

## **Dr. Robert Vannoy, Deuteronomy, Session 2, JEDP Theory and Deuteronomy Continued Resources from NotebookLM**

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

### **1. Abstract of Vannoy, Deuteronomy, Session 2, JEDP Theory and Deuteronomy Continued, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

This lecture excerpt from Robert Vannoy's "Deuteronomy" discusses the dating of Deuteronomy and its significance for the Documentary Hypothesis (JEDP theory). The lecture centers on the debate surrounding the 621 BC dating of Deuteronomy, highlighting its role as a cornerstone for the JEDP theory's chronological framework. Various scholarly opinions and arguments for and against this dating are presented, including those supporting earlier or later dates, and those upholding a Mosaic authorship. The lecture also explores underlying assumptions within the historical-critical method, such as an evolutionary view of Israelite religion and a bias against miracles. Finally, the lecture briefly surveys alternative approaches to the authorship and date of Deuteronomy.

**2. 21 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Vannoy, Deuteronomy, Session 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 → Pentateuch → Deuteronomy).**



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on02.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Vannoy, Deuteronomy, Session 2, JEDP Theory and Deuteronomy Continued

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from the provided excerpts of Robert Vannoy's lecture on Deuteronomy:

#### **Briefing Document: Robert Vannoy on Deuteronomy and the JEDP Theory**

##### **I. Overview**

This document summarizes key points from Robert Vannoy's lecture on Deuteronomy, specifically focusing on its importance within the context of the JEDP (or Documentary) Hypothesis, a critical theory concerning the authorship and dating of the first five books of the Old Testament (the Pentateuch). The lecture emphasizes that the dating of Deuteronomy is the cornerstone of the JEDP theory, and its assumed 621 BC date is a critical fixed point on which the whole theory depends.

##### **II. Key Themes and Ideas**

- **The JEDP Theory and Law Codes:**
  - The JEDP theory posits that the Pentateuch is composed of four primary sources (J, E, D, and P) written at different times, which are associated with various law codes.
  - **J** and **E** are associated with the Covenant Code (Exodus 20-23).
  - **D** is associated with the Deuteronomistic Code (primarily the book of Deuteronomy itself).
  - **H** (Holiness Code) is similar to D and roughly contemporaneous with it, and
  - **P** is associated with the Priestly Code.
  - The chronological ordering of these sources and codes is fundamental to the theory.
  - Vannoy states, "the point is, you got that JEDP progression and in connection with it, the progression of law codes."
- **Deuteronomy as the Cornerstone:**
  - Deuteronomy's assumed dating to 621 BC, linked to King Josiah's reforms as described in 2 Kings 22, is the "keystone" or "fixed point" of the JEDP theory.

- This date is critical for establishing the relative chronology of the other sources.
- Vannoy quotes Wellhausen saying, "The historical order is all the more certain because of the literary dependence of Deuteronomy on the J laws."
- The idea is that the discovery of the law book in the temple (assumed to be Deuteronomy) led to the centralization of worship under Josiah.
- Vannoy states, "In that whole JEDP structure, Deuteronomy is the cornerstone. So that's the only fixed point, 621 B.C."
- **Evolutionary Development of Israel's Religion:**
  - The JEDP theory is based on the assumption that Israel's religion developed in an evolutionary pattern over time, moving from multiple altars of worship to a centralized worship in Jerusalem, which according to the theory was enacted as a response to the discovery of Deuteronomy.
  - Vannoy points out that, "The theory is based on the assumption that there is an evolutionary development of Israel's religious ideas."
  - The dating and content of the different law codes are thought to reflect stages of this development.
  - Wellhausen is quoted as stating, "So Deuteronomy is the legal expression of the second period of struggle and transition."
- **Centralization of Worship:**
  - The Deuteronomistic Code mandates the centralization of worship at a single sanctuary.
  - Vannoy states, "Its great idea was the centralization of worship."
  - This is seen as a development from the earlier Covenant Code (JE), which allows for multiple altars.
  - The centralization of worship in 621 B.C. is the focal point for Wellhausen.
  - Wellhausen says, "I always go back to the centralization of the cultus and deduce from it the particular divergences."
- **Dependence on Deuteronomy's Date:**
  - Many scholars have highlighted the dependence of the whole JEDP structure on the 621 BC date of Deuteronomy.

