BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION AND DOCTRINAL FORMULATION IN THE REFORMED TRADITION

ESSAYS IN HONOR OF JAMES DE JONG

EDITED BY
ARIE C. LEDER &
RICHARD A. MULLER

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Preface

All the essays that follow are presented to honor the life and work of James A. De Jong as teacher, scholar, and valued colleague. In his teaching, research, and service as president of Calvin Theological Seminary, Jim has made significant contributions to the understanding of Reformed theology whether in his own writings, his encouragement of other scholars, his support of the translation of major works of Reformed theology, or in his vision for advanced seminary study at the PhD level. The appreciation and deep respect that the contributors share for Jim is well expressed in Calvin Van Reken's introductory essay.

Although the essays approach the broad topic of biblical interpretation and doctrinal formulation from rather varied perspectives, all relate to aspects of the work that has been done and continues to be required for a full-orbed analysis of Reformed thought as it developed in and after the era of the Reformation. The essays examine Calvin's influential understanding of the teaching office in the church and its impact on later Reformed thought as well as the issues in biblical interpretation and doctrinal formulation in a diverse group of thinkers—notably, Calvin, Vermigli, Beza, Ainsworth, à Lapide, Flavel, Klinkenberg, and Hoeksema—illustrating issues of style, context, development, and debate from the sixteenth to the twentieth century. Readers will notice that à Lapide was Roman Catholic and that his work well illustrates the progress of precritical exegesis in the seventeenth century, offering a point of comparison and contrast with the work of Ainsworth, Flavel, and Klinkenberg. Two other essays take up debates in Reformed thought, namely, the creedal article of Christ's descent into hell and the problem of free choice and illustrate paths taken by Reformed exegetes and theologians as they moved from biblical exegesis to doctrinal formulation.

An understanding of biblical interpretation and doctrinal formulation in Reformation and post-Reformation Reformed circles can hardly find a better starting point than the teaching office of the church. Joel Beeke's essay explores this issue with reference to Calvin and the later Dutch Reformed tradition, noting both the importance of the office to the birth and early development of the

Reformed churches and the sometimes ambiguous place of the teaching office in modern Reformed circles. Calvin's efforts to develop and reinforce the curriculum at the Genevan Collège de Rive and to institutionalize the office of teacher in the Ecclesiastical Ordinances of 1541 emphasized the importance of supporting the ongoing task of instructing the church in its doctrines, specifically those doctrines grounded on the interpretation of the Old and New Testaments. As Beeke points out, Calvin therefore understood the teaching office as "an integral part of the church's ministry" both for the education of pastors and for the general instruction of the church. Early assemblies representative of the Reformed movement in the Low Countries, like the Synod of Wesel (1568), followed fairly closely on the Genevan model and identified the office of teacher, or "doctor," as a significant church office, between that of preacher and elder. Here, moreover, the office of doctor was developed to include weekly expository gatherings, doctrinal examination of preachers, catechetical instruction, and synodical duties. At the Synod of Middelburg (1581) it was explicitly stated that the office of doctor included the duty to oppose doctrinal error. These understandings were maintained and developed at the Synod of Dort (1618–1619). As Beeke indicates, the synod in no way diminished the importance of the teaching office, as has sometimes been claimed; rather, the gradual weakening of the office began later in the seventeenth century and continued through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the context of this volume and the studies that follow, Beeke's conclusions point to the close connections between the role of the teacher or professor of theology, the tasks of exegesis, biblical instruction, doctrinal formulation, and confessional identity in the early modern era.

My own contribution to the volume, an examination of the style of Calvin's series of published sermons on Genesis, deals with some of the more significant differences between Calvin's work as a preacher and his work as a commentator. Although further examination would be required before applying its conclusions generally to Calvin's sermons, the essay indicates a more doctrinally expansive style in the sermons, supported by a far wider gathering of collateral texts from other places in Scripture, and presented in a rhetorical mode quite different from that of the commentaries. Whereas at least one previous study argued little rhetoric in the sermons, the present essay demonstrates the presence of major rhetorical considerations couched in plainer, simpler, more direct, and frequently more pointed grammatical constructions than can be found in the commentaries. Arguably, the rhetoric of Calvin's sermons was adapted to his sense of the requirements of this office as teacher in the pulpit as distinct from the academy.

Al Wolters's essay on Calvin's lectures on Zechariah is less a study of what

Calvin thought than an exercise in textual criticism of the lectures themselves. Wolters offers examples of problems found in the earliest published Latin text, which was itself based on a transcript of Calvin's lectures. Whereas some of these problems could have arisen in the work of the transcribers, Wolters rather convincingly argues that many were actually the result of slips of memory on Calvin's part, largely consisting in mistaken references to biblical texts. The French translation of the lectures that appeared shortly after the Latin edition corrects some of the references, while others are corrected in the second Latin edition of the lectures. More significantly, Wolters also identifies a series of mistakes on the part of those who transcribed Calvin's lectures—mistakes that can only be rectified by a close reading of the Latin, followed, probably, by reconstructions. As he indicates at the very beginning of his essay, Wolters's purpose is to offer a preliminary study to an analysis of Calvin's work on Zechariah. He has also provided a preliminary model for a critical edition of the lectures. Both of these preliminary purposes direct us toward a clearer approach to the nature and content of Calvin's work as teacher.

The third essay on Calvin, Keith Stanglin's study of Calvin's interpretation of the Maccabean Psalms, raises a series of issues for the study of early modern, so-called precritical exegesis. Stanglin begins with Calvin's premise that the exegete must engage with the "mind of the author" and draws out the point by noting that scholarship has rarely and never in any detail recognized that Calvin assigned the writing of Psalm 44 not to David but to an author at the time of the Maccabean revolt—largely on the basis of anonymous authorship, the nature of the suffering described, and the specific form of prayer in the Psalm. Calvin goes on to argue that Maccabean context not only for Psalm 44 but also for Psalms 74, 79, 85, 106, 123, and 129. Stanglin notes that the association of the message of these psalms—apart from the question of authorship—with the Maccabean era has a long history, extending back to Eusebius of Caesarea and Theodore of Mopsuestia and running through major medieval interpreters, including Nicholas of Lyra. What is perhaps most interesting here is that this attention to the literal sense, to the *Sitz im Leben* of the text, and to the intent of the human author are all points that have been used to argue Calvin's departure from purportedly allegorical pre-Reformation exegesis and, equally, his forward step toward modern critical understandings but actually connect his work strongly with the older tradition of precritical exegesis. Still, as Stanglin demonstrates, Calvin does add a unique dimension, given his willingness to set aside traditions of Davidic authorship and a prophetic or predictive interpretation of the Maccabean Psalms in favor of actual authorship during the Maccabean era.

Mark Larson's study of Peter Martyr Vermigli's approach to just war theory in

comparison to Aquinas's views demonstrates, among other things, a significant continuity between early modern Protestant thought and main lines of the medieval tradition. In the context of a scholarship that has seen varied medieval backgrounds reflected in Vermigli's thought, Larson's study serves to reinforce the conclusion that not only is there a medieval background to Vermigli's thought but also that the background was, at least in part, Thomistic. This is the case, Larson indicates, despite Vermigli's occasionally pointed criticisms of the medieval Scholastics. Perhaps even more interesting is that Vermigli could have constructed a just war theory from the perspective of the Augustinian tradition but instead appears to have looked primarily to Aquinas, quite specifically reproducing Aquinas's series of necessary constituent factors for a just war—and did so in a *locus* constructed in view of the basic structure of a Scholastic *quaestio*. Moreover, Vermigli constructed that *locus* as an explanatory exercise in his commentary on 2 Samuel 2. There was, in other words, an exegetical location for Vermigli's thoughts on just war, and his exposition provides not only an example of Reformation-era use of medieval backgrounds and Scholastic method but also a significant example of the way in which Reformation exegesis moved from the text and the theological questions raised by the text to broader theological treatment in the commentary itself and from thence to doctrinal exposition: Vermigli's *locus* was eventually extracted from his commentary and placed into his posthumous *Loci communes*.

The interrelationship of various strands of sixteenth-century Reformed theology is explored in Lyle Bierma's study of Theodore Beza's confessions as among possible sources of the Heidelberg Catechism. Bierma reexamines the argument, presented over a half-century ago by Walter Hollweg but since then largely ignored, that Beza's *Confessio christianae fidei* and his *Altera brevis fidei confessio* influenced the structure, content, and even some of the wording of the Heidelberg Catechism. Hollweg had identified structural similarities and linguistic parallels. As Bierma points out, some modification of Hollweg's thesis is in order. The background to some of these passages in the Heidelberg Catechism is more probably Ursinus's own Smaller Catechism, and there are also reflections of Johannes Brenz's small catechism. But Bierma also notes a series of resemblances and connections between the Heidelberg Catechism and Beza's two works that were missed by Hollweg. In the balance, then, a Bezan influence must be recognized. What is more, there was a close connection between Beza and Olevianus and a clear Bezan influence in Olevianus's own *Firm Foundation*, a catechetical work related to the Heidelberg Catechism but more detailed. There are, therefore, arguably Bezan influences on the Heidelberg Catechism that came by way of Olevianus's *Firm Foundation.* Bierma carefully

documents all these points. What is significant to the scope of the present volume is the breadth of influences on the Heidelberg Catechism and, by extension, the broad international context both of the Heidelberg Catechism and of the Reformed faith in the sixteenth century.

Henry Ainsworth, as Raymond Blacketer identifies him, the "Harried Hebraist," occupies an important place both in the ecclesiastical history of early modern Protestantism and in the history of biblical interpretation. In his own day, Ainsworth stood in the forefront of Protestant Hebraism, including the study of cognate languages as a tool in biblical exegesis. Blacketer offers concise introductions to Ainsworth's somewhat turbulent life and to the development of Hebraism in Protestant circles in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Ainsworth was positioned, moreover, on one side of a debate among Christian Hebraists concerning the use of Jewish sources. Virtually all agreed that nonscriptural sources like the Talmud and later rabbinic commentaries could be used for lexical purposes and all paid attention to the Masoretic marginal readings or *Qere*, but many argued that Jewish sources should be viewed with suspicion from a theological perspective. Ainsworth, however, particularly in his debate with John Paget, took the more positive approach, holding that the Masoretic marginalia were typically authoritative, that the Masoretic text was definitive, and that the Talmud and the rabbinic interpretive tradition ought to be used as a positive tool in interpretation of texts, setting aside the claims of others that Jewish readings of the Old Testament included many forgeries and alterations of text for the sake of undermining Christian interpretations. As to the question of which variant to follow, the line of the text (*Ketiv*) or the Masoretic marginal (*Qere*), Ainsworth argued that both ought to be examined carefully and that the exegete ought to decide on the basis of lexical and philological study. Blacketer provides a series of examples of Ainsworth's practice, focusing on his concision in an exegetical approach that focused on philological issues, ancient customs and practices, and precise translation in view of the significant grammatical and syntactical differences between the Hebrew and English. Significantly, despite the intense criticism directed at Ainsworth by rival Hebraists like Paget and Broughton, Ainsworth's own effort as commentator was to avoid explicit controversy and, as Blacketer indicates, his exegetical results were highly influential in his time, significantly dispelling the older lines of scholarship that tended to ignore the technical mastery of seventeenth-century exegetes and to assume that they had reduced biblical interpretation to dogmatics.

Christ's descent into "hell" or, more properly, hades, is a topic that has gained renewed attention in evangelical and Reformed circles in recent years; as Jay

Shim shows, the early modern Reformed addressed and debated it as well. After indicating issues in the early modern debate, including those between Reformed and Roman Catholic writers, and noting the fairly concerted recourse to patristic understandings of the doctrine in the works of William Perkins and William Whitaker, Shim (like Blacketer) takes issue with those modern critics who have ignored the philological and textual interests of seventeenth-century biblical interpreters and claimed a fundamentally dogmatic approach to Scripture. The focus of Shim's essay, illustrating this thesis by way of exegetical understandings of Christ's descent into hades, is on the interpretive work of Hugh Broughton, James Ussher, and John Lightfoot. Broughton is of interest in particular given his use of Jewish commentators, his attempt to defend what he held to be the proper interpretation in the context of the Thirty-Nine Articles against Roman Catholic interpretations, and his polemics against what he identified as the "Genevan" interpretation of Calvin and others, according to which Christ's soul suffered the torments of hell while on the cross and did not "pass into hades." (Broughton's critique did not, of course, address all "Genevan" views of Christ's descent: Beza, making a detailed philological argument in his *Annotationes,* understood the *descensus* as the burial of Christ.) Shim shows that Broughton's reading was based on a detailed lexical and philological study in Hebrew and Greek and rooted in a sense that, given its use in the New Testament, the Septuagint necessarily joined with the Hebrew text in understanding the Old Testament. Broughton also assumed a classical "heathen" background to any proper understanding of Greek. On this basis, Broughton concluded that hades in the New Testament ought to be read as indicating sheol and not the place of final punishment. Lightfoot, also a noted Hebraist, perhaps the greatest of the British Hebraists of the era, also took the interpretation of Christ's descent as an opportunity to argue a Protestant reading against Roman interpretations but (like Broughton) also against the Calvinian view, but specifically with the intention of arguing that the descent was not for the sake of suffering the torments of the final hell. Ussher, also adept in the languages and study of ancient texts, similarly identified the Greek hades with the Hebrew sheol and argued that the creedal phrase should be taken to mean the place of the dead, specifically referencing both the place of the dead body and the separated existence of the departed soul. Taken together, the three theologians, Broughton, Lightfoot, and Ussher, offer evidence of major linguistic and philological skills brought to bear both on the interpretation of biblical passages underlying Christian doctrine and on the formulation of Protestant understandings of aspects of traditional, catholic teaching.

John Bergsma's essay proposes a complement to studies of the trials of

Protestant exegesis in the early modern era by examining the work of a major Roman Catholic interpreter, Cornelius à Lapide (1567–1637), in comparison with and contrast to the early critical proposals found in the work of René Descartes, Lodewijk Meyer, and Baruch Spinoza. It can be noted here that the precritical exegetical models found in the work of Lapide are not unlike those found in the commentaries of Reformed exegetes of the era—several of whom, like the English commentator John Mayer, referenced Lapide in a positive manner as an important interpretive resource. A striking point of comparison, indicating both common ground and a significant parting of the ways, appears in Lapide's approach to an "ecclesial hermeneutic." Bergsma rightly points out that Lapide's hermeneutic fits within the approach to Scripture outlined in the documents of Vatican II: Scripture is to be interpreted "within the living Tradition of the whole Church" with attention to the analogy of faith. He might well have cited the Profession of the Tridentine Faith (1564) that surely provides the context of Lapide's method and remarks: there the "holy mother Church" is identified as having the authority to identify the sense of Scripture in accord with "the unanimous consent of the Fathers." The common ground with Reformed Protestant interpretation—something that Lapide could not or would not recognize—is that the Reformed interpretation of Scripture was also assumed to be a churchly task, framed both by the analogy of Scripture and by the analogy of faith as identified in the ecumenical creeds and the church's own biblically based confessions. Sola Scriptura did not mean Scripture without the church. This Reformation-reading of Scripture, moreover, as Heiko Oberman pointed out, had significant medieval roots in what he called "Tradition I," namely, a reading of Scripture in the context of the tradition of doctrinal interpretation that nonetheless identified Scripture itself as the sole source of necessary truths concerning God. Lapide's approach also had medieval roots, what Oberman identified as "Tradition II." There, tradition was identified as a co-equal norm standing beside the text of Scripture. In the Tridentine profession of faith, moreover, a third norm was identified, standing as a basis for authoritative interpretation of both Scripture and tradition, namely, the teaching office or *magisterium* of the church. The Reformed response to this approach was to identify clearly the distinction between Scripture and tradition, to retain the churchly *locus* of biblical interpretation, and to accord tradition a distinctly subordinate status. In the polemics of the era, Reformed writers both insisted on the catholicity of the Reformation and pointed out two things about the tradition: first that their doctrine could rest quite well on the best teachings of the church fathers and even of the early scholastics; and second (a point confirmed by modern patristic scholarship) that there was no absolute consensus of the fathers.

