

## **Dr. Robert Vannoy, Deuteronomy, Session 11, Various Scholars and Various Dates for Deut. Resources from NotebookLM**

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

### **1. Abstract of Vannoy, Deuteronomy, Session 11, Various Scholars and Various Dates for Deut., Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

This lecture excerpt discusses scholarly debates surrounding the authorship and dating of Deuteronomy. Several scholars argued for a post-exilic date, citing practical and theological reasons why Deuteronomy's laws wouldn't have been enforceable earlier. Conversely, other scholars proposed pre-exilic dates, ranging from the time of Manasseh to the tenth century BCE, emphasizing different aspects of the text and contesting the necessity of centralized worship in Deuteronomy. A few scholars even suggested a pre-monarchic, non-Mosaic origin for Deuteronomy, attributing it to the era of Samuel. Finally, the existence of those who maintain a traditional Mosaic authorship is acknowledged.

**2. 22 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Vannoy, Deuteronomy, Session 11 – 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).**



**Vannoy\_Deut\_Sessi  
on11.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Vannoy, Deuteronomy, Session 11, Various Scholars and Various Dates for Deut.

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from the provided lecture notes on the dating of Deuteronomy:

#### Briefing Document: Dating the Book of Deuteronomy

##### Introduction:

This document reviews the key arguments and scholarly perspectives on the dating of the Book of Deuteronomy, as presented in Robert Vannoy's Lecture 11. The lecture explores various proposed dates for the composition of Deuteronomy, ranging from pre-monarchic to post-exilic times, and evaluates the evidence and reasoning behind each view. The lecture emphasizes that the dating of Deuteronomy is crucial because it forms a cornerstone of the JEDP (or documentary) hypothesis regarding the authorship of the Pentateuch.

##### Key Themes and Arguments:

#### 1. Post-Exilic Dating of Deuteronomy

- **Kennett (Time of Haggai/Zechariah):** Argued that Deuteronomy could not have been written during the reigns of Hezekiah, Manasseh, or Josiah, primarily due to impracticality.
- Centralization of worship, with all Israel attending a central sanctuary annually, would have been unfeasible in earlier times but workable in the post-exilic community with its smaller population.
- Enforcement of harsh laws against idolatry (Deuteronomy 13) would have caused civil war in the pre-exilic period due to widespread idolatry.
- The law of the king (Deuteronomy 17) suggests a time when kingship was a future possibility, not an established reality.
- **Quote:** "Any attempt to carry out the laws of Deuteronomy 13 would have meant civil war."
- **Quote:** "The law of the king..." "could not have been written when a king was on the throne. But only, 'when there is a probability that one would be elected.'"
- **Holscher (Around 500 BC):** Acknowledged the historicity of II Kings 22 (Josiah's reform) but denied that Josiah's law book was Deuteronomy.

- Proposed that Deuteronomy was a post-exilic program for restoring Israel, originating in priestly circles in Jerusalem around 500 BC.
- The requirement for the whole family to go to Jerusalem (Deuteronomy 16) was deemed inoperable in pre-exilic times.
- Josiah would not have proclaimed a law (Deuteronomy 17) that limited his own power.
- The Jewish community at Elephantine, Egypt, seemed unaware of the centralization of worship, indicating that Deuteronomy did not yet exist.
- **Quote:** "He proposed that Deuteronomy was not a program for reform, but the wishful thinking of unrealistic post-exilic dreamers."
- **Berry (Post-Exilic, influenced by Holiness Code):** Identified the law book of Josiah as the Holiness Code (Leviticus 17-26) and proposed it influenced Deuteronomy, not vice versa.
- Suggested that the law book read by Ezra in the post-exilic period might have been Deuteronomy.
- This view was opposed by Fried.

