

# Dr. Robert Vannoy, Exodus to Exile, Session 6B, Date of Deuteronomy, Joshua and the Conquest Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

## 1. Abstract of Vannoy, Exodus to Exile, Session 6B, Date of Deuteronomy, Joshua and the Conquest, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This lecture explores the dating of Deuteronomy and the historical events surrounding the Israelite conquest of Canaan, as described in Joshua. It begins by examining theories, including Wellhausen's documentary hypothesis, which challenge the traditional Mosaic authorship of Deuteronomy and places its origin much later. The lecture then investigates the book of Joshua, focusing on its major themes: Israel's establishment in the Promised Land, and the land as a gift from God. **It explores the archaeological evidence for the events in Joshua and discusses contemporary models, such as the migration/infiltration and peasant revolt theories, which offer alternative perspectives on the Israelite settlement.** The lecture evaluates differing scholarly opinions, including how John Bright's views evolved over time. **It concludes by touching upon the ongoing debate regarding the historical reliability of the Old Testament, highlighting the tension between archaeological findings and postmodern theoretical reconstructions.**

**2. 24 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Vannoy, Exodus to Exile, Session 6B – 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 → Exodus to Exile).**



**Vannoy\_ExttoExile\_Session06B.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Vannoy, Exodus to Exile, Session 6B, Date of Deuteronomy, Joshua and the Conquest

This briefing document summarizes the key themes and ideas presented in Robert Vannoy's lecture "Exodus to Exile, Lecture 6B," focusing on the dating of Deuteronomy, its influence on historical books, and an introduction to the book of Joshua.

#### I. Date of Deuteronomy and the Influence of Deuteronomistic Theology

- The de Wette/Wellhausen Hypothesis:** Vannoy outlines the historical-critical perspective, tracing it back to Wilhelm de Wette, who argued that Deuteronomy was the "book of the law" found during Josiah's reign (621 B.C.). De Wette theorized that Deuteronomy was created by Jerusalem religious leaders to centralize worship. This idea was later developed by Julius Wellhausen, who made Deuteronomy the "D" document in his JEDP theory.
- According to Wellhausen, the religious leaders of Jerusalem authored Deuteronomy, "They 'found' it and attributed it to Moses to give it credentials and authority, when in reality it was not from Moses."
- Wellhausen's Evolutionary View:** Wellhausen proposed an evolutionary model of Israelite religion, moving from polytheism to henotheism to monotheism, with a parallel shift from multiple altars to a centralized sanctuary in Jerusalem. Deuteronomy became the linchpin of this theory because it seemed datable, allowing for the relative dating of J and E.
- Influence on Historical Books:** The lecture highlights the significant influence of Deuteronomy on the historical books (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings) and the prophetic books. The traditional view is that this influence suggests the historical books were written after Deuteronomy.
- Martin Noth and the Deuteronomistic History:** Vannoy introduces Martin Noth's concept of the "Deuteronomistic Historian" (DtrH), who Noth argued wrote Joshua through Kings during the exile, interpreting Israel's history through the lens of Deuteronomy's theology. "He said that Joshua to Kings was the product of an anonymous writer living in the time of the exile, who cast Israel's history into the categories of the theology of Deuteronomy."
- Vannoy's Counter-Argument:** Vannoy challenges Noth's view, suggesting that Deuteronomistic influence stems from the foundations laid by Moses, not a later revisionist interpretation. He argues for the historical reliability of each book.

"Yes, there's influence of Deuteronomy, but not in the sense in which Noth was saying—that some individual living in the exile recast Israel's history from the theology of the book written in 621 into the categories of those theological ideas, and in doing so, readily distorted what the real history was." He supports the historicity of events like the cycle in Judges, rather than seeing them as theological constructs. He supports accepting the date of Deuteronomy based on what the book "says about itself" supported by historical data.

## II. Death of Moses and Transition to Joshua

- **Deuteronomy 34:** Vannoy identifies Deuteronomy 34, which describes the death of Moses, as a conclusion added to the book. He highlights Kline's view that Deuteronomy emphasizes the transition of leadership from Moses to Joshua. Verse 10 and following says, "Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, who did all those miraculous signs and wonders the LORD sent him to do in Egypt."
- **Joshua 1:1:** This transition is then continued at the beginning of the book of Joshua. "After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: 'Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River.'"