Common ground, polemical context, and difference in interpretation are also illustrated by Lapide's exegesis of John 3:16: he disagrees with what he takes to be, in Bergsma's words, "an absolute and universal sense" of the implication of the text—which he interprets as if Protestants viewed the act of faith in Christ as the sole factor in salvation apart from the sacraments and the virtuous life. The common ground, set aside by polemic over justification, can be found in the insistence among the Reformed that justification is only one element of the order of salvation and that the faith on the basis of which Christians are counted righteous is inseparable from the regeneration and sanctification that take place by the grace of God. The Reformed, moreover, understood the sacraments as means of grace, as Vermigli said, "visible words of God." Sacraments and the redeemed life were not ignored, they were rather understood to belong to the work of salvation. The difference in interpretation between the Reformed and the Roman Catholics lies, ultimately, in the clear distinction made by the Reformed between justification and sanctification, a distinction not clearly made by Roman Catholics. Whereas there were significant differences between Roman Catholic and Reformed exegetes in their readings of key texts at the foundation of disputed doctrinal points (such as the Lord's Supper, justification, the order of salvation, and the nature of the church), the exegesis of Scripture generally and, more specifically, of the vast number of texts not related to disputed doctrines, evidences continuities of method. These commonalities of pre-critical exegesis are illustrated in the contrasts that Bergsma makes between Lapide's work and the rising critical spirit evidenced in the thought of the rationalists, Descartes, Meyer, and Spinoza: Reformed exegetes expressed virtually the same concerns. The differences stand as reminders of separate paths taken by Reformed and Roman theologians of the early modern era, with both groups insisting on their catholicity.

Won Taek Lim's study of John Flavel's works surveys the written efforts of this important and neglected late seventeenth-century Puritan who suffered through the Great Ejection, with specific attention to Flavel's approach to Scripture in the context of doctrinal formulation. Lim moves from an introduction to Flavel's life and work, recounting the persecution he encountered when he refused to cease preaching after the Ejection and refused to separate from his congregation after the passage of the Five Mile Act in 1665. Lim also examines Flavel's writings with emphasis on his practical piety, his contribution to devotional literature, and his address to the difficulties confronting Dissenters in his time. The essay then focuses on Flavel's method of interpretation, which, first, examined the grammar and literal sense of a text; second, determined its scope and argument; third, then tested different readings of the text against these

standards; and, finally, looked toward a consensus of interpretation among "learned" readers. This latter aspect of Flavel's work, when examined, appears as a Protestant approach to tradition inasmuch as Flavel draws on the church fathers, Bernard of Clairvaux, and Martin Luther, as well as a large number of Reformed authors from the time of Calvin to his own. Flavel applied this method in both doctrinal and polemical works. Flavel's arguments in favor of infant baptism against the writings of Philip Cary illustrate his use of the literal sense of the text, whereas his approach to the scope of texts is more apparent in arguments against using 1 Peter 3:19 and 2 Peter 2:5 to argue the case for purgatory. Since this text deals with Christ's preaching to the spirits in prison and the question of His descent into hell, Lim's exposition of Flavel can be taken together with Shim's analysis of the seventeenth-century debate over the question. Lim shows that Flavel's patterns of doctrinal formulation draw on these interpretive patterns in order to develop theological statements characterized by basic definition and a series of churchly and personal "uses" of the doctrine.

J. Mark Beach's study of the Hobbes-Bramhall debate on the nature of freedom takes up one of the major questions of early modern theology and philosophy, noting specifically the difficulty of maintaining a traditional view of the question, invested as it was in a series of Scholastic distinctions, in the face of the materialist critique of a thinker like Thomas Hobbes. Beach reviews the context of the debate and the circumstances of its publication. He raises a series of questions concerning the meaning and implications of the debate, both for the significant changes then overtaking European philosophy as it increasingly shed its Peripatetic underpinnings in favor of variant forms of rationalism and for the relationship of Hobbes's determinism to the theological traditions of the era—notably, to the older Scholasticism and to the Reformed tradition. Bramhall, Hobbes's opponent, also is seen to have drawn on the Scholastic tradition, but considerably more fully than Hobbes, and to have argued the case for a more or less "Arminian" view of human freedom, with lines of argument from Molina and Suarez (as was also the case with Arminius). Bramhall, whose arguments Beach presents first, evidences a deep immersion in Scholastic distinctions concerning liberty and necessity, with an insistence that liberty be understood not only as spontaneity but also as freedom from necessity and the liberty of contradiction. He also disputes the argument found among some of the Reformed Scholastic writers that things can be free with respect to second causes and necessary with respect to the first cause. Hobbes, by contrast, defines freedom not as a liberty of contrariety but as the freedom to do as one wills: a person can, then, be free and nonetheless determined by "precedent necessary

causes.” For Hobbes, as opposed to Bramhall, necessitation is not compulsion. Hobbes also argues against the traditional intellectualist assumption that the last determination of the intellect is the cause or basis of choice: the determination of the intellect is itself caused. In his conclusions, Beach carefully traces out the relationship of Bramhall to the Arminian approach and Hobbes to the Reformed, concluding that Bramhall represented a Scholastic Arminian position but that Hobbes, given his materialism and his understanding of divine remoteness, does not fit easily into the Reformed mold.

Arie C. Leder’s essay on Klinkenberg and Nahuys’s “Bible Commentary for the Untutored” engages the little-explored topic of the Reformed biblical commentary in the eighteenth century—in this case, a vast, multivolume commentary designed for the instruction not of academics schooled in the biblical languages but of literate laity seeking instruction in Scripture. Klinkenberg’s world of discourse (1780–1795) is far removed from the precritical world of Reformed and Puritan commentators of the previous century like Jean Diodati and Matthew Poole and, equally so, from the patterns of expression characteristic of the era of Protestant orthodoxy. His approach to the text registers as that of a child of the Enlightenment. Yet, as Leder shows, Klinkenberg and Nahuys were not deists. They wrote as doctors of theology and professors in the university but also as long-serving pastors of the church whose concern for biblical piety stood alongside of the more rationalistic, nondogmatic elements of their work. They evidence a preference for up-to-date technical tools and for the philological commentary in Michaelis’s translation of the Old Testament over the more traditional Dutch *Statenvertaling* annotations; but, as Leder shows, typically they also offer a reading of the text that was conformable to orthodoxy broadly understood, without attention to the controversies that had plagued the Dutch church in the century and a half preceding, except to distance themselves from factional debate. Theirs was a “moderate Christianity” that avoided conflict and proposed a rational or reasonable (*redenlyken*) approach to biblical truth while at the same time preserving the traditional Protestant sense of the perfection of Scripture and emphasizing the importance of reading Scripture for instruction in life and for devotional purposes in the family. And for those latter purposes, Klinkenberg and Nahuys recommended the more traditional text of the *Statenvertaling.* Both the style and the content of the Klinkenberg-Nahuys commentary offer a significant window into the transformation of Reformed theology in the eighteenth century.

Looking back on our past with honesty is not always an easy matter, particularly when so much that passes for history is written with a view either to the justification or the condemnation of a particular cherished point of view.

John Bolt's penetratingly honest essay concludes the volume with a new look into one of the more contentious moments in the history of the Christian Reformed Church, namely, the adoption of the "three points of common grace" by Synod of Kalamazoo in 1924. After presenting the rather blunt initial gambit that "Hoeksema was right," Bolt lays out both a significant case for the problematic nature of the "three points" on both confessional and ecclesiological grounds. Perhaps of most interest is Bolt's approach to the common ground as well as the difference between Hoeksema and Kuyper. Most striking here is Kuyper's powerful advocacy of particular grace and, more than that, Hoeksema's appeal to Kuyper in his 1923 work *Sin and Grace.* Striking as well is Bolt's recognition that Kuyper's more famous work on common grace built on his essays about particular grace and the covenants—and that the language of "grace" in the earlier works references strictly the saving divine *genade,* while the language of "common grace" consciously references the looser term *gratie,* albeit not with an absolute consistency. Kuyper insisted that "common grace" (which, incidentally, could just as well be translated "common divine favor") was of "a completely different nature" from saving grace. The first point pressed by the 1924 synod blurs Kuyper's distinction by placing the "general offer of the gospel" into the realm of "common grace" even as it, arguably, misuses the language of the Canons of Dort to make its point. Even more problematic was the synod's unwillingness to heed its own advisory committee's recommendation that no statement be made on the topic, given the lack of a Reformed consensus on common grace. It was also Hoeksema's opinion, Bolt reminds us, that the doctrine of common grace should not be elevated to the status of a dogma. Still, the synod refrained from issuing a condemnation of Hoeksema's position: it was Classis Grand Rapids East that used the synod's "three points" as a basis for taking disciplinary action against Hoeksema, without, as Bolt points out, having solid theological or confessional grounds for doing so.

In sum, the volume examines topics from across the chronological and international spectrum of the Reformed tradition. The authors of the essays, all colleagues or former students of Jim De Jong, have benefitted from his work and his support, whether as teacher, administrator, or researcher and student of the Reformed tradition. The essays are an expression of our respect and gratitude.

CHAPTER 1

An Appreciation of James A. De Jong President of Calvin Theological Seminary, Emeritus[1]

Calvin P. Van Reken

It is a sticky thing for a Calvinist to praise another person. We are all very much aware of the penetration and perdurability of sin in each person's heart. We know that in this life we only achieve a "slender measure of success" (as Calvin puts it) in being the sanctified persons God wants us to be. Whatever good a person accomplishes is a blessing from God, and we must not rob Him of His glory. This being said, there are occasions when we should thank God for someone who has been used by Him in a special way to grace our lives.

James A. De Jong, president of Calvin Theological Seminary (1983–2002), emeritus, is such a man. Let me review for you some of the good graces and gifts the Lord has given to Jim and that he has faithfully devoted to the benefit of the church and seminary. And let me include a few of the wrinkles in his style that forestalled him from ever being boringly good. What I have to say are my own views. I did not arrive at them by polling my colleagues or even by asking them informally what I should say. Yet I am confident that many of those who knew him best would affirm what I say about him below.

There are a lot of good things that I could say about James De Jong. Many of them have already been said publicly. Back in December 2001 Cornelius Plantinga Jr., spoke at a lunch honoring Jim. On that occasion Neal said that, as president of the seminary, Jim was hardworking, kept high academic standards, had a broad and deep vision, had a heart for students, raised money diligently, had a global perspective, and had a strong Christian witness. I need to reinforce a couple of things said back then and add one new thing to the list.

First, what made Jim an effective seminary president is that he always had a very clear idea of what the seminary needed to be. This clarity of vision served him and us all like a compass. I'm sure that most of you have had the experience of being confused about what direction you are driving. Somehow you get turned around and what you are sure is south turns out to be east. I'm pretty good with directions usually, so when I am confused it is doubly bad—not only am I heading in the wrong direction, but I am doing so with real conviction.

As an administrator, Jim had a clear sense of the direction in which the

seminary should go, and with unwavering confidence he led us. I think history will show that Jim was mostly right about that direction. The core of our work is preparing people for the ministry of Word and sacraments in the Christian Reformed Church. Jim saw that we could also serve the church by preparing people for other kinds of ministry, so under Jim's leadership we began the MA and PhD degree programs. Jim early on saw the role technology could play in our being able to serve the church more effectively, so he found money to equip us with up-to-date equipment. Jim recognized the limitations of our building, so he not only added many offices but he also raised the money and oversaw the construction for the student center. As the role of the seminary president started requiring more and more efforts in fundraising, in this too Jim showed himself to be energetic and effective.

To effectively stay on the course, Jim often needed to defend the seminary's interests on many fronts. For instance, when the historic marriage of the college and seminary ended in divorce some years ago, there were property disputes over apartments to be settled, custody battles over parking spaces to be waged, and visitation rights to the library to be adjudicated.

Jim often needed to protect the seminary from aggressive efforts to manage it from the outside. When a few outside authorities tried to dictate features for our curriculum and coerce our cooperation in a number of questionable initiatives, Jim repeatedly voiced resistance. Indeed, Jim kept us out of institutional harm's way by parlaying a stipulation in the ATS accrediting standards about academic independence into a defense that would have made Alan Dershowitz proud.

Not only did Jim have a clear sense of the direction in which the seminary should go, but he also understood what it would take for the seminary to be effective. That's why he always defended the academic standards rather than weakening them. That's why he presided over the hiring of an academically accomplished faculty. He read and learned from polling data, surveys, and trends in theological education, but he did not overreact to them. Jim was not overly concerned for the immediate public relations outcomes for decisions at the seminary. Jim knew that carrying out the mission that God gives you will not always result in positive responses from others. His goal was for the seminary to carry out that mission faithfully and well. I, for one, am grateful that he put his considerable energies into making the seminary the best school for training church workers that he could.

The second aspect of Jim's presidency that I want to highlight is one that I think faculty members experienced more than anyone else associated with the seminary. Jim had an important job for a long time, yet he did not try to present himself personally as above the other faculty members. He rarely presented

himself to us as anyone other than a history professor who served as chairman of the faculty. He has a genuine and authentic humility.

The faculty of Calvin Seminary is a rather unique group of persons. In many academic institutions faculty members do not talk to each other very much. They are rather careful to protect their own little provinces. Meetings are tense and unpleasant affairs. This was not true at the seminary under Jim's leadership. We often disagreed, but beneath our disagreements there were bonds of unity. Each of us had a deep and sincere commitment to the Reformed faith and the CRC. And we liked each other. We liked each other enough that we chose to meet together over lunch, in hallways, even at each other's homes. These bonds of unity gave us the freedom to argue about theology, politics, the church, and many other topics and also to tease and kid around with each other without hurting anyone's feelings.

Jim could and did enter into these conversations as an equal. You could disagree with Jim vigorously without fear of reprisal or harm. A disagreement with Jim was about ideas or decisions; it was not personal. You could argue with Jim one day without any carryover to the next. When someone would cleverly point out that he did or said something objectionable or even a little goofy, as often as not he would laugh before anyone else. And we had many occasions for such laughter. All of this is to say, Jim is a mensch, and he was one of us.

There are many wonderful gifts that James De Jong brought to his work as president of the seminary. I have described only two: his clarity of vision and his collegiality. For all the good he did for the seminary, and it was considerable, we are all grateful. I am grateful, too, that he was more than a mere colleague; he was, and is, a friend.

1. This address was given at the January 31, 2002, retirement dinner for James A. De Jong by Professor Calvin P. Van Reken, who was asked to represent the faculty in his remarks.

CHAPTER 2

Calvin's Teaching Office and the Dutch Reformed *Doctorenambt*

Joel R. Beeke

Reformed Protestantism has painstakingly defined the ecclesiastical offices of minister of the Word, elder, and deacon. The teaching ministry or doctoral office has not fared so well; like the cowbird, it has never acquired a nest of its own. This has left the seminary professor uncertain about where his vocation fits into the work of the ministry. In a day of expansive and disconnected parachurch ministries, this sometimes results in a tragic divorce of the doctoral office from the church itself. Indeed, given the split between church and academy, the very suggestion of a link between a professor of theology and church ministry has too often been viewed as a hindrance to the freedom of the professor.

Is the teaching ministry an ecclesiastical office? Or is it only a substitute for, or an extension of, the pastoral ministry? Do the "pastors and teachers" of Ephesians 4:11[1] represent two distinctive offices, or are they two aspects of one office? Is ministerial ordination required of a professor of theology? Does the doctoral office in the church extend beyond the confines of theology? Which is fitting for the doctoral office in church councils, the low-profile role of advisor to the court or assembly, or the high-profile role of a member of the assembly with voting power? Should doctors in theology be involved with consistorial decisions and ecclesiastical discipline, especially cases involving doctrine?

The doctoral office has become a foster child, which the modern Reformed church will neither adopt as its own nor cast out. Robert Henderson writes, "Although the churches of the Reformation may have allowed one formal teaching office to atrophy, they have not thereby been able to exorcise the 'memory' of such an office from their midst."[2] The memory of the doctoral office not only persists throughout Reformed ecclesiastical standards but also recalls a more ancient history.