#### 1. **Pre-621 BC Monarchic Dating of Deuteronomy**

- **Ewald (Time of Manasseh):** Placed the origin of Deuteronomy in the time of Manasseh, approximately 20 years before Josiah's reform.
- **Westphal (Time of Hezekiah):** Argued that only Deuteronomy could have inspired Hezekiah's reforms, placing its origin in the time of Hezekiah and Isaiah, roughly 100 years before Josiah.
- **Ostriker (10th Century):** Pushed the date back to the 10th Century.
- Stated that Josiah's reforms focused on the purification of worship (cultus reinheit) rather than centralization (cultus einheit).
- Argued Josiah's reforms were politically motivated, aimed at freeing Israel from Assyrian dominance, and were not primarily concerned with the centralization of the cult.
- Interpreted Deuteronomy 12:14 to allow for multiple sanctuaries, opposing polytheism, not necessarily centralization.

- **Quote:** "Deuteronomy does not direct itself against multiplicity of sanctuaries, but against polytheism."
- **Quote:** "in the place which the Lord, your God shall choose and in of your tribes," he says that's better translated, "in any place which the Lord shall choose in any of your tribes."
- **Welch (Time of Samuel/8th Century):** Argued that the main emphasis of Deuteronomy was on the character of worship sites, not their number.
- Concluded Deuteronomy originated in Northern Israel from the time of Samuel but reached its present form in the 8th century.
- **Von Rad (Long Development, Rooted in Shechem):** Retained the idea that Deuteronomy was Josiah's law book but argued it was the product of a long and complex development.
- Saw Deuteronomy as an organic whole with a distinctive form.
- Believed its roots were in the cultic tradition of the Yahweh amphictyony at Shechem, a confederation of political units around a central religious shrine.
- Von Rad's view suggests that the final form was shaped by Levites and that the book had a cultic liturgy.
- Estimated the final form of Deuteronomy was in the century before 621, around 721 BC.
- **Quote:** "Deuteronomy makes its appearance as a finished, mature, beautifully proportioned, theologically clear work... the final product of a long and extremely complex development."
- **Quote:** "Obviously from the point of view of form criticism, no one would accept any such picture of the origins of Deuteronomy. It is precluded by a recognition of the fact that Deuteronomy is in form an organic whole."
- **Amphictyony:** A confederation of political units around a central religious shrine. Von Rad argued that Israel's earliest organization was based on this, centered at Shechem.

### 1. **Pre-Monarchic Date of Deuteronomy but Non-Mosaic**

- **Robertson (Time of Samuel):** Proposed that decentralized religious communities with their own traditions and laws developed in early Israel.
- Under Samuel's leadership, these traditions were unified and codified into Deuteronomy for the purposes of establishing religious unity.
- The union of tribes made centralization of worship desirable and possible.
- **Brinker (Influence of Sanctuaries/Time of Samuel):** Similar to Robertson, argued that Samuel was responsible for Deuteronomy.
- Emphasized purification of worship over centralization, rejecting synchronism with idolatry.

### 1. **Mosaic Date:**

- While the lecture does not focus on advocating for the Mosaic view, it mentions that there are modern scholars who argue for a Mosaic date for Deuteronomy, bringing new perspectives to the debate.

### **Critiques of Different Views:**

- **Patton's Critique of Holscher:** Argued that Josiah's reforms in II Kings conform to Deuteronomy.
- Stated that the historical reliability of II Kings 22 is difficult to question.
- Criticized Holscher's claims about later additions to II Kings 23.
- Counters the idea that centralization was impractical, saying it would also have been so in post-exilic times.
- The lecture also notes that Holscher did not attempt to discover what the "law book of Josiah" actually was if it wasn't Deuteronomy. Berry attempted to do this, claiming it to be the Holiness Code.