## III. Introduction to the Book of Joshua

- **Basic Theme and Structure:** The central theme of Joshua is the establishment of Israel in the Promised Land under Joshua's leadership, encompassing the entrance (crossing the Jordan), the conquest (southern and northern campaigns), and the division of the land.
- "I think the theme that gives unity to the various parts of the book of Joshua could be put this way: it describes the establishment of Israel in the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua. The establishment includes three elements: the entrance (crossing of the Jordan River), the conquest (first there was a southern campaign and then a northern campaign), and the division of the land."
- **Anticipation in Joshua 1:** Vannoy argues that Joshua 1 foreshadows the entire book, with verses anticipating the crossing of the Jordan (verse 2), the conquest (verse 5), the inheritance of the land (verse 6), and the call to covenant faithfulness (verses 7-8).

- **Land as a Gift from God:** A recurring theme is that the land is a gift from God, possessed through His grace and help. Joshua 1:2: "Get ready to cross the Jordan River into that land I am about to give to them;" the Lord is giving the land to his people.
- **Joshua as a Transition Book:** The book bridges the Pentateuch and the rest of the Old Testament. It looks back to the fulfillment of promises made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses. It also looks forward, providing detailed descriptions of possessions that largely remained intact through the Old Testament period.
- **Serve Theme:** Vannoy highlights the theme of "serve," emphasizing Israel's obligation to serve the Lord. Joshua challenges Israel repeatedly with that word in chapter 24, where it occurs 16 times. He says in Joshua 24:15, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." The book warns that covenant breaking will lead to expulsion from the land.
- **The Primary Character or Personality of Joshua:** Moses changed Joshua's name from Hoshea to Joshua, "the Lord is salvation." "Joshua" in Hebrew is really the same name as "Jesus" in Greek.
- **External Evidence:** The lecture touches on the limited external evidence for the events in Joshua, mentioning the Amarna Letters, the Merneptah Stela, and destruction levels in Canaanite cities.
- **Contemporary Approaches:** Vannoy outlines three contemporary models for understanding Israel's establishment in Canaan: the conquest model, the migration/infiltration model, and the peasant revolt model.
- He notes the shift in mainstream biblical scholarship away from the traditional conquest theory.
- He discusses John Bright's evolving views, illustrating the changing trends in scholarship. He moves from basically the description in Joshua through a semi-Mendenhall view to pretty much adopting Mendenhall's view
- The lecture ends with a critique of the tendency to use sociological models to recreate history rather than accepting the biblical text as a primary historical source.

## 4. Study Guide: Vannoy, Exodus to Exile, Session 6B, Date of Deuteronomy, Joshua and the Conquest

### Exodus, Deuteronomy, and Joshua: A Study Guide

#### Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. What was Wilhelm de Wette's theory regarding the authorship and purpose of Deuteronomy?
2. Briefly explain Julius Wellhausen's Documentary Hypothesis (JEDP) and the significance of Deuteronomy within this framework.
3. According to Martin Noth, what is the Deuteronomistic History (DtrH)?
4. According to the source material, in what way does the influence of Deuteronomy extend beyond the book itself?
5. What is the main theme of the book of Joshua?
6. How does the first chapter of Joshua foreshadow the events described in the rest of the book?
7. According to the source material, in what ways is the land portrayed in the book of Joshua?
8. What is the significance of Moses renaming Hoshea to Joshua?
9. What three types of archaeological evidence that are identified in the source material?
10. Name and briefly describe the three contemporary models for understanding the establishment of Israel in Canaan.

#### Quiz Answer Key

1. Wilhelm de Wette proposed that Deuteronomy was the "book of the law" found in the temple during Josiah's reign in 621 B.C. He believed it was written by Jerusalem religious leaders to centralize worship in Jerusalem, consolidating their power and religious control.
2. Wellhausen's JEDP theory posits that the Pentateuch is composed of four sources: J, E, D, and P. Deuteronomy (D) was central to his theory, dated to 621 B.C.,

serving as the fulcrum to date the other documents as either pre- or post-Deuteronomistic.