The question of how to define the office of teacher among God's people stretches back to the Old Testament.[3] In the New Testament, the Spirit gifted men with knowledge and the ability to teach (Acts 13:1; 1 Cor. 12:28–29; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:11; Heb. 5:12; James 3:1).[4] The history of the early church reveals there were teachers who were not considered pastors within the church.[5] But the

relation between those offices was ill defined and sometimes a point of rivalry.[6] The pastoral office appears increasingly to have reduced the distinct role of the teacher. By AD 529, a church council decreed that bishops and presbyters must take youth into their homes to provide for them as fathers, train them in Scripture, and prepare them for the pastoral office.[7] With the rise of universities in the late middle ages, ecclesiastical authorities first—and educational guilds later—issued the *licentia docendi* (license for teaching) to gifted individuals, who were then given the titles of *magister* or *doctor.* By 1350, these titles were associated with academic degrees.[8] Therefore the doctoral office was part of the catholic tradition the sixteenth-century Reformers inherited.

The implications of the "doctoral office" problem stretch far beyond the limits of this chapter. So we will confine our discussion to the Reformed concept of the doctoral office. Specifically, we will focus upon Calvin's efforts to legitimize this office within the church, then upon the *doctorenambt* (doctoral office) in the Dutch Reformed tradition as evidenced by its church orders (*kerkenordeningen*) and its practice (*praktijk*).[9]

John Calvin's "Teaching Office"

Despite attempts to establish and maintain schools that were started as early as the thirteenth century, Geneva's higher educational system in the early sixteenth century was sporadic and poorly esteemed.[10] In the 1530s William Farel (1489–1565) and Pierre Viret (1511–1571) began presenting theological lectures on the Scriptures in private homes.[11]

After Calvin arrived in Geneva in 1536, educational reform paralleled church reform. It was relatively easy for Calvin to influence public education at this time because there were no external controls on Geneva's Collège de Rive curriculum, discipline, or finances. Calvin was influential in reinforcing the medieval *trivium* as the core curriculum,[12] in emphasizing French, and, in conjunction with Farel, in calling Mathurin Cordier (1479–1564),[13] humanist and educator, to teach at the collegiate level.

The years 1536–1539 were transitional at the Collège de Rive and included the evolving ecclesiastical status of the rector, his assistants, and college lecturers. Rector Saunier and his assistants, as *docteurs* of the school, were regarded by the magistrates as semiclerical rather than extraclerical. Indeed, the city council clearly regarded its doctors as "second in line" for pastoral duties, even though the teachers felt unqualified to officiate at the Lord's Supper in a manner consistent with the Articles of 1537.[14] The lecturers for the Collège de Rive were also closely connected with the Genevan Reformed church. Though officially registered as a college activity, Farel's Old Testament lectures and

Calvin's New Testament lectures both were held in the cathedral. However, the doctoral office was not yet formally introduced into Geneva. The program of study dated January 14, 1538, is silent on the doctoral office, even when it deals with Calvin's and Farel's theological lectures at St. Pierre Cathedral.[15] Prior to their banishment in 1538, Calvin and his colleagues were beginning to plan more specialized educational study that would provide the church with doctors and pastors, but such plans were still preliminary.[16] Only after serving at Strasbourg (1538–1541) did Calvin present a fully developed fourfold office, which he evidently learned from the teaching and practice of Martin Bucer (1491–1551).[17]

The Doctoral Office in Geneva, 1541–1600

Soon after Calvin's return to Geneva on September 13, 1541, the General Council adopted his Ecclesiastical Ordinances, on November 20 of the same year. These ordinances not only served as the foundation of the organization and discipline of the Genevan church, but also helped structure the life of the city itself. They reflect Calvin's commitment to Christian education as well as his view of man. T. M. Moore writes, "Calvin viewed man as inherently a learning creature."[18] All persons, boys and girls, should receive an education and be able to read the Bible for themselves. Calvin believed that as future citizens, ministers, and civil servants, children must receive a good education.[19]

Subsequent to its introduction, Geneva's 1541 Ecclesiastical Ordinances state, "Firstly, there are four official orders which our Lord instituted for the government of His Church: firstly, pastors; secondly, teachers; thirdly, elders, otherwise called Seigneury's[20] delegates; and fourthly, deacons."[21] Following an explanation of the pastoral office and duties, the office of *docteurs* is described as follows:

> THE SECOND ORDER, WHICH WE HAVE CALLED TEACHERS
> The proper office of teachers is to instruct the faithful in sound doctrine in order that the purity of the Gospel may not be corrupted either by ignorance or by false opinions. At the same time, as things are disposed today, we comprehend in this title the aids and instruments for preserving the doctrine of God and ensuring that the Church is not desolated through the fault of pastors and ministers. And so, to use a more intelligible word, we shall call it the order of the schools. The degree nearest to the ministry and most closely associated with the government of the Church is the teaching of theology, the scope of which includes both Old and New Testaments.[22]

Since Calvin was the primary drafter of these ordinances, we may assume that

Calvin viewed the primary task of the *docteurs* in 1541 as identical with his 1539 perception that teachers were to teach sound doctrine and maintain purity in the gospel message. The contemporary situation of Geneva obliged him to enlarge his "doctoral" horizons to include the training of new pastors. This enlarged concept, in turn, created the necessity for new languages and subjects to be taught, which broadened the scope of the doctoral office to include all subject areas. Consequently, the 1541 ordinances say, "But since it is possible to profit from such teaching only if in the first place there is instruction in the languages and humanities, and since also there is need to raise up seed for the future so that the Church is not left desolate to our children, it will be necessary to build a college for the purpose of instructing them, with a view to preparing them both for the ministry and for the civil government."[23]

Finally, the ordinances offer plans in rough detail to inculcate such widespread endeavors:

> First of all it will be necessary to allocate a place both for the giving of lessons and for the housing of children and others who wish to benefit, to have a learned and experienced man in charge of both the house and of the studies who himself can also teach, and to engage and hire him with the provision that under his charge he shall have teachers both of languages and of dialectic, if possible. Again, there will be need of young men for teaching the little children, which we wish and order to be done.
>
> All such persons shall be subject to ecclesiastical discipline, like the ministers.
>
> There is to be no other school in the city for little children, but the girls shall have their school separate, as has been the case hitherto.
>
> None is to be accepted unless he has been approved by the ministers, after having first notified the Seigneury, and then in turn he is to be presented to the Council with their recommendation, as a safeguard against abuses. Moreover, the examination should be conducted in the presence of two members of the Little Council.[24]

In the ordinances, Calvin received most of what he was striving for, though he was not entirely satisfied with the Little Council's insistence on retaining power in the hiring of *docteurs.* The city fathers, in turn, were not entirely satisfied with Calvin's notion that *docteurs* should be chosen and supervised exclusively by the ministers. Hence, a fairly detailed compromise on both parts was worked out in the ordinances. This compromise worked for some time.

Unfortunately, because of Geneva's political situation in the 1540s and 1550s, few of these educational plans could be implemented, particularly for an

academy in Geneva. The existing elementary school system was quite extensively overhauled. A new school was started in each of Geneva's four parishes, directed temporarily by a minister or a catechist.25 On the secondary level, however, the Collège de Rive barely managed to survive for another eighteen years.26

In 1559 educational affairs improved somewhat with the founding of Calvin's Genevan Academy. Following a visit late in 1557 to Strasbourg to discuss educational matters with former colleagues, Calvin obtained some land outside of Geneva for the proposed academy. Calvin almost singlehandedly raised sufficient funds for constructing the college. After the building was complete, Theodore Beza was hired as rector, Antoine Chevalier as professor of Hebrew, Francois Beraud as professor of Greek, and Jean Tagaut as professor of Arts.27 On June 5, 1559, the Genevan Academy was formally opened with a public service held in St. Peter's. Calvin conducted the service and Beza delivered the major address.

Much has been made of the contrast between Beza's address and the brief remarks Calvin made in conjunction with the reading of the academy's laws and regulations, under the title, *The Order of the College of Geneva*.28 Calvin's rules and remarks were permeated with a God-centered, pious approach to education in close conjunction with the church's goals, whereas Beza's speech appeared to forward the notion that the school would do well if it was administered by the state rather than the church. Hence we are told that Beza's approach was more secular than Calvin's, indicating that the two must not have agreed about the role of Christian education.29

Nothing could be further from the truth. Though Beza did defer to the city magistrates in his opening address, this was done more out of political considerations than any deviation from the views of Calvin. Moreover, those who assumed a split between Beza and Calvin have ignored the rector's remarks that explained to the new students "that they were not there solely for instruction, and even less for ephemeral games, as the Greeks were accustomed to in their gymnasia, but that they had for their task, to work for the glory of God, and for their duty, to become soldiers worthy of their mission."30 Finally, the close ties between Calvin and Beza in subsequent church and school relations disprove the notion that they were at odds in the educational field; moreover, neither Calvin nor Beza believed in such a thing as the "secular" or "religiously neutral" state.

For the rest of the sixteenth century, the Genevan church was intimately connected with the Genevan Academy, and the academy's *docteurs* were intimately connected with the church, both theoretically and practically, as

office-bearers. Doctoral interviews, the selection of *docteurs,* and their subjection to discipline for erroneous teaching or sinful behavior were primarily under ecclesiastical control. All professors, theological and non-theological, were obliged to take part in the weekly gatherings of the *Compagnie des pasteurs,*[31] frequently referred to as the *Compagnie des pasteurs et professeurs.* On Saturdays, academy students defended their theses or preached trial sermons in front of Geneva's ministers. While prospective ministers studied at the academy, the pastors gave them extra attention in terms of correction and assistance. Though the 1561 ordinances eventually may have helped the Genevan Academy separate itself from church control in the seventeenth century, this was not Calvin's intent; in essence, the 1561 ordinances reiterate the doctoral and church/school emphases of the 1541 ordinances, with only minor deviations.[32]

In sum, the pastor/doctor situation of the Genevan Church/Academy during 1559–1600 may be reduced to the following generalizations:

> (1) There were preachers who were specifically called to pastoral duties and not hired to be teachers of Christian doctrine, though Christian doctrine was inevitably woven into their preaching. These were commonly called the ministers of the Word, pastors, or shepherds.
>
> (2) There were teachers who were not called as pastors. Such were Calvin and Beza prior to their being clothed with the preaching office. They were called lecturers, professors, and, occasionally, doctors.
>
> (3) There were also individuals who were both pastors and doctors in the narrowest sense of these words.

Groups 1 and 3 above undoubtedly were regarded as office-bearers due to their ordination to the ministry of the Word of God. Group 2 is not so clearly defined. Professors of theology were regular members of the consistory and, though not free from government authority, were first and foremost regarded as servants of the church. Theological professors were called to meet annually with the church's council. Magistrates supervised professors who taught non-theological subjects, though the church council could also interview and discipline them. Interestingly, the council hired these professors of the second group without their names being brought before the congregation for approval; moreover, they could attend council meetings and were sometimes encouraged to do so. Consequently, Dankbaar rightly questions Henderson's assertion that non-theological professors were also clothed with the doctoral office since they usually joined in consistorial deliberations.[33]

The Doctoral Office in Calvin's Theology, 1541–1564

Calvin's ecclesiology is linked with his theological worldview that is grounded in the absolute sovereignty of God. As absolute Sovereign of heaven and earth, God has an order and law for all creation. All created persons are called to honor His greatness by bowing before His law and Word in every sphere of life.

Indeed, God is perfect and complete in power, wisdom, faithfulness, and sovereignty from eternity. History is the outworking of His eternal decree and sovereign counsel. No creature can thwart God's eternal purpose. All are entirely dependent on Him and cannot perform anything that will not glorify His attributes. The end of history, including the church, is a love song to the greatness and unfathomable wisdom of God. "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen" (Rom. 11:36).

For Calvin, predestination, as part and parcel of God's sovereign decree from eternity, not only determines the eternal state of rational creatures but also includes the means by which people will be led to their eternal abodes. It pleases God to use the church as the *primary means* in carrying out the election aspect of predestination. Through the application of the Holy Spirit, the church is instrumental in begetting and nourishing life in the elect.

Hence, Calvin's ecclesiological emphases are far-reaching. He views the church as a gathering of the elect, a communion of believers, our mother, and the mystical body of Christ.[34] Indeed, he says, "departure from the church is a renunciation of God and Christ."[35] Outside the church, there is no salvation, for she is the mother of all the pious.[36] Calvin said, "We may know from the title of Mother how useful and even necessary it is to know her; since there is no other way of entrance into life, unless we are conceived in her, born of her, nourished at her breast, and continually preserved under her care and government."[37]

Calvin was convinced that the church plays a nurturing role for all age groups and all spheres of life.[38] In a sermon on 1 Timothy 1:1–2, Calvin stated,

> It is true that it is God alone who begets us by His Word, which is the seed of life; but at the same time he calls the Church our mother. For just as a mother conceives, and carries her children, and nourishes them, so thus God, having always his Word in the Church, desires that we be begotten of her, nourished and reared to manhood by her, as St. Paul affirms. That is what is meant when the Church is called our heavenly mother, and the Scriptures are full of the idea.[39]

In short, the edification and growth of the faithful proceeds "under the education of the church."[40] Consequently, the teaching aspect of the ministry can hardly

be overemphasized, for on it depend the issues of life and death, yes, truth itself. As Calvin states,

> To express it in a more homely manner, is not the Church the mother of all believers? Does she not regenerate them by the Word of God, educate and nourish them through their whole life, strengthen and bring them at length to complete perfection? For the same reason she is called the "pillar of the truth" *because the office of administering doctrine, which God has placed in her hands, is the only instrument of preserving the truth, that it may not perish from the remembrance of men.*41

Typical of Calvin's numerous statements about teaching ministry is his comment on Ephesians 4:11: "The government of the Church by the ministry of teaching is not a contrivance of men but an appointment made by the Son of God. As God's unalterable law, it demands our assent."42 Elsewhere, Calvin argues that to reject the true church's ministry is to insult Christ, for the ministry is Christ's ongoing gift to the church. He raises up, forms, molds, and endows the ministry of the church for ecclesiastical offices.43

Calvin distinguished ecclesiastical offices as either (1) extraordinary and temporary, or (2) ordinary and permanent. Joseph Hall suggests that in the ordinary and permanent offices, Calvin distinguished "two genres: teachers, pastors, and elders under the genus *presbyteros/episkopos* and deacons under the single genus of *diakonos,*" though the teachers do not share in all elder duties.44 Pastors and teachers are further distinguished as those who regularly bring the Word of God to the people.45

Before discussing the details of Calvin's development of the doctoral (teaching) office, it is necessary to give a general overview of Calvin's convictions on the subject, from the 1540s onward:

(1) Calvin was increasingly persuaded that *the teaching office must be regarded as an integral part of the church's ministry.* Calvin therefore did not regard Geneva's teachers as secular employees. Calvin refused to place the profession of teaching outside of the church, for church and school were inseparable in his theology. Though these leaders operated in different arenas, their tasks were interwoven; hence, teachers were to remain within the pale of the church, though Calvin was not always clear about the ecclesiastical status of non-theological teachers.46 For Calvin, all teaching had the glory of the sovereign God as its primary frame of reference. Teaching was meaningful because it contributed to both personal salvation and the advancement of the church. As Walker sums up, "In Calvin's judgment, the school was an integral factor in the religious training

of the community."[47]

A second, less obvious, reason why Calvin fervently held teaching to be a "spiritual office" was that it was directly related to the church's ministry. The mode of knowledge to be learned at school was distinctive, Calvin said. This knowledge, which has God for its primary object, is not to be equated or identified with knowledge that comes from man's natural senses. As J. M. Jones comments, "The most significant aspect of Calvin's treatment of the problem of religious knowledge was his basic assumption that such knowledge is qualitatively different from descriptive or speculative knowledge."[48]

True knowledge, according to Calvin, is not mere mental cognition.[49] It is not a gift of sensory perception.[50] There is no proper understanding as long as we lack a superior, spiritual element in which the mind rises above itself. True knowledge is a "certain persuasion," a trusting confidence, a "holding,"[51] a believing that is accompanied by true understanding. Calvin explains,

> When we call it knowledge, we intend not such a comprehension as men commonly have of those things which fall under the notice of their senses. For it is so superior, that the human mind must exceed and rise above itself in order to attain to it. Nor does the mind which attains it comprehend what it perceives, but being persuaded of that which it cannot comprehend, it understands more by the certainty of this persuasion, than it would comprehend of any human object by the exercise of its natural capacity.[52]

T. H. L. Parker thus rightly comments,

> [Calvin] will not allow the rigid division of man into intellect, affection, senses, etc…. Knowledge is the activity of the soul; that is, of the whole inward life of man. The knowledge of God, then, far from being a purely intellectual knowledge unrelated (or related only psychologically) to trust, reverence and love, is so closely bound up with these other forms of man's relationship to God as to be dependent upon them for its very being as real knowledge of God.[53]

For Calvin, an academy's ultimate goal is that God might use its teaching instrumentally through His Spirit to glorify His own name by matriculating students in His school of grace.[54] It is God who teaches to salvation, and it is God who preserves His elect and causes them to grow spiritually in the way of salvation through this same teaching.[55] Teaching is preeminently a spiritual task, not only in content, but also in mode of knowledge, Calvin said. Whatever true knowledge students assimilate is God's gift through the mouths of His teaching spokesmen.