- Vannoy quotes G.W. Anderson, who states, "If there is serious uncertainty here, the entire structure of the theory is weakened and may collapse."
- H.H. Rowley points out that "it is primarily by relation to it that the other documents are dated."
- Vannoy references that Otto Eissfeldt referred to this date as a fixed point from which to work from, or as "point of Archimedes."
- G. Dahl calls the dating of Deuteronomy the "keystone of the arch of Old Testament research," and goes on to say that, "To abandon, or even seriously question this finding, won by patient and unremitting toil of several generations of scholars, would involve a readjustment of the whole critical position which is nothing short of revolutionary."
- If the 621 BC date of Deuteronomy is questioned or moved, the entire JEDP framework is challenged.
- Vannoy summarizes that in this view, "With Deuteronomy stands or falls the entire critical structure..."
- **De Wette's Arguments for the 621 BC Date**
- De Wette argued that Deuteronomy was written near the time of Josiah based on two main arguments.
- First, he believed there was no evidence of Deuteronomistic influence in the historical books prior to Josiah (with the caveat that later additions may exist). He states, "In the historical books, with the exception of texts that are clearly from a later date, there is no trace of Deuteronomy before the time of Josiah in the historical books."
- Secondly, he notes the nature of Josiah's reforms as described in 2 Kings 22 reflects the content and emphases found in Deuteronomy. He said, "The content of 2 Kings 22 confirms that Deuteronomy is in view."
- De Wette speculated that Hilkiah the priest, Huldah the prophetess, and Shaphan the scribe could be associated with the authorship of the book.
- Vannoy emphasizes that this leads to the idea of a "pious fraud," where Deuteronomy was presented as ancient Mosaic law when it was written at the time of Josiah.

- **Challenges to the 621 BC Date:**

- Vannoy notes that the 621 BC dating of Deuteronomy is not universally accepted, even among critical scholars.
- He notes some scholars have proposed a post-exilic date. Some scholars have proposed an earlier date, moving it back to the monarchical period or even before.
- He notes there are also people who defend a mosaic date for the text.
- The articles in the 1928 JBL volume (Dahl, Bewer, Patton) illustrate the ongoing debate about the dating of Deuteronomy.
- The title of the articles are somewhat deceptive, as all three authors accepted the 621 date, but they examined the arguments for earlier and later dates, ultimately returning to 621.

- **The Historical Reliability of 2 Kings 22-23:**

- The theory that Deuteronomy spurred the reforms in 2 Kings 22-23 assumes the historicity of those texts.
- Vannoy quotes Dahl saying, "The historicity of these chapters is seriously challenged by a number of scholars."
- Some scholars question the historicity of this account and thus challenge the connection between Josiah's reforms and the book of Deuteronomy.
- However, some critical scholars, such as Dahl, argue for the historicity of 2 Kings 22-23 as being historically accurate and necessary for supporting the assumed 621 BC dating. He says that "The reform of King Josiah seems better attested than most. The balance of probability seems to be decidedly in favor of a general historicity of 2 Kings 22."

- **Underlying Assumptions:**

- The lecture reveals the reliance on a naturalistic methodology that excludes divine intervention and the miraculous.
- Vannoy states, "That historical-critical method, that they're committed to is a method, that from the outset would exclude divine interventions and miraculous things of that sort."

- The evolutionary view of religious development predisposes scholars to reject the idea that sophisticated religious ideas were present early in Israel's history.
- He notes that scholars reject early dates for sophisticated ideas, for example, stating, "...when you look at the Pentateuch and you find these magnificent, sophisticated God concepts, i.e. Genesis 1, 'In the beginning, God created heaven and earth,' that couldn't possibly have existed in the early date of Israel. Such an elevated God concept that you find there must be late."

