols or false gods, which is strictly forbidden in the covenant.
- **Temple:** The central place of worship for the Israelites, symbolizing God's presence among His people. Its destruction represents a major crisis in Israel's history.
- **Hesed:** A Hebrew word often translated as "loving-kindness," referring to loyal and compassionate love.
- **Ahav:** A Hebrew word often translated as "love," referring to affectionate love.
- **Mishpat:** A Hebrew word often translated as "justice," but referring to God's design for life.
- **Exile:** The forced removal of the Israelite people from their land, specifically to Babylon, as a consequence of their disobedience to the covenant.

## 5. FAQs on Oswalt, 1 & 2 Kings, Session 30.3, 2 Kings 24-25, Part 3, [Biblicalelearning.org](http://Biblicalelearning.org) (BeL)

### Frequently Asked Questions about 2 Kings 24-25 and the Theology of the Temple

- **What were the key events that led to the destruction of Jerusalem, as described in 2 Kings 24-25?**
- The destruction of Jerusalem was the culmination of a three-step process employed by the Assyrians and adopted by the Babylonians. Initially, alliances were offered, followed by tribute demands. Revolts led to sieges, and if the city surrendered, the tribute was raised. However, subsequent revolts resulted in complete destruction: the city was burned, and the walls were torn down to prevent future rebellions. In the case of Jerusalem, after multiple revolts against Babylonian rule, Nebuchadnezzar's forces burned the temple, the royal palace, and all the houses, and they broke down the city walls.
- **What happened to the Temple of the Lord and its contents during the Babylonian conquest?**
- The Babylonians systematically desecrated and plundered the Temple of the Lord. They burned it to the ground and broke up the bronze pillars, movable stands, and the bronze sea. The valuable bronze was carried away to Babylon. They also seized the pots, shovels, wick trimmers, dishes, censers, sprinkling bowls, and all other articles made of gold, silver, and bronze that were used in the temple service. This detailed accounting emphasizes the magnitude of the loss and the sacrilege committed against a place dedicated to God.
- **What is the theological significance of the Temple's destruction, according to the source?**
- The destruction of the temple signifies more than just a physical loss; it represents a profound spiritual tragedy. The Temple was meant to be God's dwelling place, a symbol of His presence among His people. God Himself consecrated the temple, promising to keep His eyes and heart there forever, provided that the Israelites remained obedient to Him. However, the destruction of the temple became inevitable when the Israelites turned away from God, embraced other gods, and disobeyed His commands. As such, the destruction of the temple serves as a potent symbol of God's departure from the people.

- **What is the connection between the glory of the Temple and the tragedy of its destruction?**
- The texts present contrasting images: the initial glory of the Temple, meticulously constructed and dedicated to God, and its subsequent devastation. This contrast highlights a fundamental theological truth: God's presence and favor are conditional upon obedience. The Temple's magnificence reflected God's love and desire to dwell with His people, but its destruction reflected His judgment and departure due to their unfaithfulness. The glory and the tragedy are thus two sides of the same coin, illustrating the consequences of covenant faithfulness and unfaithfulness.
- **What is the significance of the detailed descriptions of the Temple and its contents in the biblical text?**
- The detailed descriptions serve multiple purposes. First, they emphasize the Temple's immense value, both materially and spiritually. Second, they underscore the sacrilege and thoroughness of the Babylonian destruction. Finally, they serve as a constant reminder of what was lost when the people turned away from God. It also suggests that even in the midst of destruction, the details are still important to God. The elaborate nature of the Temple furnishings reflects the devotion and artistry poured into honoring God, making the destruction all the more poignant.
- **How does the story of Jehoiakim's release from prison offer a glimmer of hope amidst the destruction and despair?**
- Despite the overall narrative of destruction and exile, the account of Jehoiakim's release from prison and elevation in Babylonian society provides a subtle yet significant glimmer of hope. While Judah as an independent nation is finished, the fact that a descendant of David is given a position of honor suggests that God's covenant with David, promising a perpetual dynasty, is not entirely broken. This seemingly small act hints that God's plan extends beyond the immediate disaster and that the story is not over. God's kingdom will continue.

- **How does the book of Deuteronomy inform our understanding of the events in 2 Kings?**
- The book of Deuteronomy provides the theological framework for understanding the historical narrative in 2 Kings. Deuteronomy outlines the covenant between God and Israel, stipulating that obedience to God's commands would result in blessing, while disobedience would lead to cursing. 2 Kings interprets Israel's history through this lens, portraying the kings who remained faithful to the covenant as successful and blessed, while those who broke the covenant faced judgment and disaster.
- **What are the core principles of Deuteronomy that are used to evaluate the kings of Israel and Judah?**
- The kings of Israel and Judah are evaluated based on their adherence to four key principles derived from Deuteronomy: exclusive devotion to Yahweh (no other gods), rejection of idolatry (no representations of God), trust in Yahweh alone (not in foreign powers or material possessions), and treating others with kindness, generosity, and justice (especially those who cannot repay). These principles served as a moral compass for assessing the righteousness and effectiveness of the rulers and their impact on the nation's fate.