(2) Though both the pastoral and teaching office could be undertaken by one person, provided the essential gifts and calling were present, Calvin maintained *the doctorate as a function distinct from the other offices of the church:* "For there is a difference in my judgment between doctors and prophets."[56] Commenting on Ephesians 4:11, Calvin writes, "*Pastors,* in my opinion, are those who have the charge of a particular flock; though I have no objection to their receiving the name of teachers, if it be understood that there is a distinct class of *teachers,* who preside both in the education of pastors and in the instruction of the whole church. It may sometimes happen, that the same person is both a pastor and a teacher, but the duties to be performed are entirely different."[57] By "entirely different," Calvin did not refer to means or goals, but to the arena or sphere of operation. The teaching office proper was to be exercised in the academic arena for the welfare of the whole church, and the state as well, by training young men for the ministry of the Word and for office in the civil government.[58]

Contrary to some critics, Calvin did not inconsistently plug a fourth distinctive teaching office into his renowned *munus triplex.*[59] For Calvin, a fourfold ecclesiastical ministry called to reflect Christ's threefold office presented no enigma.[60] Having maintained the close tie between the pastoral and doctoral offices throughout his *Institutes* and commentaries, Calvin could readily connect both functions to Christ's work as our chief Prophet, saying, "Our teachers correspond to the ancient prophets, [as] do our pastors to the apostles."[61] Henderson accurately sums up this issue in saying, "Thus for Calvin, the prophetic-doctoral ministry under the gospel was not to be confused with the apostolic-pastoral office. It rested squarely on the prophetic-doctoral office of Christ himself, and performed functions that are essentially didactic and critical in contradistinction to the liturgical, shepherding, and governing competence of the apostolic-pastoral office. It is true, all pastors ought to be doctors, but functionally and by office all doctors are not pastors."[62]

Calvin did distinguish between prophets and doctors in their didactic function. He gave the gospel prophet a slightly wider range of responsibility in making known "the will of God by applying with dexterity and skill prophecies, threatenings, promises and the whole doctrine of the scripture, to the present use of the Church"; while the office of doctors (*doctorum munus*) "consists in taking care that sound doctrine be maintained and propagated, in order that the purity of religion may be kept in the Church."[63]

(3) As G. Doekes makes clear, Calvin thus *viewed the doctorate as a proper*

office in the narrowest sense of the term doctorum munus.[64] According to Calvin, the title of prophet under the gospel dispensation should be limited to those who "perform the office (*munus*) of an interpreter in explaining the will of God…. [To this end] a *doctor* is one who forms (*format*) and builds (*instituit*) the Church by the word of truth.[65]

To sum up, Calvin distinguished between the vocations of teaching and shepherding, which are closely related, yet distinctly different. Randall Zachman explains Calvin's vision for doctors and pastors:

> Both are teaching offices, guiding the faithful in the right way to read Scripture to confirm their faith. However, doctors teach the universal church its essential dogmas and doctrines of piety, and defend such doctrines from error by observing the true, simple, and genuine meaning of Scripture. Doctors have the responsibility for teaching future pastors, and for correcting any damage done to the church by faulty pastors. Pastors differ from teachers in that they do not instruct other pastors and the universal church, but teach only a particular congregation. Pastors are also unique because they not only teach and preach doctrine drawn from the genuine meaning of Scripture, but they also exhort, admonish, warn, and censure their congregation and every individual therein, and administer the sacraments.[66]

Both the doctor and the pastor deal with biblical doctrine and biblical exposition, but with different target audiences: the congregation for the pastor, and the school—especially the seminary—for the doctor. In some cases, as with Calvin himself, these two are combined in one person. We may thus distinguish Calvin's literary production to some extent by the office exercised therein. As a doctor, he wrote the *Institutes* and Latin polemical treatises (biblical doctrine) and his commentaries (biblical exposition) to train pastors. As a pastor, he wrote his catechisms (biblical doctrine) and his sermons (biblical exposition and application) to train the church.[67]

The Development of Calvin's Perspective on the Teaching Office

Let us now summarize Calvin's approach to the doctoral office as it developed chronologically:

> 1539—In his Romans commentary, Calvin first distinguishes the pastoral and doctoral offices.[68]
>
> 1541—Within months of his return to Geneva, Calvin in the Ecclesiastical Ordinances unequivocally adopts a fourfold ministry, thereby including the

doctoral office.[69]

1543—In the third edition of the *Institutes*, Calvin, for the first time, supports his conception of the doctoral ministry with a theological foundation. He leaves open the possibility that one person with adequate gifts and calling could encompass both the pastoral and doctoral offices, and frequently alludes to how these two offices are connected.[70] But he explicitly establishes the validity of a unique doctoral office as a scriptural parallel to the pastorate. In 1543 Calvin clarifies that he "was able to distinguish between them [i.e., the pastoral and doctoral offices], that doctors neither exercise discipline, nor administer the sacraments, nor engage in admonition or exhortation, but rather interpret the scripture in order that sound and sane doctrine may prevail among the faithful.[71]

1546—In his Corinthians commentary, Calvin reiterates the distinctions between the pastorate and doctorate.[72] He spells these out in greater detail later in his Ephesians commentary. The Ephesians statement, quoted above in part, is one of his clearest statements on the teaching office.[73]

1551—In his Acts commentary, Calvin freely speaks of pastors and teachers. He seems to imply on one occasion that these functions can form two sides of one office, though he immediately adds that only a limited number of pastors have special teaching gifts.[74]

1555—In his comments on Matthew 23:6–8, Calvin again emphasizes the validity of the teaching office: "Now it is absurd to take away the title [of master and/or teacher] from those on whom he bestows the office, and more especially since, while he was on earth, he appointed apostles to discharge the office of teaching in his name."[75]

1559—Only the general position of Calvin's *Institutes* (fourth edition) needs to be mentioned, as it has been previously cited with regard to several pertinent notions of Calvin's doctoral office. The fourth edition repeats the watershed ideas of the third (1543), underlining the distinction of the pastorate and doctorate in greater detail.[76] Also, in *Institutes* 4.3.16, Calvin says that he believes the imposition of hands was used in ordination by the primitive church for doctors and deacons as well as pastors.

1561—The new Genevan Ecclesiastical Ordinances strongly reassert the ecclesiastical office and function of all teachers, especially doctors or teachers of theology.[77]

This chronology leads us to reject W. F. Dankbaar's conclusion that the doctoral office in Calvin's thought was "more a special activity than an

independent office."[78] For Calvin, the office of doctor was a permanent, ordinary, distinct office, not a temporary, extraordinary office, or a special function of the pastoral office. Indeed, the strength of Calvin's view of the teacher as a distinct office proved to have broad ramifications for the Reformed churches of France, Scotland, and particularly the Netherlands, not to mention the Puritan settlement of New England and the deliberations of the Westminster Assembly.[79] Let us move on now to the Dutch concept of the *doctorenambt*, forged principally by Calvin.

The Doctoral Office in the Dutch Reformed *Kerkenordeningen*

Though Calvin did not speak Dutch, his work was highly esteemed in Holland's sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Reformed circles. Many of the Dutch could read Calvin in Latin, and many would have more than a passing acquaintance with French. Moreover, through translations of his works, Calvin's influence in the Dutch Reformed movement was incalculable. F. L. Rutger's *Calvijns Invloed op de Reformatie in de Nederlanden voor zooveel die door hemzelven is uitgeoefend* is a compelling tribute to the Genevan Reformer's influence in the Low Countries.[80]

W. Robert Godfrey divides the Dutch Reformation into four chronological phases: the Lutheran phase (1517–1526), the Sacramentarian phase (1526–1531), the Anabaptist movement (1531–1545, though Dutch Anabaptists were martyred until the 1570s), and the most powerful of all—the Calvinist phase (infiltrating southern Holland c. 1545 and northern Holland c. 1560).[81] Nonetheless, the buds of Calvinism in Holland did not flower profusely until the seventeenth century.[82]

Calvin's ecclesiology indirectly began to filter into the Low Countries prior to the Reformer's death. This is seen particularly in the precursors of the renowned Dutch *kerkenordeningen* (church orders), which spanned the progressive period of 1568–1619. Surprisingly, the forerunners of the Dutch church orders did not come directly from Genevan, or even Continental, soil; rather, their home was England, specifically "the refugee congregations of weavers and other artisans from the Lower Rhine and the Low Countries (both Flemings and Walloons)."[83] During the reign of Edward VI, John à Lasko (1499–1560) and Valérand Poullain (c. 1509–1557) began to write pragmatic ecclesiastical books of discipline for their refugee churches. Heavily influenced by Calvin's writings, both of their "church orders" addressed the question of proper ecclesiastical offices. À Lasko established a two-tier order of elders and deacons, in which bishops, pastors, and doctors were included as elders. In practice, however, "pastors and doctors were spoken of indiscriminately as elders of the church; the

doctor had the same functions in worship, the sacraments, and discipline as the pastor had."[84] In addition to traditional office-bearing activities, however, à Lasko made provision for "doctor-supervised" sessions of "prophesying" (that is, in Calvin's sense of instruction, as distinguished from prediction) on Tuesdays and Thursdays, which were open to the entire congregation.[85] Poullain's writing for his Glastonbury congregation reinforced that of à Lasko, though his offices were restricted to pastor-superintendent, elder, and deacon. In both churches, however, Calvin paved the way for the forthcoming Dutch *kerkenordeningen,* which began at the Synod or Convent of Wesel in 1568, in which one of three principal groups of delegates were officers from the Flemish congregations in England.[86]

The Convent of Wesel (1568)

"The Netherlands churches which sit under the Cross, and are scattered within and without the Netherlands" was the name the Reformed Churches of Holland gave themselves in 1568, when Alva's council of blood was "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord."[87] Despite untold persecution and martyrdoms, the Dutch churches looked to the future with hope, trusting that the free exercise of religion would soon be granted. In anticipation of such freedom, many Dutch Reformed churches began to gather covertly to discuss distinctive doctrines and polities, to pave the way for harmony subsequent to their "jubilee year." Numerous questions relative to discipline, customs, worship, office-bearing, and interdenominational affairs, as well as governmental affiliation, had to be ironed out during this period. Prior to the Synod of Dort (1618–1619), several semi-authoritative councils met to discuss just such issues: Wesel (1568) and Emden (1571), Dordrecht (Dort) (1574 and provincial), Dordrecht (Dort) (1578), and Middelburg (1581).[88]

As groundwork for future synods and because of its valuable insights and distinctives, the Convent of Wesel[89] played a significant role in the development of the Dutch Reformed *kerkenordeningen.* It consisted of men from twenty "churches under the Cross," and was chaired by Petrus Dathenus (c. 1531–1588). Fifty-three delegates gathered on November 3, 1568, at Wesel in Kleefsland, on the lower Rhine, to provisionally determine a number of specifics as well as to make organizational plans for the future. The bulk of its recorded proceedings dealt with the duties of church officers, divided, as the divines believed, into four apostolically appointed orders: pastors (or ministers), doctors (teachers), elders, and deacons.

In harmony with Calvin, the Wesel document set forth the doctoral office along Genevan lines. We may outline its significant aspects as follows:

(1) Chapter I, Section 11 (hereafter: I, 11) lists the office of doctors after preachers, but before elders and deacons, suggesting that the doctoral office be viewed as either coordinate with, or slightly subordinate to, the pastoral office in status, but superior in function to that of elders and deacons.

(2) Chapter II is titled *Van de Dienaren en Doctoren* (Of the Ministers and Doctors). This document details the ordination service of preachers (II, 11) but is silent on ordination of doctors, implying that the laying on of hands was not to be conferred upon doctors.90 Like the preachers, the doctors are "clothed with" a teaching office, though in a different manner (II, 14).91 Doctors are to expound Scripture in congregational gatherings in an orderly, scriptural fashion. Their public teaching, however, is limited to scriptural instruction and exposition in distinction from pastoral teaching, which broadens itself to include pastoral application (*toepassing*) (II, 16).92

(3) Doctoral congregational teaching must come to the fore in weekly gatherings (prophesyings), in which the Word of God is expounded by moving through entire Bible books and/or chapters, or by following the lives of biblical characters. These weeknight services, primarily conducted by doctors, must have biblical exposition and instruction as their major thrust rather than application (II, 17, 19). Preferably, they should be slightly shorter than Sunday sermons, never exceeding one hour so as not to burden the people (II, 24). Though such "prophesyings" (which came to be called *Bijbellezingen* or "Bible readings") could be conducted in the Socratic method of question and answer, this method should be abandoned because it "ministered to strife and debate."93 Wesel thus established *Bijbellezingen* as a unique means of grace, for they could not be equated with formal preaching, catechizing, or schooling. Though influenced by à Lasko on this score, no church council in Reformed history carved out such a secure place for the doctoral office in regular instruction within the context of organized congregational life.94 Little did the Wesel delegates realize that such gatherings, though later transferred back to the domain of preachers, would remain a permanent landmark in many Reformed denominations until this very day.95

(4) Doctors must assume a variety of consistorial duties in addition to attendance at meetings (II, 20); specifically, they must continually examine the doctrinal soundness of the preachers (II, 8); must always be present at the consistory meetings just prior to the Lord's Supper to assist with discipline (VI, 9; VIII, 4); must always be present when prospective ministers are to be examined, and when they preach "trial" sermons (II, 26);

must take an active part in the catechetical instruction of youth (III, 1); must attend national synods and assist in the establishment of a college when the Lord may take away the "cross" (I, 2), etc.

(5) Furthermore, doctors are to be dealt with as pastors in the matter of personal church discipline (VIII).

(6) Finally, Wesel left further detailing of the doctoral role in the hands of a forthcoming national synod (II, 15).