3. Martin Noth's Deuteronomistic History (DtrH) is a theory that the books from Joshua to Kings were written by an anonymous author during the exile. This author allegedly recast Israel's history through the lens of Deuteronomy's theology.
4. The source material indicates that Deuteronomy's influence is reflected in the historical books (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings) and the prophetic books. This influence raises questions about the dating and reliability of these later texts.
5. The main theme of the book of Joshua is the establishment of Israel in the Promised Land under Joshua's leadership, encompassing the entrance into the land, the conquest of Canaan, and the division of the land among the tribes.
6. The first chapter of Joshua anticipates the rest of the book by foreshadowing the crossing of the Jordan River, the conquest of the land, the division of the land among the tribes, and the challenge to remain faithful to the covenant.
7. According to the source material, the land in the book of Joshua is a gift from God to his people, possessed through God's grace and help. This theme is emphasized repeatedly throughout the book, highlighting God's role in Israel's success.
8. Moses renaming Hoshea to Joshua (from "salvation" to "the Lord is salvation") signifies a deeper understanding of God's role in delivering the Israelites. The Septuagint translates Joshua into Jesus, which connects Joshua in the Old Testament to Jesus in the New Testament.
9. The three types of archaeological evidence are the Amarna Letters, the Merneptah Stela, and the destruction levels found in Canaanite cities dating to the late thirteenth century B.C.
10. The three contemporary models are the conquest model (Israel invaded and conquered the land), the migration/infiltration model (a gradual and peaceful settlement), and the peasant revolt model (an internal uprising within Canaanite society).

## Essay Questions

1. Discuss the implications of the dating of Deuteronomy on the historical understanding of the Old Testament. How does the debate surrounding its date influence interpretations of Israel's history and religious development?
2. Compare and contrast the traditional conquest model with the migration/infiltration and peasant revolt models for understanding the establishment of Israel in Canaan. What evidence does each model use to support its claims, and what are the weaknesses of each?
3. Explore the significance of the theme that the land is a gift from God in the book of Joshua. How does this theme shape the narrative and the theological message of the book, and how does it relate to the concept of covenant?
4. Analyze the role of Joshua as a leader in the book of Joshua, focusing on his relationship with Moses and his leadership during the conquest and division of the land. How does Joshua embody the ideals of covenant faithfulness, and how does his leadership prepare Israel for the future?
5. Discuss the parallels drawn between Joshua and Acts in the source material. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this comparative interpretation and what does it reveal about the transition between the Old and New Testaments?

## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Deuteronomy:** The fifth book of the Old Testament, presenting a series of speeches by Moses before Israel enters the Promised Land.
- **Deuteronomistic History (DtrH):** The theory that the books from Joshua to Kings form a unified historical narrative written during the exile, interpreting Israel's history through the lens of Deuteronomy's theology.
- **Documentary Hypothesis (JEDP):** The theory that the Pentateuch is composed of four main sources (J, E, D, P) written at different times and later combined.
- **Henotheism:** The belief that there are multiple gods, but one is superior or worthy of worship.
- **Monotheism:** The belief that there is only one God.
- **Polytheism:** The belief in many gods.

- **Tel el-Amarna Tablets:** A collection of clay tablets containing correspondence between Egyptian pharaohs and city-states in Canaan, dating to around 1400-1350 B.C.
- **Merneptah Stela (Israel Stela):** An inscription from the reign of the Egyptian Pharaoh Merneptah (c. 1220 B.C.) that contains the earliest known extra-biblical reference to "Israel."
- **Conquest Model:** The view that Israel invaded Canaan from outside, conquering it through military force.
- **Migration/Infiltration Model:** The view that Israel gradually settled in Canaan through a peaceful migration or infiltration of nomadic peoples.
- **Peasant Revolt Model:** The view that Israel's origins lie in an internal uprising of oppressed peasants within Canaanite society.
- **Herem:** A form of holy war and a religious ritual act of dedicating spoils to God.
- **Exile:** The period in Israelite history when the people of Judah were forced to live in Babylon after the destruction of Jerusalem.
- **Hittite Treaty Form:** Ancient treaty with a specific structure of preamble, historical prologue, stipulations, deposit/reading clause, witnesses, and blessings/curses.
- **Septuagint:** The Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible.
- **Minimalist:** A school of thought that doubts the historicity of the biblical material.
- **Habiru:** Term used in ancient texts (including the Amarna Letters) for people existing as fugitives, mercenaries, or outlaws.



## 5. FAQs on Vannoy, Exodus to Exile, Session 6B, Date of Deuteronomy, Joshua and the Conquest, [Biblicalelearning.org](http://Biblicalelearning.org) (BeL)

### FAQ on Deuteronomy and Joshua

- **What is the Documentary Hypothesis (JEDP), and how does Deuteronomy fit into it?**
- The Documentary Hypothesis, primarily formulated by Julius Wellhausen, proposes that the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible) is a composite work derived from four independent sources: J (Jehovah), E (Elohim), D (Deuteronomy), and P (Priestly). Wellhausen dated the D source, specifically the core of Deuteronomy (chapters 12-26), to the time of King Josiah's reforms in 621 B.C., based on its emphasis on the centralization of worship in Jerusalem. This dating became a cornerstone of his theory, suggesting that J and E, which allow for multiple altars, predate Deuteronomy, and P is post-exilic. This theory is influential still today.
- **What is the Deuteronomistic History (DtrH), and how does it relate to the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings?**
- Martin Noth proposed that the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings form a unified "Deuteronomistic History" (DtrH) written by an anonymous author during the exile. Noth argued that this author interpreted Israel's history through the lens of Deuteronomy's theology: obedience leads to blessing, disobedience to curse and judgment. The lecture, however, contends that while Deuteronomistic influence is present, these books are historically reliable accounts and not merely late revisionist histories shaped by Deuteronomistic theology.
- **How did Wilhelm de Wette influence the dating of Deuteronomy?**
- Wilhelm de Wette, in the early 1800s, identified Deuteronomy with the "book of the law" found during King Josiah's reign in 621 B.C. He argued that Deuteronomy was written by religious leaders in Jerusalem to centralize worship, giving them political and religious control, and attributed to Moses to gain authority. De Wette's theory significantly impacted subsequent discussions about Deuteronomy's authorship and dating.

- **How does the book of Joshua portray the establishment of Israel in the Promised Land?**
- The book of Joshua depicts the establishment of Israel in the Promised Land under Joshua's leadership. This establishment involves three main elements: the entrance into the land (crossing the Jordan River), the conquest of Canaan (through both southern and northern campaigns), and the division of the land among the tribes of Israel. The first chapter foreshadows these elements, setting the stage for the events that follow.
- **What is the significance of the land as a "gift" in the book of Joshua?**
- A recurring theme in Joshua is that the land is a gift from God to His people. This gift is not earned but bestowed by God's grace and possessed through His help. This concept emphasizes God's faithfulness to His promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses. Passages throughout Joshua highlight that God is the one who delivers the land into Israel's hands and grants them rest.
- **How is Joshua presented as a transitional figure between Moses and the subsequent history of Israel?**
- Joshua serves as a critical transitional figure, connecting the Pentateuch with the rest of the Old Testament. Looking back, the book demonstrates the fulfillment of God's promises to the patriarchs and Moses regarding the land. Looking forward, it sets the stage for Israel's life in the Promised Land, establishing the tribal territories that would largely remain intact throughout the Old Testament period. Additionally, Joshua's challenge to Israel to "serve the Lord" echoes Moses' call in Deuteronomy and foreshadows the choices Israel will face in the books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings.
- **What are the three contemporary models for understanding Israel's establishment in Canaan, and how do they differ?**
- Three contemporary models for understanding Israel's establishment in Canaan are:
- **Conquest Model:** This traditional view, based on the biblical narrative, describes a swift military invasion and conquest of Canaan by Israel. Some proponents cite archaeological evidence of destruction layers in Canaanite cities around 1250-1200 B.C., though others focus on the destruction of Jericho, Ai, and Hazor as the major cities destroyed.

- **Migration or Infiltration Model:** This model suggests a gradual and peaceful infiltration of Canaan by nomadic groups from the deserts, with limited military conflict until later.
- **Peasant Revolt Model:** This theory proposes that Israel's emergence was the result of a peasant uprising within Canaanite society, with oppressed rural populations rebelling against the city-state system. Some scholars argue that religious fervor inspired this revolt.
- **What archaeological evidence is cited in relation to the book of Joshua, and how is it interpreted?**
- Archaeological evidence sometimes cited in relation to the book of Joshua includes:
  - **The Amarna Letters:** These letters, dating from around 1400-1350 B.C., are correspondence between Egyptian pharaohs and Canaanite city-states, mentioning a group called the "Habiru" who were causing unrest. Some speculate that the Hebrews may have been part of this group, though the Habiru were more of a social class than a distinct ethnic group.
  - **The Merneptah Stela:** Dated to around 1220 B.C., this stela contains the earliest extra-biblical mention of "Israel" in Canaan.
  - **Destruction Layers in Canaanite Cities:** Excavations have revealed destruction layers in some Canaanite cities, dated to the second half of the thirteenth century B.C. The question is whether these destructions can be directly linked to the Israelite conquest or if they occurred during the later period of the Judges.