### **III. Conclusion**

Vannoy's lecture highlights the centrality of Deuteronomy's dating within the JEDP theory. The assumed 621 BC date, linked to Josiah's reforms, serves as a crucial point for dating the other source documents of the Pentateuch. However, this date is not without challenge, and ongoing debates persist even among critical scholars. The underlying assumptions of the evolutionary perspective and the exclusion of the miraculous also contribute to the current understanding of the JEDP theory. Vannoy emphasizes that if this date is undermined, "you've undermined, you see, this whole elaborate critical theory, and these people readily admit that." The lecture concludes with a discussion of the various approaches that question and challenge the classic Wellhausen position.

This briefing document should serve as a comprehensive overview of the main themes and ideas presented in the excerpts from Robert Vannoy's lecture on Deuteronomy.

## 4. Study Guide: Vannoy, Deuteronomy, Session 2, JEDP Theory and Deuteronomy Continued

### Deuteronomy: A Study Guide

#### Quiz

**Instructions:** Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. What is the significance of the date 621 B.C. in the context of the JEDP theory?
2. According to Wellhausen, how does the Deuteronomic code relate to the Covenant Code found in Exodus?
3. How does the concept of centralization of worship relate to the book of Deuteronomy according to the Wellhausen theory?
4. What is meant by the term "Archimedean point" in relation to the dating of Deuteronomy?
5. According to Driver, how does Deuteronomy relate to the JE codes and the Holiness Code?
6. What is the "pious fraud" concept associated with the Wellhausen view of Deuteronomy's origin?
7. What are de Wette's two primary arguments for dating Deuteronomy around 621 B.C.?
8. Why do some critical scholars challenge the historicity of 2 Kings 22 and 23?
9. How does the "history of religions" perspective influence the dating of the Pentateuch?
10. How does the anti-miracle bias of the historical-critical method impact the dating of texts?

#### Quiz Answer Key

1. 621 B.C. is crucial because it is the proposed date of the law book discovered in the temple during Josiah's reign, which Wellhausen identifies as Deuteronomy. This date serves as the fixed point by which the other documents in the Pentateuch (J, E, and P) are chronologically arranged.

2. Wellhausen asserts that the Deuteronomistic Code (D), which promotes centralized worship, is a later development from the Covenant Code (JE), which allows for multiple altars and worship centers. D is a second period legal expression dependent on the J laws.
3. The Wellhausen theory suggests that the concept of centralized worship, a key theme in Deuteronomy, was a novel idea introduced around the time of Josiah's reforms (621 BC). This centralization was a break from earlier practices outlined in the Covenant Code.
4. The "Archimedean point," as described by Eissfeldt, refers to the 621 B.C. date for Deuteronomy's origin, which acts as a fixed reference point for dating the other parts of the Pentateuch. It's the critical, fixed point on which the entire structure of the dating of the Pentateuch rests.
5. Driver sees Deuteronomy as an expansion of the laws in the JE sources, and he notes that it has parallels to the Holiness Code (H), and allusions to laws later codified in the Priestly Code (P). In essence, it stands in an intermediary position to all the sources.
6. The "pious fraud" concept suggests that Deuteronomy wasn't actually found but was intentionally written and presented as ancient to provide it with authority, attributed to Mosaic origin, when it was actually written during or around the time of King Josiah's reforms.
7. De Wette argued that there is no trace of Deuteronomistic influence in the historical books before the time of Josiah, except for texts later identified as interpolations. He also argued that the nature of Josiah's reform described in 2 Kings 22 reflects the central emphases of Deuteronomy.
8. Some scholars challenge the historicity of 2 Kings 22 and 23 because they view it as a theological construct rather than accurate history. This questioning can undermine the historical link between Josiah's reforms and the dating of Deuteronomy.
9. The "history of religions" perspective posits an evolutionary development of religious thought, leading to the conclusion that sophisticated theological concepts in the Pentateuch are necessarily later developments in the development of Israel's religion and could not have originated in earlier periods.
10. The anti-miracle bias, inherent in the historical-critical method, leads scholars to disregard texts that contain divine intervention or supernatural events. This bias

affects the dating of texts by assuming they must be written later, when such ideas were believed to have developed, rather than originating from a time where supernatural claims are more common.