The Synods of Emden (1571) and Dordrecht (1574, 1578)

According to Henderson, Wesel's delineation was so effective that no need arose for further clarification of the doctoral office in Dutch circles in the next thirteen years.[96] However, according to Dankbaar, no need for further confirmation existed also because Wesel's doctoral office was seldom exercised but remained largely an idealistic theory.[97]

At any rate, the first national Dutch Reformed synod at Emden was silent on the doctoral office.[98] Meeting on October 4–12, 1571, as a synod in exile representing "the churches which sit under the Cross and are scattered throughout Germany and East Friesland," under the leadership of Kasper Van der Heyden, the delegates at Emden neither confirmed nor rejected Wesel's doctoral initiatives.[99] No reference was made to Wesel's "gatherings for prophesyings." The only reference to doctors (now called "professors of theology") was a request for their assistance in examining the scriptural soundness of any prospective religious publication (cf. art. LI).[100]

The *doctorenambt* also received little attention at the first Dutch Reformed synod that actually met in the Netherlands. The Provincial Synod of Dort met June 16–28, 1574, in the interest of the Holland and Zeeland churches, to divide them into fourteen large classes.[101] Henderson comments on this provincial synod's only reference to professors of theology:

> The Provincial Synod of Dort (1574) entertained an overture from the Classis of Walcheren in which the classis requested the synod to take action to stimulate the magistracy in the reformation of the schools so that adequate instruction in theology, law, medicine, and "professors in the three languages" might be established in an existing school to the end that a more adequate ministry might be obtained. Reference to professors of language was important because of the position taken at Wesel that it was the duty of the church to work for the establishment of schools and theological colleges where these languages would be taught.[102]

Like Emden (1571) and Dort (1574), the Synod of Dort, which met June 2–18,

1578, had little to say on the *doctorenambt.* It is the only gathering of the 1568–1619 period of blossoming of the *kerkenordeningen* that took a step backward in the development of the doctoral office. By implication it omitted the *doctorenambt* altogether in its first chapter, *Van de Dienaren des Woords, Ouderlingen en Diakenen* (Of the Ministers of the Word, Elders, and Deacons).[103] Though it is not clear whether the delegates of this synod regarded doctors as office-bearers, it did state that no professor of theology could preach or administer sacraments unless he was an ordained minister (III, 51).[104]

Furthermore, this synod said that attendance of consistory meetings was no longer required of theological professors, though classical and synodical attendance remained mandatory. Finally, professors of theology had to subscribe to the Reformed doctrinal standards, and should continue to give a helping hand in censoring religious books (III, 50).[105]

The Synod of Middelburg (1581)

By addressing the doctoral question once more, the Synod of Middelburg in 1581 revealed that the Dutch Reformed Church was not satisfied with the decisions of its former synod. The following items are worthy of note:

(1) Middelburg returned decisively to Calvin's fourfold office of "ministers of the Word, doctors, elders, and deacons" (II).[106]

(2) The duties of the doctoral office are once again defined as Calvin defined them, that is, to explain Holy Scripture and oppose error with pure doctrine (XIII).[107]

(3) The terms "doctors" and "professors of theology" left dangling by the Synod of Dort in 1578 as possibly distinct roles are declared by Middelburg to be synonymous.[108]

(4) Middelburg also followed Calvin's tendency to extend the doctoral office to all branches of learning by stating that "professors of liberal arts, languages and literature" (literally, *vrije consten ende spraecken leeren,* "liberal arts and learned tougues," rendered into Latin as *humanas disciplines et politiores literas,* "studies in the humanities and classical literature") and those who teach the catechism are to be considered in the same category as professors of theology.[109]All professors must teach in the fear of God; all must sign the confessional standards (XII, XXXVII).

(5) In response to the question whether ministers who were called from the University of Leyden or another university should be examined by classis, the Middelburg synod says it is sufficient for them to be "examined and

approved by the Professors of Theology."[110]

(6) Finally, in question 110, Middelburg confirms the full-orbed role of professors of theology in classical and synodical gatherings; their duty to attend, and their rights to speak and vote are all reaffirmed.[111]

The Synod of 's-Gravenhage (1586)

The National Synod of 's-Gravenhage (1586) basically echoed the declarations of Middelburg,[112] proving that the *doctorenambt* was deeply engrained in Dutch Reformed thought. The synod declared, "The office of the doctors and professors of theology is to expound the Holy Scriptures and to vindicate sound doctrine against heresies and errors" (XVI). 's-Gravenhage confirmed that Wesel and Middelburg did not present strange theories, but workable realities. The only significant contribution of 's-Gravenhage to Middelburg's decision was to place all professors under church jurisdiction as equally accountable. 's-Gravenhage declared that *any* professor who refused to take an oath of faithfulness toward the church confessions was to be dismissed immediately from his teaching position (XLVII–XLIX).[113]

The Synod of Dordrecht (1618–1619)

After dealing with the Remonstrant problem in its first 154 sessions, resulting in the renowned *Canons of Dort in Five Heads*,[114] the Dutch delegates took up the task of revising its existing Church Order (adopted at Emden in 1571, and further reedited in subsequent synods outlined above) in its 155th session. No major alterations were made relative to the doctoral office despite the thirty-three year interval since the Synod of 's-Gravenhage.

Article 2 of the Church Order of Dort reiterates the concept of the fourfold ministry: "The offices are of four kinds: of the Ministers of the Word, of the Professors of Theology, of the Elders, and of the Deacons."[115] Despite modern attempts to minimize the Dutch doctoral office in Reformation times, every commentator on the Dort Church Order admits that article 2 intends to confirm a distinctive doctoral office.[116]

Article 3 reveals the ongoing struggle in the Dutch churches to wrest from government authorities a sufficient amount of ecclesiastical jurisdiction to prevent office-bearer appointments unapproved by the church: "No one, though he be a Professor of Theology, Elder, or Deacon, shall be permitted to enter upon the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments without having been lawfully called thereunto. And when any one acts contrary thereto, and after being frequently admonished does not desist, the Classis shall judge whether he is to be declared a schismatic or is to be punished in some other way.[117]

Due to the problem of Arminianism and other forms of liberalism, the Dort fathers insisted on retaining control of doctoral appointments. Article 3 was just one more attempt to warn the state not to take everything into its own hands.[118]

Interestingly, article 12, the ban on "Changing to a Secular Vocation," did not apply to a professorship, because, according to K. DeGier, "secular vocation" did not include "spiritual labors in institutions of mercy, hospitals or a professorship." In fact, ministers who became professors were allowed to continue to preach and to administer the sacraments, "because their labor was entirely interwoven with the service of God's church."[119]

The job description of the *doctorenambt* is restated in article 18 with no surprises: "The office of the Doctors or Professors of Theology is to expound the Holy Scriptures and to uphold sound doctrine against heresies and errors."[120]

Finally, article 53 dealt with the formula of subscription:

> The Ministers of the Word of God and likewise the Professors in Theology shall subscribe to the Confession of Faith of the Netherlands Churches [i.e., the Belgic Confession] (which is proper for the other Professors as well), and the Ministers who refuse to do so shall *de facto* be suspended from their office by the Consistory or Classis until they shall have declared themselves fully in this matter, and if they obstinately persist in refusing, they shall be deposed from their office.[121]

Nothing in this article is new. What is new is that in its *post-acta* the synod added that subscription included declaring allegiance to the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dort, as well as to the Belgic Confession, "as a token of unity in soundness of doctrine."[122] In signing the Formula of Subscription (still in force in many conservative Reformed churches today with respect to ministers, elders, and deacons), all teachers swore allegiance to the Three Forms of Unity and committed themselves to the following:

> A. The promise to defend the true doctrine and to combat errors.
>
> B. The obligation not to spread questionable doctrines, but to submit them to the judgment of the major assemblies.
>
> C. The commitment to submit oneself to the right of investigation (*jur inquistionis*) with the right of appeal.[123]

VanDellen and Monsma clearly misread the Church Order of Dort in claiming that Dort's intention was to delineate the *doctorenambt* as "at best a semi-ecclesiastical office."[124] Articles 2, 12, 18, and 53, among others, oppose the twisting of the Dort Church Order to coincide with modern Reformed Church practice. Nor does their objection of a lack of *doctorenambt* in the confession of

faith hold any weight.[125]

By 1619 an extensive support network based on Calvin's theology was laid in the Dutch *kerkenordeningen,* promising a hopeful future for the *doctorenambt.* Nevertheless, Dutch Reformed practice in the years that followed would effectively cause the decline of the concept of the *doctorenambt* in both Holland and America.

Conclusion: The Decline of the *Doctorenambt*

The details of the decline in the Dutch *doctorenambt* lie beyond the scope of this paper; however, we can state the major factors involved in this decline.

The *doctorenambt* fared well in Reformed practice in Holland for some time. Generally speaking, as office-bearers, professors of theology had the right to participate in the life of the church both before and after the Synod of Dort. Synodical records of this period reveal a remarkable degree of interaction between doctors and pastors as well as between doctors and synods. In an intensive study of Dutch *praktijk* (practice), Henderson identified, in the period from 1572 to 1620, seventeen Dutch professors who held no pastoral status as far as is known, of whom eleven were given active synodical duties, including the collection of church histories (Paulus Merula), the securing of confessional signatures (William Coaddaeus), the performance of various church duties with groups outside of synod (Salmasius and L'Empereur), etc.[126] Nine of these doctors attended synodical sessions, and several served in more than one session.[127] Bertius and Vossius, despite their resistance, were called to give accounts of their beliefs before the Synod of South Holland in 1619, because of their suspected Arminian leanings. Though the government supported these teachers' opposition to appearing before the synod, both finally did appear, with the result that Bertius was excommunicated, and Vossius was retained only with some hesitancy.[128] In both cases, a battle to keep the teaching office under church control was waged against the state.

The question of Johannes Maccovius's (1588–1644) status at church functions also arose in the Dort years and was finally resolved at Dokkum, June 2–9, 1618, as follows: "On the question whether or not Dr. Maccovius, doctor of theology, but not a pastor, may examine and ordain candidates for the Church's service, it is by the majority vote of the classis found acceptable that he lawfully function in such a manner along with the other professors of theology."[129]

As late as 1629 and 1639, the particular synod of South Holland protested synodical participation by professors of theology. In both cases, the national synod confirmed the validity of their participation by relying on article 52 of the 1578 *kerkenordening.*[130]

Subsequent Dutch writers, however, began to question the validity and necessity of Calvin's teaching office, such as Gisbertus Voetius (1589–1676), Johannes à Marck (1656–1731), and Bernardinus de Moor (1709–1780). That weakened the concept of the *doctorenambt*. More contemporary writers, such as Heinrich Heppe (1820–1879), Abraham Kuyper (1837–1920), Herman Bavinck (1854–1921), and Willem Dankbaar (1907–2001) reinforced this trend. As a result, the *doctorenambt* died a slow death, despite the "pamphlet war" Doekes reported, revealing that even at the beginning of the twentieth century the *doctorenambt* was more than a smoldering issue.131

In America, the *doctorenambt* in Dutch Reformed circles has an ambiguous role. Church assemblies in the eighteenth century sanctioned "lectors in theology" among the professors even before the establishment of a general synod. The General Synod of 1792 adopted the "Rules of Church Government Established in the National Synod (1618–1619)," but attached "Explanatory Articles," which reduced the doctorate to a paper office at best. Ultimately, professors of theology were defined simply as "ministers in good standing."132 Indeed, several twentieth-century writers, including Martin Monsma and Herman Hanko, affirm that no professor of theology may be an unordained layman.133

In conclusion, three major factors were involved in the demise of the *doctorenambt* in Holland and Dutch Reformed America. First, all attempts to solidify a Calvinian *doctorenambt* in Holland were ultimately foiled by government interference. The government never ceased to claim that the school was their domain, despite the deliverances of Wesel, Middelburg, and Dort. With the establishment of the Reformed State Church in 1816, the appointment of theological professors was unconditionally surrendered to the state. However, the state's intent was not to separate the doctors from the church; rather, they ordered the professors "to attend the sessions of Synod as advisory members, and the Synods were directed to consult the theological faculties about any matters of debate in which it might be desirable to have an expression of their views."134 Nevertheless, the state made it clear that it held all reins of authority and supervision. The *doctorenambt* was reduced to a Scholastic office and state function, which the church's assemblies had to accommodate.

Second, despite all efforts, the Dutch *kerkenordening* never achieved perfect consistency and definitiveness, much less unanimity, on the concept of the *doctorenambt*. In both confession and practice, regarding the *doctorenambt*, the church's trumpet did not blow a clear, unified note.135

Finally, internationally, a shift in terms of the understanding of the biblical prophet had a profound affect on the view of the teaching office. As Henderson

says:

> Calvin had been at considerable pains to minimize the predictive and nonrational interpretation, stressing rather the didactic role. This was as true of his estimate of Christ's prophetic office as it was of his understanding of the position of the Old Testament prophet. In the tumult of Commonwealth England, and again in the upheaval that characterized pietistic reaction on the Continent, the prophetic function came increasingly to be understood along nonrational lines. In some quarters, it was equated with visionary experience. Thus, immediate experience became the desired goal and the highest criterion of the Christian life, together with a de-emphasis on faith mediated and informed by sound learning and clear doctrine. Professor Dowey reminds us that Calvin's doctor was not an infallible teacher, but rather a fellow believer whose ministry was based upon his competence as a scholar and instructor.[136]

Thus it was no surprise that, as Henderson says, "gradually, under the press of a number of circumstances—confessional concern with orthodox doctrinal conformity, moralistic interpretation of the Christian life, revived political initiative as to both motivation and authority for the education process—the Reformed churches limited their doctoral concern to an increasingly narrowing list of so-called 'sacred' subjects, and at the same time began to subsume the doctoral office in the pastoral [office]."[137] In short, the problem of the *doctorenambt* has never been satisfactorily resolved. The Reformed Church owes it to itself to reinvestigate, scripturally and historically, the Calvinian/Dutch concept of the teaching office and its bearing on the life and work of the churches today.

1. In Dutch, "herders en leeraars." Calvin and the Dutch hang much of their "doctoral" luggage on this text.

2. Robert W. Henderson, *The Teaching Office in the Reformed Tradition: A History of the Doctoral Ministry* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962), 11.

3. Hadrianus Saravia, *Of the Diverse Degrees of the Ministers of the Gospel* (London: John Wolfe, 1592), 272; Herman Bavinck, *Het Doctorenambt* (Kampen: Kok, 1899), 9–10; John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), bk. 4, chap. 3, sec. 1–16. [Hereafter, the following format will be used: *Institutes,* 4.3.1–16.]

4. T. M. Lindsay, *The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries* (London: G. Doran, 1902), 103. Cf. 65–66, 91–109.

5. *Didache,* 10.7; 13.2; 15.2; *Apostolic Constitutions,* 8.32.

6. Henderson, *Teaching Office,* 15–17; Bavinck, *Doctorenambt,* 14–15; Saravia, *Diverse Degrees,* 270–271.

7. Bavinck, *Doctorenambt,* 20.

8. Henderson, *Teaching Office,* 17–18; H. Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages,* (London: Oxford University Press, 1936), 1:574; W. F. Dankbaar, "Het Doctorenambt Bij Calvijn,"

Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift 19 (1964): 151–152.

9. For the role of the doctoral ministry in other countries, cf. Henderson, particularly for France (*Teaching Office*, 72–98), Scotland (127–155), English Puritanism (156–194), and at the Westminster Assembly (195–213).

10. Henderson, *Teaching Office*, 23, 42; W. Stanford Reid, "Calvin and the Founding of the Academy of Geneva," *Westminster Theological Journal* 18, no. 1 (1955): 6–7.

11. Henderson, *Teaching Office*, 42.

12. *Trivium:* Latin grammar, rhetoric and logic. *Quadrivium:* arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music.

13. Cordier was Calvin's old teacher. For his teaching method and Calvin's personal interest in education, see A. Mitchell Hunter, "The Education of Calvin," *The Evangelical Quarterly* 9 (1937): 20–33.

14. J. P. Gabarel, *Histoire de l'eglise de Geneve* (Geneva: Joel Cherbuliez, 1858), 305–307, quoted by Henderson, *Teaching Office*, 44.

15. Dankbaar, "Doctorenambt bij Calvijn," 137. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that Calvin never regarded himself as first and foremost a pastor. Cf. David VanderPoel, "The Ordination of John Calvin" (master's thesis, Adelphi University, 1974), 85–86.

16. Henderson, *Teaching Office*, 47.

17. Henderson, *Teaching Office*, 39–40; Dankbaar, "Doctorenambt bij Calvijn," 138–139; Willem van't Spijker, *De Ambten bij Martin Bucer* (Kampen: Kok, 1970), 453; P. Stephens, *The Holy Spirit in the Theology of Martin Bucer* (Cambridge: University Press, 1970), 186; Van't Spijker, "Bucer's Influence on Calvin," in *Martin Bucer: Reforming Church and Community*, ed. D. F. Wright (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 39.

18. T. M. Moore, "Some Observations Concerning the Educational Philosophy of John Calvin," *Westminster Theological Journal* 46, no. 1 (1984): 148; repr. in *Articles on Calvin and Calvinism*, ed. Richard C. Gamble (New York, Garland Publishing, 1992), 3:228.

19. John T. McNeill, "John Calvin: Doctor Ecclesiae," 17; repr. in Gamble, *Articles*, 10:115.

20. "Delegates of the nobility," i.e., the local aristocracy or landowners.

21. P. E. Hughes, ed. and trans., *The Register of the Company of Pastors of Geneva in the Time of Calvin* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), 35–36. See also David L. Puckett, "Calvin as Teacher," in *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 13, no. 4 (2009): 46.

22. Hughes, *The Register*, 40–41.

23. Hughes, *The Register*, 41.

24. Hughes, *The Register*, 41. Cf. Theodore A. Greene, "Ecclesiastical Organization of Geneva in the Time of Calvin," *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society* 11, no. 8 (1923): 347, 351.

25. William Monter, *Calvin's Geneva* (New York: Wiley, 1967), 136.

26. Reid, "Academy," 8.

27. Reid, "Academy," 9–10.

28. Printed as an appendix in Reid, "Academy," 22–33.

29. E.g., cf. Henderson, *Teaching Office*, 63, where he states that Beza's address placed "its author very decidedly in the camp of those who regarded the school as being a creature of the state," whereas Calvin charged the doctors to be "mindful of their office."

30. Reid, "Academy," 10. Interestingly, Dankbaar states: "Beza kon in zijn rede, waarin hij met geen woord van de kerk repte, en waarin hij gewaagde van een 'republiek der school,' die bestond uit leraars en leerlingen, niettemin de Academie noemen: 'het middel om met waarachtige vroomheid en ware wetenschap gevoed to worden.' Hij hield de studenten voor, dat zij 'van deze heilige dienst rekenschap moesten afleggen aan onze hoogste Bevelhebber." Dankbaar, "Doctorenambt bij Calvijn," 157. Since this could hardly sound more like Calvin, the artificial Calvin/Beza dichotomy should also be dispensed with in matters related to education.

31. "The Company of Pastors."

32. Henderson, *Teaching Office*, 64–65; G. A. Taylor, "John Calvin, the Teacher: The Correlation

between Instruction and Nurture within Calvin's Concept of Communion" (PhD diss., Duke University, 1953), 173–176.

33. Cf. Dankbaar, "Doctorenambt bij Calvijn," 159. For perceptive comments on how the state gradually began to immerse itself more influentially in church affairs subsequent to Calvin's death, and particularly following Beza's retirement, consult Monter, *Geneva*, 212ff.

34. Cf. John T. McNeill, "The Church in Sixteenth Century Reformed Theology," *Journal of Religion* 22, no. 3 (1942): 260.

35. Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.1.10.

36. Emil Brunner propounds that the concept *mater ecclesia*, within which circle one must be in order to be united with Christ, is that which frees Protestantism from stark individualism. The *mater ecclesia* describes a "living fellowship, which not only proceeds out of union with Christ, but also leads to Christ." Emil Brunner, "One Holy Catholic Church," *Theology Today* 4, no. 3 (1947): 323.

37. Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.1.4.

38. G. A. Taylor relates the instructional emphasis in Calvin's thought primarily to his religious epistemology. But he also asserts that a preoccupation with instruction lay "at the heart of Calvin's views on the Word, the church, the ministerial task, and effective civil government." Taylor capitalizes on the close connection in Calvin between teaching and the redemptive task of the church; hence the suitableness of the *mater ecclesia*. See "John Calvin, the Teacher," 10ff.

39. John Calvin, sermon on 1 Tim. 1:1–2, in *Corpus Reformatorum*, 53:14 [hereafter *CR*].

40. Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.1.9.

41. John Calvin, sermon on 1 Tim. 3:15, in *CR*, 52:288; emphasis added.

42. John Calvin, Com. on Eph. 4:11.

43. Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.1.10.

44. Joseph H. Hall, "John Calvin's View of Church Government," in *A Theological Guide to Calvin's Institutes*, ed. David W. Hall and Peter A. Lillback (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R Publishing, 2008), 393–394.

45. Calvin, Com. on Eph. 4:11; F. Wendel, *Calvin: The Origins and Development of His Religious Thought* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 303.

46. Taylor, "John Calvin, the Teacher," 172.

47. Williston Walker, *John Calvin: The Organizer of Reformed Protestantism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 270. Greene sums up this program of religious training in the following four points: "1) The establishment of the Church as a distinct organism with co-ordinate and constitutional rights, co-existent with the state, thus limiting the state's ecclesiastical power and preventing absorption of Church by a state. 2) A definite organization of creed and religious training, including a catechism, discipline and supervision of morals, and the substitution of new marriage laws for old canon law. 3) An unflinching enforcement of the Word of God in all matters of daily life, moral, social, private and public, and equally upon all inhabitants. 4) A university to give education fitting men for the work of both the new Church and the new state." Greene, "Ecclesiastical Organization," 316.

48. J. M. Jones, "The Problem of Faith and Reason in the Thought of John Calvin" (PhD diss., Duke University, 1942), 217.

49. Calvin, Com. on John 6:69.

50. Calvin, *Institutes*, 3.2.14.

51. Calvin, Com. on 2 Tim. 3:7.

52. Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.2.14.

53. T. H. L. Parker, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1952), 107.

54. Calvin, sermon on Deut. 28:36–45, in *CR* 28:425.

55. Calvin, Com. on John 6:25.

56. Calvin, Com. on 1 Cor. 12:28.

57. Calvin, Com. on Eph. 4:11.

58. Cf. Genevan Ordinances, 1541, in Hughes, *The Register.*

59. Cf. Henderson, *Teaching Office*, 25.

60. Henderson, *Teaching Office,* 24–27; J. F. Jansen, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Work of Christ* (London: J. Clarke, 1956), esp. 20–57. Such purely formal considerations meant nothing to Calvin. Hence, when Petrus Dathenus took up Calvin's sacramental forms, for example, he had to do a great deal of work to bring a formless verbal exercise into a well-structured and orderly presentation.

61. Calvin, *Institutes,* 4.3.5; for a right understanding of this statement one should have knowledge of Calvin's unusual definition of prophet, as given in his Com. on 1 Cor. 12:28. Calvin viewed the prophets as ministers of the written Word. Cf. Henderson's comments on Calvin's conception of Christ's prophetic office (*Teaching Office,* 26–28).

62. Henderson, *Teaching Office,* 31.

63. Henderson, *Teaching Office,* 30–31.

64. G. Doekes, *Het kerkelijk Doctorenambt* (Kampen: Kok, 1917), esp. 18–19, 26–27. Calvin also uses *officium doctum* in his Com. on 1 Cor. 12:28.

65. Calvin, Com. on Rom. 12:6–8; cf. Doekes, *Doctorenambt,* 18–19.

66. Randall C. Zachman, *John Calvin as Teacher, Pastor, and Theologian* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 61.

67. Zachman, *John Calvin as Teacher, Pastor, and Theologian,* 62–65.

68. Calvin, Com. on Rom. 12:6–8.

69. Cf. Hughes, *Register,* 35ff.

70. On one occasion Calvin even numbers the offices as three instead of four, presumably on account of this interwovenness.

71. Quoted by Henderson, *Teaching Office,* 59.

72. Calvin, Com. on 1 Cor. 12:28; cf. Dankbaar, 145–146.

73. Calvin, Com. on Eph. 4:11.

74. Calvin, Com. on Acts 13:1.

75. Calvin, Com. on Matt. 23:6–8; more pertinent comments follow.

76. Calvin, *Institutes,* 4.1–3.

77. Hughes, *Register,* 352ff.

78. Dankbaar, "Doctorenambt bij Calvijn," 160–161.

79. Cf. Henderson, *Teaching Office.*

80. F. L. Rutger, *Calvijns Invloed op de Reformatie in de Nederlanden voor zooveel die door hemzelven is uitgeoefend* (Leiden: D. Donner, 1899).

81. W. Robert Godfrey, "The Dutch Reformed Response," in *Discord, Dialogue and Concord,* ed. Lewis W. Spitz and Wenzel Lohff (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), 166–167.

82. Especially at the Synod of Dordt, where Calvinism triumphed.

83. Henderson, *Teaching Office,* 99.

84. Henderson, *Teaching Office,* 100. Hanko adds, "The rules which we now possess [in the Church Order of Dordt, 1618–1619] arose organically out of the life of the churches. The organization of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands is to a considerable extent the work of John à Lasko. He assisted in the organization of the Dutch Church of the refugees from London and laid down the main lines of church polity and liturgy in his *Forma ac Ratio.*" H. Hanko, "Notes on the Church Order" (Grand Rapids: Theo. School of Prot. Ref. Churches, 1973), 7.

85. Henderson, *Teaching Office,* 101–102.

86. Henderson, *Teaching Office,* 104. For Calvin's influence on à Lasko and Poullain, see Rutger, *Calvijns Invloed,* 60–61, 117–119.

87. Acts 9:1.

88. Maurice G. Hansen, *The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands traced from A.D. 1340 to A.D. 1840 in Short Historical Sketches* (New York: Board of Publication of the Reformed Church in America, 1884), 76. Translations of the synodical documents are available in Richard R. De Ridder, trans. and ed., "The Church Orders of the Sixteenth Century Reformed Churches of the Netherlands Together with Their Social, Political, and Ecclesiastical Context" (Grand Rapids: Calvin Theological Seminary, 1987).

89. Here called a “convent,” for Wesel 1568 was more of a conference than a formal synod, properly speaking, as attendees were not delegated by the churches.

90. Cf. Henderson, *Teaching Office*, 106n.

91. “Den Dienaren zijn bijgevoegd de leeraars en profeten dewelke wel ook het ambt van leeren bekleeden, maar op een andere verscheiden wijze.” G. H. Kersten, *Kerkelijk Handboekje* (Rotterdam: De Banier, 1937), 17.

92. In some Dutch pulpits still today a sort of discoursed sermon is delivered in two or three major points, followed by the announcement of *toepassing.* The sermon proper and application are separated by singing. Hence, a professor would have been allowed to deliver the former, but not to speak the latter. These ideas find kinship among the English Congregationalists, but this distinction in church history never seemed to hold for long, for what is preaching without application?

93. Hansen, *Reformed Churches*, 79.

94. Henderson, *Teaching Office*, 106. It should be noted that à Lasko was more influenced by the Zwingli-Bullinger tradition than by Calvin. S. Van der Linde, “Vierhonderd jaar Convent van Wezel, 1568–1968,” *Theologia Reformata* 11, no. 4 (1968): 215–216.

95. Several conservative Dutch Reformed American denominations still have periodic *bijbellezingen*, though they are gradually becoming synonymous with worship services also in these circles.

96. Henderson, *Teaching Office*, 107.

97. Dankbaar, “Doctorenambt bij Calvijn,” 162.

98. Though Emden called its gathering “General Synod” out of modesty, it really was the first proper National Synod. VanderLinde, however, finds some justification for Emden’s modesty, since the entire gathering consisted of only twenty-nine persons.

99. Cf. Hansen and VanderLinde for its historical development and ecclesiastical decisions.

100. Kersten, *Handboekje*, 52. See also Van der Linde, “Convent van Wezel,” 195.

101. Cf. Hansen, *Reformed Churches*, 86–91.

102. Henderson, *Teaching Office*, 107–108.

103. Kersten, *Handboekje*, 89.

104. Kersten, *Handboekje*, 100.

105. “Inasmuch as some ministers had expressed the opinion that they were not bound by the Confession of Faith, but had a right to depart from it—particularly as regards Article 16 (Of Eternal Election), and 35 (Of the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ)—this synod, and also that of 1586, felt compelled to take stringent measures. It was resolved that the professors of theology and the elders of the churches should sign it. The Synod of 1586 added to these the schoolmasters, and declared that if any minister or professor refused to subscribe to it, he should be deposed from office.” Hansen, *Reformed Churches*, 96.

106. Kersten, *Handboekje*, 123.

107. Kersten, *Handboekje*, 125.

108. Henderson, *Teaching Office*, 109.

109. Henderson, *Teaching Office*, 109.

110. DeRidder, “Church Orders,” 284.

111. See Q. 110; Henderson, *Teaching Office*, 152–153.

112. Cf. Hansen, *Reformed Churches*, 110, for a list of ways.

113. Kersten, *Handboekje*, 164.

114. The history of the canons and synod is well known and need not be repeated here. Following the first 154 sessions, sessions 155–180, known as the Post-Acta of Dort, are not as well known and include the discussion of a variety of matters: church visitation, ministerial call, correspondence between magistrates and consistories, feast-days, hymn-singing, the baptism of Roman Catholics, Sabbath observance, marriage, adult baptism, visitation of the sick, Bible translation, foreign missions, profanity, ministers’ salaries, liturgy, etc.

115. Joel Beeke, ed., *Doctrinal Standards, Liturgy, and Church Order* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2003), 179.

116. Cf. Joh. Jansen, *De Kerkenordening van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland* (Nijverdal: E. J. Bosch), 80–91; Idzerd Van Dellen and Martin Monsma, *The Revised Church Order Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1967), esp. 84. Also, Bavinck, Ainslie, Heppe, Dankbaar, and VanMastricht lean toward minimizing the *doctorenambt.*

117. Beeke, ed., *Doctrinal Standards,* 179.

118. H. Bouwman, *Gereformeerd kerkrecht* (Kampen: Kok, 1928), 498. Cf. Henderson, *Teaching Office,* 112.

119. K. DeGier, *Explanation of the Church Order of Dordt* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 26. Cf. VanDellen and Monsma, *Church Order,* 58, though Hanko disagrees (*Notes on Church Order,* 32).

120. Beeke, ed., *Doctrinal Standards,* 181.

121. Beeke, ed., *Doctrinal Standards,* 185.

122. DeGier, *Dordt,* 81.

123. DeGier, *Dordt,* 82. For minor changes in the form between pastors and doctors, cf. H. H. Kuyper, *De Post-Acta* (Amsterdam: Hoveker and Wormer, 1899), 245–246.

124. VanDellen and Monsma, *Revised,* 83.

125. Bouwman, *Kerkrecht,* 499.

126. Henderson, *Teaching Office,* 114–115.

127. Henderson, *Teaching Office,* 115–116.

128. Henderson, *Teaching Office,* 116–118.

129. Henderson, *Teaching Office,* 121.

130. Henderson, *Teaching Office,* 124–125.

131. Doekes, *Doctorenambt.*

132. Henderson, *Teaching Office,* 229–230.

133. Cf. their dealing with article 3 of Church Order of Dordt.

134. Hansen, *Reformed Churches,* 293.

135. Cf. list of pro and con Reformers, Bavinck, *Het Doctorenambt* (Kampen: Zalsman, 1899), 55; Bouwman, *Gereformeed Kerkrecht,* 499; Jansen, *Kerkenordening,* 84. Also consult Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1950), 679–681.

136. Henderson, *Teaching Office,* 245–246.

137. Henderson, *Teaching Office,* 245.

CHAPTER 3

An "Immeasurably Superior" Rhetoric: Biblical and Homiletical Oratory in Calvin's Sermons on the History of Melchizedek and Abraham

Richard A. Muller

Calvin's sermons on the "history of Melchizedek" and Abraham's faith and obedience, published as a separate volume in 1560, are both a highly representative and also a genuinely significant selection from the preaching of the Genevan Reformer. They are representative inasmuch as they follow out the method of expository sermon for which Calvin was renowned in his time and on the basis of which he remains one of the truly great preachers in the history of the church. Given that the sermon series on Genesis began in September 1559, after Calvin published the final edition of his *Institutes,* they are significant even among the sermons of Calvin. They present what, with little hyperbole, can be called Calvin's final testament to the Reformed teachings of justification by grace alone through faith and of the right relationship between faith and the obedience of Christians. Inasmuch as these sermons also were preached after the Genesis commentary of 1554, they offer some of Calvin's final thoughts on that text as well.[1] They offer a significant point for comparison between Calvin's style as a commentator and his style as a preacher, just as they offer an example of Calvin's pulpit rhetoric when he was at the height of his powers.

Although much has been written in recent years concerning the rhetorical aspect of Calvin's theology,[2] very little has been done by way of investigating the rhetoric of Calvin's sermons. Indeed, Millet's magisterial study of the rhetorical patterns of Calvin's writings focuses strictly on the Latin text,[3] while Bouwsma's analysis of Calvin's "theologia rhetorica" concludes that, in contrast to the high rhetoric and amplificatory style of the commentaries, there were but few rhetorical "flights" in Calvin's sermons and that Calvin's homiletical style was seldom eloquent.[4]

Bouwsma's judgment is curious for several reasons. First, it hardly comports with what we can infer from Calvin's understanding of the place and purpose of rhetoric. The classical rhetorical tradition in which Calvin was so immersed understood rhetoric and its fundamental interest in techniques of persuasion as

the tool of oratory, perhaps even more than of written composition—and it was in the pulpit of St. Pierre and at the lectern of the *Auditoire* that Calvin practiced oratory for the sake of persuasion on a daily basis.[5] Second, Bouwsma's judgment stands in conflict with Calvin's own assumptions about the style of his commentaries and sermons, and explicit disagreement with assessments of Calvin's style by his contemporaries. Calvin himself consistently indicated that his commentaries cultivated stylistic brevity and avoided using techniques of *copia* and *amplificatio*.[6] By contrast, a reading of Calvin's sermons and of his comments about the delivery of sermons reveals an overt concern for rhetoric at least as great as that evidenced in his written labors—and the sermons quite consistently move toward topical amplification and copious illustration, if only by way of collateral biblical citation.[7] At least one of Calvin's contemporaries apologized for the non-oratorical, indeed, "Scholastic" style of Calvin's commentaries and pointed toward the more oratorical style of Calvin's other writings—in his preface, dated February 14, 1557, he mentions the printed version of Calvin's lectures on the Minor Prophets. Calvin, Jean Budé wrote,

> preferred to advance the edification and benefit of his hearers by eliciting the true sense and making it plain, rather than by vain pomp of words to delight the ears, or to regard ostentation and his own glory. I would not, at the same time, deny, but that these lectures were delivered more in the scholastic than in the oratorical style. If however, this simple, though not rude, mode of speaking should offend any one, let him have recourse to the works of others, or of this author himself, especially those in which, being freed from the laws of the school, he appears no less the orator than the illustrious theologian.[8]

Third, a reading of Calvin's sermons and of his comments about the delivery of sermons reveals an overt concern for rhetoric at least as great as that evidenced in his written labors.[9] And fourth, in confirmation of the contemporary identification of Calvin's sermons as not obliging the style of oratory, Calvin quite explicitly avoids using techniques of copia and amplificatio in his commentaries—and quite consistently moves toward topical amplification in his sermons.[10] There is, of course, one potential barrier to the examination of the sermons as an example of Calvin's rhetoric: they were virtually all taken down in shorthand and then copied out for use, without any further revision on Calvin's part. Identification of the style of the sermons as Calvin's oral style places considerable trust on the several Genevan stenographers. We do have, however, contemporary testimony from the *Compagnie des étrangers*, Denis Raguenier's employers in the work of taking down and transcribing Calvin's

sermons, that the result was highly accurate. In their preface to the Deuteronomy sermons (1567), the *Compagnie* wrote that Raguenier "devoted himself to the word for word gathering of Calvin's sermons…with such speed and ability, by means of certain abbreviations and figures, that few words escaped him even at the beginning."11 There is, as Parker has indicated, evidence from the increased length of sermon texts after the first year of Raguenier's work that his abilities did develop. Beyond this, Parker notes both the consistency of the style of the sermons during the years of Raguenier's efforts as well as the consistency between the style of the sermons Raguenier transcribed and those transcribed by others.12 We have therefore no reason to doubt that the sermons offer good evidence of the style as well as the substance of Calvin's pulpit oratory.

Calvin's Pulpit Oratory: Biblical Style and the Preaching of the Bible

There is considerable ground in the Christian rhetorical and homiletical writings of the Reformation era for the conclusion that the literary style (or styles) of Scripture itself provided at least part of the model for pulpit oratory. Given that virtually all of the Reformers and their successors had some training in classical rhetoric, the differences between the style or styles found in Holy Writ and the classical canons for the communication of religious themes were most evident in the sixteenth century.13 This point is made quite specifically in Hyperius's *De formandis concionibus sacris* (1553), one of the most widely read homiletical manuals of the sixteenth century.14 So too, writing in the 1539 edition of his *Institutes* on the stability or solidity of Scripture as a foundation for faith, Calvin briefly commented on the difference between the style of the classical orators and that of Scripture: the former would "allure, delight, move," and even "enrapture" readers, but the words of Scripture, which "pierce [the] heart" and "breathe something divine (*divinum quidam spirare*)," lead far higher.15 In his 1559 edition, Calvin elaborated the point. Inasmuch as there are places in the prophets that equal the classical orators in their elegance and splendor, the "awkward and rough style" found in other places ought not be viewed as an indication that the Holy Spirit lacks eloquence: whether the style of the text "flows sweetly and pleasantly," as in the writings of David and Isaiah, or harshly and in a somewhat rustic manner, as in the books of Amos, Jeremiah, and Zechariah, the "majesty of the Spirit" is everywhere evident.16

This sense of the uniqueness of the style of Scripture and it relation to Christian oratory is also a theme explicitly presented in many of Calvin's commentaries and sermons. Calvin's comments on 1 Corinthians 1:17–19 offer perhaps his most detailed excursus on the proper style of preaching. Calvin regarded this epistle as filled with "most profitable teaching" and, specifically, as

a source of discussions on a wide variety of significant topics or *loci*.[17] The first chapter raised for Calvin a series of major questions concerning the nature of preaching itself—questions particularly germane to the efforts of one, like himself, who had been schooled in classical rhetoric. Paul had indicated that his task was "to preach the gospel" but "not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect." In the apostle's own conception of the task, "the preaching of the cross" is "foolishness" to a perishing world, a divine teaching that cut across the "wisdom of the wise." Paul's statement that he has come to preach the gospel "not in wisdom of words" amounts to admission of a lack of formal eloquence and training: the "method of his teaching," Calvin paraphrases, "was free of all brilliance, and revealed not a trace of ambition." Unlike the Corinthians, Paul made no "show of words" and did not attempt to "ingratiate" himself with the people.

For Calvin, the trained rhetor, Paul's words raised two fundamental and profoundly searching questions: "*First*, whether Paul here condemns in every respect *the wisdom of words*, as opposed to Christ; and *secondly*, whether he means that eloquence and the doctrine of the gospel are invariably opposed, so that they cannot agree together, and that the preaching of the gospel is vitiated, if the slightest tincture of eloquence [and rhetoric] is made use of for adorning it."[18] For Paul's phrase "wisdom of words" did not refer merely to empty verbal facility but to a "true eloquence, which consists in skillful choice of subjects, in clever arrangement, and fineness of style."

In response, Calvin argues that Paul was not so "unreasonable" as to condemn groundlessly such "arts" of speaking and presentation as are "excellent gifts of God," and "instruments" to be used for the sake of expediting a valuable work. "Solid learning" and discourse based on "true principles" are "useful and suitable" for instructing society—so that Paul ought not to be understood as broadly "disparaging…the arts, as if they were unfavorable to piety."[19] Thus, in answer to the first question, Paul probably does not set the "wisdom of words" absolutely against Christ and the gospel. The second question poses more difficulty: in Paul's view, the cross of Christ cannot be confused or mingled with "wisdom of words"—for "the preaching of Christ crucified is simple and unadorned, and therefore it ought not to be obscured by false ornaments of speech." The "majesty of truth" stands in no need of trained eloquence.[20]

Still, Calvin argues for the use of an eloquence that serves the gospel, as opposed to an eloquence that rules the gospel. Augustine wisely noted that God gave ability with words both to "Peter the fisherman" and "Cyprian the orator." Of these, the superior authority is Peter, who spoke with unadorned divine authority—the follower is the orator, Cyprian, who, as it were, sat at the feet of

Peter. The place of rhetoric in preaching is, therefore, very much like that of philosophy in theology—an ancillary status. We therefore do not reject an eloquence that presents the cross of Christ rightly and that points us back "to the inherent simplicity of the Gospel," humbles itself as a herald of good news, and procures "a hearing for those fishermen and illiterate people, who have nothing to recommend them but the energy of the Spirit." This is not an "empty" rhetoric, but one that is "solid and efficacious," having "more substance than elegance."[21] The rhetorical power of Scripture is, as one translator rendered Calvin's words, "immeasurably superior" to the fine language of Demosthenes, Cicero, Plato, and Aristotle.[22]

Calvin's pulpit oratory, accordingly, took many of its specific rhetorical forms from Calvin's root assumption that, in its preaching of the Word, the church was the "school of God." Calvin commented that the prophets wrote in a style "both elegant and clear," evidencing the eloquence of the Spirit and providing an indication that even when some of the biblical writers, like Amos, Jeremiah, and Zechariah, wrote in harsher or less refined style—even with accents of "rusticity"—the true "majesty of the Spirit" was nonetheless present.[23] So also, then, following the model of Scripture itself, preaching ought to adopt a fairly plain, direct style that still uses the tools of rhetoric, but uses them specifically for the sake of edification.

As Parker, Blacketer, and others have pointed out, Calvin's basic approach to the text of Scripture in his sermons—the running comment on a selected series of verses designed to discuss the whole text rather than comment on select topics—had little or no precedent in medieval homiletics, which had followed largely topical patterns with an interest in the seasons of the church year. Rather, Calvin's sermons follow a method that parallels the medieval practice of glossing the text and working through entire books of the Bible verse by verse, a practice reminiscent of the medieval schools—indeed, of the university theological curricula, albeit accommodated to the vernacular and to a theologically uneducated audience.[24] Related to this "school" motif is Calvin's consistent use in his sermons (as distinct from other genres that came from his pen) of a theme of teaching the "ABC."[25] This theme appears both positively and negatively: Calvin will inculcate the ABC's in his own preaching while often noting that the "Papists" have failed to teach the Christian ABC's or, indeed, have failed even to learn them for themselves.

Calvin's Preaching and the Sermons on Genesis

In early September 1559, Calvin concluded his series of sermons on Isaiah and began to preach on Genesis. The Isaiah sermons had occupied Calvin for three

years; the sermons on Genesis would occupy him for a year and a half, from September 1559 to February 1561. Inasmuch as Calvin had already published his commentary on Genesis (1554), he came to his sermons with a massive preparation for the task.

The nature of a preacher's preparation for the pulpit was, moreover, of great importance to Calvin. On the one hand, Calvin strongly believed that sermons ought to be delivered extemporaneously and in a "lively" manner. His typical practice was to enter the pulpit with only the text of Scripture in the original language, and he strongly opposed the practice of "reading from a written discourse."[26] A sermon ought to be delivered in such a way that the congregation would be "touched to the quick, and…feel that what the Apostle says is true, that 'the word of God is a two-edged sword, piercing even through the thoughts and affections to the very marrow of the bones.'"[27] At the same time, Calvin warned against lack of careful study: "if I should step into the pulpit, without troubling myself to examine any book, and frivolously imagine [that]…God will give me enough to speak about, at the same time that I scorn to read or to study beforehand what I shall say, and come here without considering how to apply the holy Scripture to the edification of the people,… I should play the fool, and God also would throw me into confusion for my audacity."[28] Whether in the detailed study of his text in the original language, in his classical training as an orator, or in his extemporaneous delivery of the sermon, Calvin assumed that the heart of his work was the edification of God's people.

The nature of Calvin's approach to preaching—preparation of heart and mind for delivery without noted or written text—raises rather directly the question of the character and quality of the preserved text of the sermons. As had been the case for a decade, the Genesis sermons were recorded in stenographic form by the most famous of Calvin's scribes, Denis Raguenier. Raguenier was recognized in his day as a very accurate scribe, particularly after he became accustomed to Calvin's style. Inasmuch as he had begun his work in 1549, Raguenier was a practiced transcriber by the time Calvin began the sermons on Genesis. As previously noted, we can be reasonably certain that both the content and the style of the sermons is a faithful representation of what Calvin's congregation heard from his lips.[29]

Unfortunately, unlike the sermons on Deuteronomy and Job,[30] Calvin's sermons on Genesis were never published in entirety.[31] Instead, only a very brief selection from the lengthy series was printed: three sermons dealing with a portion of Abraham's encounter with Melchizedek (Gen. 14:13–16; 18–24), four on the theme of Abraham's justification by faith (Gen. 15:4–7), three on Abraham's obedience in the sacrifice of Isaac (Gen. 21:33–22:14), and a series

of thirteen sermons on Jacob and Esau (Gen. 25:12–27:38) saw print in the sixteenth century. The remainder of the Genesis sermons, one hundred in number, were not published.32 And the few that were committed to print for diffusion beyond Geneva were not reissued after the sixteenth century except for their inclusion in the great nineteenth-century edition of the complete works of Calvin in Latin and French.33

The three sermons on Melchizedek and the four on justification first appeared in print in French in a volume of eighteen miscellaneous sermons in 1560.34 In the same year, the sermons on Jacob and Esau were gathered together as a treatise on predestination.35 The three sermons on the sacrifice of Isaac appeared in a separate publication in the following year.36 It was only in 1565 that all of the sermons on Abraham and Melchizedek were gathered into a single volume.37 A translation of the sermons on Jacob and Esau was printed in London in 1579 and the sermons on Abraham and Melchizedek followed in 1592.38

Although thematically related, the ten sermons on Abraham and Melchizedek do not present an unbroken series. Between the last of the published Melchizedek sermons and the first of the sermons on Abraham's justification, we miss comment on Genesis 15:1–3. Between the final printed sermon on Abraham's faith and the first sermon on the sacrifice of Isaac, there is a major gap—Genesis 15:8–21:32. There is also a gap (Gen. 22:15–25:11) between the sermons on Abraham and those on Jacob and Esau. The printed sermons thus are not a continuous series, even taken by themselves: rather, they are a set of excerpts from the full series—chosen, most probably, because of their theological and religious interest: namely, the doctrines of faith, justification, godly obedience, and predestination. Indeed, these sermons, given that they were written after virtually all of the commentaries that deal with these particular themes and also after the completion of the final edition of the *Institutes*, represent Calvin's final published thoughts on these major doctrinal issues of the Reformation. They also offer a significant basis for the comparison of Calvin's homiletical approach to his approach to the same texts and issues as a commentator and as a more formal expositor of Christian doctrine.

The Sermon as a Unique Vehicle of the Word: The Genesis Sermons and the Commentary

Comparison between the sermons and Calvin's commentary on the same texts reveals significant differences in style and content. Calvin made a very clear distinction between the literary genre of the commentary and the spoken genre of the sermon. Whereas the commentary was addressed to a more scholarly

audience and was designed to hold closely to the flow of the text, the sermon was addressed to a less educated gathering and was intended to elucidate doctrinal, moral, and ecclesial issues the text raised for Calvin's hearers. To this end of popular edification, Calvin tended to cite collateral texts of Scripture more widely and broadly in his sermons than in his commentaries, and to develop doctrinal and moral topics at far greater length. (Indeed, his stated method in the commentaries demanded that he refrain from topical elaboration.) Calvin's sermons, moreover, evidence a far greater willingness than his commentaries to draw out the text of the Old Testament toward its fulfillment in the New Testament: Calvin was famous in his day for insisting that his commentaries hold closely to the letter of the text and for refusing to read the doctrine of Christ into non-messianic Old Testament texts. In the sermons, however, his interest in the fullness of the biblical message and its ultimate focus or "scope" yields a far more christological emphasis.

In addition, unlike the commentaries, Calvin had consistent recourse in his sermons to a series of rhetorical devices designed to impress the meaning of the text on listeners, as distinct from readers. There are repetitions of key phrases and motifs. Thus, Calvin frequently compared the office of preaching to a school and reminded his hearers that they were to learn their "ABC's." He frequently began or concluded a sub-point with the comment that his hearers ought to attend to "what they ought to learn" from a particular passage. He also engaged in substantive doctrinal elaboration by means of collateral texts. There is also consistent application to the congregation by means of these forms of speech: God's testing of Abraham is a basic lesson, an "ABC," a "school" that sets an example for Christians under threat and temptation in Calvin's time. Abraham, Calvin enjoins, is a "mirror" for believers who should be "conformed" to this "the father of the whole Church."[39]

The sheer size of the exposition of the text in the sermons also demands comment: by way of example, the four sermons on Abraham's faith and justification cover only Genesis 15:4–7. The first sermon deals with verses 4–6, the second with verse 6 only, the third again with verse 6 only, and the fourth with verses 6–7. In the sixteenth-century translation, these sermons run to 123 pages of text. In the commentary, despite Calvin's expanded comment on the sixth verse, the comment on verses 4–7 runs barely nine pages in the translation.[40] Of course, even by Calvin's standards, the length of these particular sermons is unusual: typically, his sermons ran no more than three or four times the length of the commentary on the same text. Still, the number of biblical citations stands in proportion to the length of the treatment: Calvin offers eight collateral citations of Scripture in the commentary (all but one in the

comment on v. 6),41 but some ninety citations and allusions in the sermons on these texts.42

Of course, the enlarged list of collateral citations is not merely a product of greater length: both the length of the sermons and the extended use of collateral citations follow from Calvin's sense of the purpose and genre of the sermon. In both his commentaries and his sermons, Calvin presented a verse-by-verse exposition of the biblical text, but the exposition found in the commentaries is less elaborate and less given to topical expansion than that in the sermons. The difference between these two forms of exposition stands in direct relation to Calvin's critique of the method of Melanchthon's commentary on Romans.

As opposed to Melanchthon, whose topical method strove to draw out only the central issues of each section of a biblical book, Calvin understood the entirety of the text as normative and in need of exposition, both in its narrative flow and in its varied issues and themes. But this highly textual or even narrative approach took two distinct forms in Calvin's work. Calvin's commentaries examine the entire text but often give the impression of a rather pared-down discussion of text: there is little expansion of ideas, only sparing collateral citation, no topical digression, and (even in places where the debates of the day impinged most clearly on the biblical text) little interest in polemic. Unlike the commentary, however, in which Calvin's purpose was brevity and directness of expression for the sake of a more scholarly exposition of text, the sermons follow a model of pedagogical amplification for the sake of the religious edification of the laity.43 Here, in a sense, the sermon returns more positively to the rejected method of Melanchthon: Calvin still refuses to follow his Lutheran colleague in a radical emphasis on topics to the exclusion of a running comment on the text, but he does (in the sermon) expand his running commentary for the sake of drawing out the key theological topics toward which the text points. In particular, the broader biblical reach of the sermon in its collateral citations stands in direct proportion to the edificatory and polemical amplification found in the sermon.

This pattern is evident in Calvin's presentation of the theme of justification by faith. The presentation is broad, rhetorically and theologically amplified, replete with collateral citations, and drenched in polemic. The phrase "that Abram believed God, and he counted this to him for righteousness" Calvin identifies as central to the religious insight of the Reformation—and so seemingly simple that no one should miss its meaning. Calvin comments, however, that the Jews "are so blind and foolish" that they misunderstand the text, while "barely…one in a hundred" Christians grasp its meaning. Yet, he continues, if only these words were rightly understood they would "without doubt utterly abolish the Papacy:

all the superstitions presently in vogue would cease: all the debates in which we are involved would be resolved."[44] This teaching, Calvin continues, is "the key to opening all that is needed for our salvation"; it is "the foundation of true Religion."[45]

According to Calvin, the first point at issue in the text is the meaning of the word "belief" or "faith"—a point of error and confusion among the "Papists," who do not grasp the issue: "And here is why the Papists are so entangled in their errors: for however much they acknowledge in part that we are justified by faith, they cannot fully receive and accept this. And the reason? It is because they don't at all understand the word Faith, or the word Believe."[46] By way of explanation, Calvin first offers the metaphor of a singer who may have a fine voice, but whose music is incomplete without the other voices. Even so, "if the word of God does not precede, and if faith is not in harmony with it, there will be no music."[47] The Word of God and faith are inseparable. Calvin gives another example (with obviously negative ethnic overtones, for the amusement of the congregation): a person can speak of "belief" in the manner of a "high German," rendering the word "barbarous," as is common among the "Papists." Nor, continues Calvin, is this faith merely a receiving of the Word with reverent assent as the "certain and sure" Word of God.[48] "What, then, is it to Believe? It is to receive what is spoken to us from the mouth of God, with such reverence… that all doubt be removed from us."[49] This is what the "Papists" cannot grasp. Even so, God spoke authoritatively to Cain, who heard and answered faithlessly. Calvin continues,

> Adam clearly heard the same voice: Where are you? but he was seized with dread and fear, he hid himself, and tried to find some abyss in which to flee the presence of God. It is not enough that we receive the word given to us by God with the authority that it deserves: but it is necessary that this word be specified, that is to say, it must be a word made certain for us to approach God, and for us become partakers of his goodness: such that we do not doubt that he will be Father and Savior, and that we will gain from it the strength to call him, and hold to him as his children, and have our refuge in him.[50]

We find nothing quite like this in Calvin's commentary on the text. There, he offers no basic definition, but discusses the relationship of faith to the promise and, as his explanation of the way in which faith may be said to justify, offers a fairly technical distinction—faith is not the "efficient" but the "formal" cause of our righteousness before God. There are no musical metaphors, no comments about Germanic mispronunciations, no asides to Adam or Cain, no polemics

against the “Papists.”51 The argument in the sermon, by way of contrast, is not unlike Calvin’s more topical discussion and definition of faith in the *Institutes*,52 namely, that true faith does not merely accept the authority and truthfulness of God’s Word but also grasps the Word in profound trust that the God who speaks is the merciful Father of believers in and through the work of Christ Jesus. Yet the style or rhetoric of the sermon differs radically from that of the *Institutes*. In Calvin’s sermon, the style is suited to the form of direct address to a congregation: the homiletical style is simpler, less technical, more aware of the need for the immediate application of biblical teaching to the contemporary situation. There are no lengthy clauses, no complex constructions. Calvin’s phrases are short and pointed. His examples, Cain and Adam, are intended for the unlearned, who nonetheless know the biblical story. His warnings about the “Papists” address what he recognized as an immediate spiritual threat in a population not long reformed in its religion; and his implication could not be more clear—have faith as “Papists” have it, merely on authority, and one is no better off than the terrified Adam or the unrepentant and fratricidal Cain.

Calvin’s sermon moves next to the issue of “imputation.” It is faith, understood as a personal approach to God and appropriation of God’s truth that “is imputed for righteousness.” Quite in contrast to his commentary on the text, where Calvin develops the meaning of imputation textually in the light of several other Old Testament passages and with limited specific recourse to Paul,53 Calvin’s sermon holds to its fundamentally Pauline pattern of exposition and moves by way of a single citation of Psalm 32, toward a summary definition of the term: it is of paramount importance that Christians understand the meaning of the term “impute.” Here, again, Calvin evidences his sensitivity to the audience: the verb *imputer,* he comments, can be taken to have a highly negative meaning “in our French language.” One would never say “that a virtue is imputed to a person, inasmuch as this word Impute carries with it some reproach and guilt: we say that something was imputed as a fault.”54 Scripture, however, uses “a single word for good as for ill, as when God imputes righteousness, and does not impute sins.”55

In the sermon, moreover, as distinct from the commentary, it is necessary that the Old Testament message and its promise be placed fully into the interpretive context of the New Testament fulfillment. Drawing probably on his legal training, Calvin makes it clear that the imputation of righteousness can only be understood in contrast to the imputation of sinfulness: “For when it is said, that sins are imputed to us, it is as if to say that the record is established, that our legal process is done, and that nothing remains but to pass sentence and to execute it.”56

The imputation of righteousness, then removes "the imputation of guilt" that was the basis for judgment and condemnation.57 When the text states that Abram's belief or faith was imputed as righteousness or, indeed, that he was justified by faith, it indicated that Abram was absolved of his sins on account of his faith, so that one who could not have been called righteous through his works was nonetheless counted as righteous. This Old Testament example of Abram, Calvin continues, was cited by St. Paul as the rule for our reconciliation to God. This is the most basic teaching, the ABC all Christians must understand as "the perfection of all our wisdom" and "the foundations of our faith," if they would attend the "school of God" with profit.58 For, returning to "the article" of faith set forth in the sermon, if "Abram brought nothing with him in order to be accepted before God," but rested entirely "on the pure grace and graciousness that was contained in the promise," it is clear that "throughout his life he was justified solely by means of faith."59 The example of Abram sets God's truth against "the lies of the Papacy, and the errors with which all of these hellish schools are infected."60 By direct implication the preaching of reform in Geneva is the "school of God," countering the papal school of hell. Once again, such language is not to be found in the commentary on the text, but the rhetoric of the sermon thrives on the metaphor of contrasting schools and the juxtaposition of a profitable ABC with infernal error.

Concluding Thoughts

By way of conclusion, we can first note that Bouwsma's assessment of Calvin's sermons and his contrast between the style of the commentaries as illustrative of rhetoric and that of the sermons as lacking in rhetoric is simply incorrect. There is comparatively little evidence of *copia* and *amplificatio* in the commentaries. Their style is rather sparse and utilitarian, as Jean Budé noticed in Calvin's own time. There is, by contrast, considerable rhetorical development in the sermons, particularly in the form of *amplificatio,* together with an occasional rhetorical flight, and always with a clear sense of audience and a telling choice of words. Of course, Calvin's assumptions concerning *copia* and *amplificatio* are not so much Erasmian as Agricolan and Melanchthonian: *amplificatio* occurs not so much for the sake of ornamentation as for the sake of edification, and *copia* appears not so much in the form of classical allusion as in the concatenation of metaphor and allusion drawn from a more common or popular knowledge base. Calvin's homiletical rhetoric, then, evidences adaptation to the needs of addressing a less educated audience than the audience of the commentaries or, indeed, of the Latin *Institutes.*

There is one issue, of course, that must remain unresolved. We can be

reasonably sure that the transcripts of Calvin's sermons were accurate and that we therefore know not only what he said but the words and even the syntax he used. What we cannot adequately reconstruct, however, is the actual delivery—how Calvin spoke—and so much of oratory has to do with delivery. The exceedingly long paragraphs of the sermon texts and even sometimes the punctuation stand as a barrier to Calvin's oratorical style at the same time that they stand as a vehicle of his meaning. We do, however, get glimpses of the oratory, if only by contrast with the style of the commentary. Here in the sermon there are rhetorical questions addressed to the congregation, many of them only a few words in length. Thus, Calvin indicates that the "Papists" do not understand justification. Period. Then he asks simply, "And the reason?"[61] He answers his own question in fairly short phrases, in the text, set apart by colons, each one a unit. Or, again, he paraphrases Paul: "The Law, he says, cannot have any agreement with faith, they are two incompatible things." Then, a question: "And how so?" And another question: "Isn't God the author of the Law as well as the Gospel?" And another: "Is there any contrariety or repugnance in him?" Then an answer: "Certainly not, he is immutable." Then a further question: "And why then does Saint Paul find such contrariety between the Law and the gospel?" Answer: "It is with respect to our justification. And so it is between faith and works."[62] Passages like this occur with frequency. The style is pointed. It anticipates questions and demands attention. It is suited to a very basic instruction. Even so, Calvin returns to his school metaphors again and again—contrasting the hellish school of error with the school of God, preaching a simple ABC to his hearers.

Beyond this, it is also arguable that Calvin's homiletical oratory evidences adaptation to the style of Scripture itself, as understood by Calvin—a point Bouwsma entirely missed, looking only for a more or less Ciceronian rhetoric in Calvin's sermons, where, in fact, it would have gone unappreciated by Calvin's hearers. As Calvin himself, together with other writers of his time (like Hyperius) indicated of Scripture, its patterns of speech and argument, reflecting the divine address to a chosen people, could be as movingly eloquent as the words of classical orators, but they could also take on different accents, offering a pointed message in rude or rough-hewn forms of speech. Calvin noted these rougher forms particularly among some of the prophets and he also understood the prophets as preachers. And if, as the marginal heading in the Second Helvetic Confession indicates, "the preaching of the word of God is the word of God," how better to accomplish that end by not only preaching on the words of the text but also, in one's own exposition, reflecting the "immeasurably superior" rhetoric of the sacred text itself.

1. In the following essay, Calvin's works are cited from *Ioannis Calvini opera quae supersunt omnia*, ed. Guilielmus Baum, Eduardus Cunitz, and Eduardus Reuss, 59 vols. (Brunswick: Schwetschke, 1863–1900), hereinafter *CO*; the commentaries are translated in *Calvin's Commentaries*, 46 vols. (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1844–1851), hereinafter *CTS*, followed by the name of the biblical book, e.g., *CTS Romans*.

2. E.g., Quirinus Breen, *John Calvin: A Study in French Humanism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1931); Breen, "John Calvin and the Rhetorical Tradition," in *Christianity and Humanism: Studies in the History of Ideas* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968), 107–129; E. David Willis, "Persuasion in Calvin's Theology," in *Calvin and Christian Ethics,* ed. Peter De Klerk, 83–94; Willis, "Rhetoric and Responsbility in Calvin's Theology," in *The Context of Contemporary Theology: Essays in Honor of Paul Lehmann*, ed. Alexander McKelway and E. David Willis (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1974), 43–63; William J. Bouwsma, "Calvin and the Renaissance Crisis of Knowing," in *Calvin Theological Journal* 17, no. 2 (1982): 190–211; Bouwsma, "Calvinism as *Theologia rhetorica*," in *Calvinism as Theologia rhetorica,* ed. Wilhelm Wuellner (Berkeley: Center for Hermeneutical Studies, 1986), 1–21; Bouwsma, *John Calvin: A Sixteenth-Century Portrait* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Olivier Millet, *Calvin et la Dynamique de la Parole. Étude de rhétorique réformée* (Paris: Librairie Honoré Champion, 1992); Serene Jones, *Calvin and the Rhetoric of Piety* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995).

3. See Millet, *Calvin et la dynamique de la parole,* 20–22.

4. Bouwsma, "Calvinism as *Theologia rhetorica*," 12–13.

5. Note that a view of Calvin's preaching quite contrary to that of Bouwsma is expressed in Rodolphe Peter, "Rhétorique et prédication selon Calvin," in *Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuses* 55 (1975): 249–272.

6. Contra Bouwsma, "Calvinism as *Theologia rhetorica*," 12. Calvin's own assertions concerning the *brevitas* characteristic of his style as commentator can be found in: Calvin, *Commentarii ad Romanos* (Strasbourg, 1540), "Calvinus…Grynaeo," fol. A5v; also in *CO* 10, col. 404–405 (*CTS Romans*, p. xxvi); Calvin, *In Lib. Psalmorum Comm., Calvinus lectoribus,* in *CO* 31, col. 35 (*CTS Psalms* 1, p. xlix); Calvin, *In primum Mosis Comm…Dedicatio*, in *CO* 20, col. 121 (*CTS Genesis* I, p. liii). Also see Richard Gamble, "*Brevitas et facilitas:* Toward an Understanding of Calvin's Hermeneutic," in *Westminster Theological Journal* 47 (1985): 1–17.

7. See, e.g., Jean Calvin, *Sermons sur les deux Epistres S. Paul à Timothée, et sur l'Epistre à Tite* (Geneva: 1561), sermon 6 on 2 Tim. 1:13–14 and sermon 13 on 2 Tim. 2:16–18, in *CO* 54, col. 70, 153–154; also note *Sermons of M. John Calvin, on the Epistles of S. Paule to Timothie and Titus*, trans. L. T. (London: G. Bishop and T. Woodcoke, 1579), 752, col. 2; 754, col. 1; 806, col. 2. Also note Calvin to Somerset, October 22, 1548, in *CO* 13, cols. 70–71; translated in *Selected Works of John Calvin: Tracts and Letters*, ed. Henry Beveridge and Jules Bonnet (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983), 2:190.

8. Jean Budé in Calvin, *Praelect. in proph. minores*, *CO* 42, col. 187–188 (*CTS Minor Prophets* 1, pp. xxvi–xxvii); cf. T. H. L. Parker, *Calvin's Preaching* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1992), 132.

9. See, e.g., Jean Calvin, *Sermons sur les deux Epistres S. Paul à Timothée, et sur l'Epistre à Tite* (Geneva, 1561), sermon 6 on II Tim. 1:13–14 and sermon 13 on II Tim. 2:16-18, in *CO* 54, col. 70, 153–154; also note *Sermons of M. John Calvin, on the Epistles of S. