

Review of: "Deuteronomic Redaction and the Evolution of the Decalogues in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Review of "Deuteronomic Redaction and the Evolution of the Decalogues in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5 by Robert Gnuse

I believe this article by Robert Gnuse makes a significant contribution to understanding the possible redaction and evolution of the different versions of the Decalogue in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5. He provides a fine summary of the different theories of the redaction history from the nineteenth century until recent times. This summary is very useful for those who do not have access to these sources or who are not familiar with them. I am impressed by the scholarly reserve of the author. He recognizes that these different theories are hypothetical, speculative, and tenuous. I don't believe many people know about the early signs of a monthly as opposed to a weekly Sabbath; so I am glad to see this mentioned. I also appreciate Gnuse's careful attention to the variation of Hebrew words used in the different versions. I am likewise grateful that the author notes that in Deuteronomy 5 the neighbor's wife is considered distinct from the neighbor's property. The author is likewise to be praised for noting the different reasons for the Sabbath rest in Exodus and Deuteronomy. Some scholars might argue that—since the redaction history is so speculative—there's no value in discussing these variations. I disagree. I think an examination of such variations is important for appreciating the differences between the priestly and prophetic motivations behind the specific commandments. My only suggestion would be that more attention should be given to the significance of these variations for believers today, whether Jewish or Christian.

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