## Essay Questions

1. Analyze the significance of the dating of Deuteronomy within the JEDP theory. How does this dating act as a "keystone" or "Archimedean point"? What implications does a potential misdating have on the whole theory?
2. Compare and contrast the arguments for and against the traditional Wellhausen view of Deuteronomy's origin, including the "pious fraud" concept and alternative views presented by scholars mentioned in the text.
3. Discuss the role of the historical-critical method in the dating of the Pentateuch. How does the method's assumptions, such as the "analogy of history" and "anti-miracle bias," influence conclusions about the dates of biblical texts?
4. Examine the relationship between Deuteronomy and the other law codes in the Pentateuch (JE, Holiness Code, and Priestly Code) according to both traditional and critical scholarship. What does this relationship reveal about the development of Israelite religious ideas and practices?
5. Explore the debates surrounding the historicity of 2 Kings 22 and 23. How do these debates impact the discussion of the date and origin of Deuteronomy? How are the issues of historical reliability and theological interpretation related in these discussions?

## Glossary of Key Terms

**JEDP Theory:** A theory that proposes that the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament) was compiled from four distinct source documents: J (Yahwist), E (Elohist), D (Deuteronomist), and P (Priestly).

**Covenant Code:** A law code found in Exodus 20-23, associated with the JE documents, which allows for multiple worship centers.

**Deuteronomic Code:** A law code found primarily in the book of Deuteronomy, associated with the D document, which promotes the centralization of worship in a single sanctuary.

**Holiness Code:** A collection of laws, associated with the H source, dealing with ritual purity and holiness, believed to have originated around the same time as the D source.

**Priestly Code:** A set of laws, associated with the P source, focused on ritual and cultic matters, typically placed later in the JEDP progression.

**Centralization of Worship:** The idea that all legitimate worship should take place in a single, designated sanctuary, which is a central theme in the book of Deuteronomy.

**Archimedean Point:** A term used by Eissfeldt to describe the fixed date of 621 B.C. associated with the discovery of the law book in Josiah's time, which serves as the basis for dating other parts of the Pentateuch.

**Pious Fraud:** The concept that Deuteronomy was deliberately composed and presented as ancient to give it authority, rather than being a genuine historical document from the time of Moses.

**Historical-Critical Method:** A method of biblical study that seeks to understand texts in their historical and cultural contexts, often excluding supernatural or miraculous explanations.

**Analogy of History:** A principle within the historical-critical method that argues for interpreting past events based on the limits of present-day human experience and natural causes, therefore often disregarding supernatural claims.

**Post-Exilic:** Referring to the period after the Babylonian exile (586 BC), when some scholars believe certain biblical texts were written or edited.

**Monarchal Period:** The period in Israel's history when it was ruled by kings.

**Pre-Monarchal Period:** The period in Israel's history before the establishment of the monarchy.

## 5. FAQs on Vannoy, Deuteronomy, Session 2, JEDP Theory and Deuteronomy Continued, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Okay, here's an 8-question FAQ based on the provided source, formatted with markdown:

### FAQ on Deuteronomy and the JEDP Theory

- **What is the JEDP theory, and what role does Deuteronomy play within it?**
- The JEDP theory proposes that the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament) is composed of four distinct sources: J (Yahwist), E (Elohist), D (Deuteronomist), and P (Priestly). Each source is believed to have been written at different times and reflects different theological perspectives. Deuteronomy, or the "D" source, is considered a cornerstone of the JEDP theory because it's thought to have a relatively fixed date of origin around 621 BC during the time of King Josiah, based on the biblical account of a law book being found in the Temple. This date serves as a crucial anchor for dating the other sources; they are dated in relation to Deuteronomy, either as before or after it.
- **Why is the dating of Deuteronomy so critical to the JEDP theory?**
- The dating of Deuteronomy to around 621 BC is foundational for the entire JEDP framework. This date is used to establish a relative chronology of the other sources. If the dating of Deuteronomy is incorrect, or if it's not linked to 621 BC and Josiah's reforms, the whole structure of the JEDP theory would be weakened or even collapse. As some scholars have said, Deuteronomy is the "keystone of the arch," the "Archimedean point," or the "meridian of Greenwich" for Old Testament research within the JEDP framework. The whole framework essentially hinges on this particular dating.

- **What is the prevailing view within the JEDP theory regarding the relationship between Deuteronomy and earlier legal codes?**
- According to the JEDP theory, Deuteronomy is considered an expansion and revision of earlier legal codes, particularly the Covenant Code found in Exodus (associated with the JE source). It is seen as an evolved code that, among other things, emphasizes the centralization of worship, and thus different from the earlier codes that allow for multiplicity of altars and worship centers. It also shows parallels with the Holiness Code. It is believed that Deuteronomy is not the original law but represents a later development of Israel's religious ideas and practices.
- **What is the connection between the book of Deuteronomy and King Josiah's reforms in 2 Kings 22?**
- The JEDP theory posits that the "book of the law" discovered during Josiah's reign (as described in 2 Kings 22) was none other than the book of Deuteronomy. This discovery is credited with sparking the religious reforms led by Josiah, particularly the centralization of worship in Jerusalem. This alleged historical linkage between the discovery and subsequent reforms is the main reason behind the critical date of 621 BC. The reforms reflect the core teachings and emphases found in Deuteronomy, making the connection seem self-evident.
- **What are the main arguments used to support the 621 BC dating of Deuteronomy?**
- The main arguments supporting the 621 BC date of Deuteronomy are: 1) the alleged absence of Deuteronomistic influence in historical books prior to the time of Josiah; 2) the content of 2 Kings 22 which is seen as confirming that Deuteronomy is in view because it reflects the teachings in Deuteronomy. Essentially, it is argued that Deuteronomy was either written during Josiah's time or shortly before it and then found as described in 2 Kings. It is also often assumed that this was some kind of "pious fraud" to give authority to the reforms.

- **What are some of the challenges to the traditional JEDP view and the 621 BC date for Deuteronomy?**
- The traditional Wellhausen/JEDP position, while dominant for a long time, has faced challenges. Some scholars have advocated for: 1) a post-exilic date for Deuteronomy, pushing its origins later; 2) an earlier date than 621 BC but still within the monarchical period, suggesting it may have been written during the time of Hezekiah or Manasseh and lost until Josiah's time; 3) a pre-monarchical date, though not Mosaic; 4) a Mosaic date, moving authorship back to the time of Moses as claimed within the book itself. These challenges highlight that the 621 BC date is not universally accepted, even among critical scholars.
- **What is the significance of the historicity of the narrative in 2 Kings 22 and 23 for the dating of Deuteronomy?**
- The traditional argument that Deuteronomy was the law book found in the time of Josiah (621 BC) relies heavily on the assumption that the narrative in 2 Kings 22 and 23 is historically reliable. This narrative details the discovery of the law book and Josiah's subsequent reforms. If the historicity of this account is challenged, the strong link between Deuteronomy and the Josianic era is weakened, thus weakening a crucial piece of the argument for the 621 date. Ironically, the same scholars that suggest that Deuteronomy is a "pious fraud" rely heavily on the historical reliability of 2 Kings 22-23 for this theory to work.
- **What is the underlying philosophical assumption that shapes the JEDP approach to dating Deuteronomy and other texts?**
- The JEDP theory is fundamentally shaped by the assumption that Israel's religion evolved over time in a manner that is similar to other ancient religions. This approach rejects divine intervention and is based on the historical-critical method, which often imposes a naturalistic worldview onto the biblical text. That approach tends to assume a natural development and progression of religious ideas from simple to complex, and considers any claim of miracles or divine interventions as mythical or later additions. Therefore, a view of a sophisticated text like Deuteronomy dating from the time of Moses is seen as anachronistic and historically improbable.