**Conclusion:**

The lecture reveals that the dating of Deuteronomy is a complex and much-debated topic, with scholars holding differing views based on their interpretations of biblical texts and historical evidence. The dating has huge implications for the JEDP source theory. Some scholars argue for a late, post-exilic date, citing the practical difficulties of enforcing Deuteronomy's laws in pre-exilic Israel and the apparent lack of knowledge of its laws among some Jewish communities. Others argue for pre-exilic dates during the monarchy, linking it to the reforms of Hezekiah or Josiah. Still others believe its foundations go as far back as to the time of Samuel, or earlier with roots in cultic observances at Shechem. This topic remains a subject of ongoing scholarly debate. The lecture emphasizes the importance of considering the form and structure of Deuteronomy in order to understand its development, particularly highlighting the work of Von Rad.

This briefing document provides a thorough summary of the main arguments and key points made in the lecture.

## 4. Study Guide: Vannoy, Deuteronomy, Session 11, Various Scholars and Various Dates for Deut.

### Deuteronomy: A Study Guide

#### Quiz

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

1. According to R.H. Kennett, why was it impractical for Deuteronomy to have originated during the reigns of Hezekiah, Manasseh, or Josiah?
2. What was G. Holscher's main argument against identifying Josiah's law book with Deuteronomy?
3. How does Patton respond to Holscher's argument that the Elephantine papyri suggest Deuteronomy was not yet promulgated in the 5th century BCE?
4. How does G.R. Berry propose the relationship between the Holiness Code (Leviticus 17-26) and Deuteronomy?
5. What is Heinrich Ewald's view on the date of Deuteronomy's origin?
6. According to T.H. Ostriker, what kind of reform was Josiah attempting, and how does this relate to Deuteronomy?
7. How does Adam Welch understand the emphasis of Deuteronomy regarding places of worship?
8. According to Gerhard von Rad, what is the key to understanding the form of Deuteronomy?
9. How does Robertson explain the origin of Deuteronomy in relation to Samuel and the differing legal traditions at various sanctuaries?
10. What is the "amphictyony" and what role does it play in Von Rad's understanding of Deuteronomy's origins?

#### Quiz Answer Key

1. Kennett argued that Deuteronomy's requirement of annual gatherings at a central sanctuary would have been impractical due to the large population during those times and that the strict penalties for false worship would have been impossible to enforce. He also noted that Deuteronomy's law of the king sounds like it's

describing the establishment of a king, rather than being written when a king was already on the throne.

2. Holscher argued that Deuteronomy was a post-exilic program for restoration rather than an actual law book used by Josiah, and that it's unlikely Josiah would willingly accept the limitations on royal authority contained in Deuteronomy 17. He also argued that the lack of knowledge of centralized worship in the Elephantine papyri suggested Deuteronomy was not yet in existence during that time.
3. Patton countered Holscher's claim by arguing that the existence of illegitimate cultic practices at Elephantine after the time of Josiah demonstrates that such practices quickly returned, rather than proving that Deuteronomy was unknown during that time. He also points out that the idea of centralized worship was impractical in any historical period.
4. Berry proposed that the Holiness Code influenced the writing of Deuteronomy rather than the other way around. He suggests that the book of the law read by Ezra in post-exilic times may have been the book of Deuteronomy.
5. Ewald placed the origin of Deuteronomy in the time of King Manasseh, which is around twenty years prior to the discovery of the law book in the time of Josiah. This is still during the monarchic period, but not associated with Josiah.
6. Ostriker believed Josiah's reform was primarily a political act to free Israel from Assyrian dominance and a move towards cultic purity rather than cultic centralization. He argued that Deuteronomy opposes polytheism, not the existence of multiple sanctuaries.
7. Welch argued that Deuteronomy is focused on the character of the places of worship and that the emphasis was not on centralizing the number of sanctuaries, but the character of the worship conducted there. He placed its origin in Northern Israel from the time of Samuel.
8. Von Rad emphasizes the importance of understanding Deuteronomy's form as a unified and organic whole, the result of a long process of development, possibly going back to the traditions of a covenant renewal festival at Shechem. He argued the Levites played a key role in its development.
9. Robertson proposed that Deuteronomy was compiled under Samuel's guidance, as a way to unify different legal traditions of various sanctuaries that had



developed after settlement in Palestine. He suggested the unification under a king made this centralization of law and worship both desirable and possible.

10. The amphictyony is a confederation of political units around a central religious shrine or deity. Von Rad used this concept to suggest that Deuteronomy originated in the traditions of a Yahweh amphictyony at Shechem, later reintroduced as a restoration movement, with the Levites preserving and elaborating it.

## **Essay Questions**

1. Compare and contrast the arguments for a pre-exilic vs. post-exilic dating of Deuteronomy, addressing specific scholars and their reasoning.
2. Discuss the significance of the “centralization of worship” debate in dating Deuteronomy, using specific examples from the scholars presented in the lecture.
3. Analyze Von Rad’s approach to the dating and form of Deuteronomy, and evaluate the importance of his amphictyony theory.
4. Evaluate the claim that Deuteronomy’s law of the king (Deuteronomy 17) better fits a time where a king was being established versus a time where a king was already ruling.
5. Discuss the relationship between Josiah’s reform as presented in 2 Kings and the content of Deuteronomy, drawing on various scholars' perspectives.

## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Post-Exilic:** Refers to the period after the Babylonian exile (586 BCE), when the Israelites returned to their homeland.
- **Pre-Exilic:** Refers to the period before the Babylonian exile (586 BCE).
- **Monarchic:** Relating to the period of kings in Israel's history.
- **Mosaic Date:** A traditional view that ascribes authorship of the Pentateuch to Moses.
- **Decalogue:** The Ten Commandments.
- **Holiness Code (H):** Refers to Leviticus 17-26, characterized by its emphasis on holiness.
- **Elephantine Papyri:** Ancient Jewish papyri found in Elephantine, Egypt, that provide insight into Jewish practices outside of Jerusalem in the 5th century BCE.
- **JEDP Source Theory:** A theory that posits that the Pentateuch is composed of four major sources: J (Yahwist), E (Elohist), D (Deuteronomist), and P (Priestly).
- **Cultus Einheit:** Refers to cultic unity, the idea that there should be a single center of worship.
- **Cultus Reinheit:** Refers to cultic purity, the idea that worship should be free of foreign influence.
- **Amphictyony:** A confederation of political units organized around a central religious shrine.
- **Form Criticism:** A method of biblical interpretation that analyzes literary forms and genres to understand their origin and purpose.
- **Covenant Renewal:** The act of reaffirming or renewing a covenantal relationship.
- **Syncretism:** The merging of different religious beliefs or practices.

## 5. FAQs on Vannoy, Deuteronomy, Session 11, Various Scholars and Various Dates for Deut., Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

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

### FAQ on the Dating and Origins of Deuteronomy

- **What are some of the main arguments for a post-exilic date for the Book of Deuteronomy?**
- Several scholars, such as Kennett, Holscher, and Berry, argue for a post-exilic date, placing Deuteronomy's composition after the Babylonian exile (around 500 BCE). Kennett argued that the strict requirements for centralized worship and the severe penalties for false worship detailed in Deuteronomy would have been impractical to enforce during the monarchic period of Hezekiah, Manasseh, or Josiah, but more feasible in the smaller, post-exilic community. Holscher believed Deuteronomy was a program for restoration of Israel after exile, stemming from priestly circles in Jerusalem. He pointed to the Elephantine papyri, which suggest that a Jewish community in Egypt was unfamiliar with the centralization of worship, indicating that the concept hadn't been widely established by the 5th century BCE. Berry suggested that the Holiness Code in Leviticus influenced Deuteronomy, pushing its composition later, and that the law book read by Ezra might have been Deuteronomy itself.
- **Why do some scholars argue that the law book discovered during Josiah's reign was not Deuteronomy?**

Holscher argued that while the historical narrative of King Josiah's reform in 2 Kings 22 is generally reliable, the law book found could not have been Deuteronomy. He suggests that Deuteronomy is a post-exilic text, and that Josiah's actions were not based on the requirements of Deuteronomy. Holscher posited that Josiah's actions were more about *purification* of worship rather than *centralization*. Holscher noted that Deuteronomy 17 places restrictions on the king, which he thought unlikely to be imposed by a king already in power, as Josiah was.

- **What is the "Wellhausian" standpoint, and how does it relate to the dating of Deuteronomy?**
- The Wellhausian theory posits that the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible) is the result of a long process of development from four major sources, J, E, D, and P, and argues for Deuteronomy's composition late in Israel's history. The date of Deuteronomy is seen as key to this theory. The Wellhausian view generally aligns with the idea that Deuteronomy was written around the time of Josiah (621 BCE), serving as the basis of his religious reforms. Scholars like Patton defend this general timeline, arguing that the events described in II Kings 22-23 closely mirror the laws and principles in Deuteronomy.
- **What is the significance of the "centralization of worship" in the discussion about Deuteronomy's date?**
- The emphasis on centralization of worship, where sacrifices and religious activities are to be conducted in one designated sanctuary, is a crucial point in dating Deuteronomy. Scholars debating its origins often disagree on whether this is a primary concern of the book, as well as whether it would have been feasible during different periods. Many post-exilic theories revolve around the idea that the centralization requirements of Deuteronomy would not have been practical until the smaller post-exilic community, while earlier dates see the book as being more about *purification* from foreign idolatrous practices, rather than centralization.
- **What alternative viewpoints exist for dating Deuteronomy to an earlier monarchic period?**
- Several scholars, like Ewald, Westphal, and Ostriker, argue for dating Deuteronomy to the monarchic period prior to Josiah's reign. Ewald placed it in the time of Manasseh, Westphal in the time of Hezekiah, and Ostriker as early as the 10th century. Ostriker, in particular, contended that the book's emphasis was against polytheism rather than on centralized worship, making it relevant even before the establishment of a single sanctuary. Welch argued that Deuteronomy arose in northern Israel around the time of Samuel, but was formalized in the 8th century.

- **What is the amphictyony theory proposed by Von Rad, and how does it relate to Deuteronomy's origins?**
- Von Rad uses a "form-critical approach," proposing that Deuteronomy is the culmination of a long process of development rooted in an ancient Israelite "amphictyony." An amphictyony is a confederation of political units that center around a religious shrine. Von Rad suggests that the core of Deuteronomy evolved from a covenant renewal ceremony that occurred periodically at Shechem, possibly going back to the time of Joshua. He proposes that Levites were the ones who preserved and developed the cultic material over time. He sees the structure of the book mirroring these renewal ceremonies.
- **How do scholars arguing for a pre-monarchic date, like Robertson and Brinker, explain the origin of Deuteronomy?**

Robertson and Brinker argue for a pre-monarchic origin of Deuteronomy, placing its origin in the time of Samuel. They propose that after the initial settlement in Palestine, law traditions developed at different sanctuaries and that Samuel compiled and standardized them under the early monarchy to promote religious unity. Like Ostriker and Welch, they argue the key is not centralization, but purification of worship from idolatrous influences. They argue for a time of diverse sanctuaries before a need for unification was seen under the early monarchy.

- **How does the debate about Deuteronomy's date impact our understanding of the Old Testament?**
- The dating of Deuteronomy is crucial because it affects the broader understanding of the Old Testament, especially the development of Israel's religious and political institutions. If Deuteronomy is late, as the post-exilic theory suggests, then it implies that key aspects of Israelite law and identity were shaped after the exile, rather than originating with Moses as tradition holds. If the book is from the monarchic era, it impacts the understanding of Israel's religious development during that time. Dating also affects the scholarly JEDP hypothesis that attempts to explain the authorship of the Pentateuch. A different date of Deuteronomy undermines the source theory, calling into question how the Pentateuch came to be. Ultimately the dating of Deuteronomy influences how we understand the historicity, development, and authority of the Hebrew Bible.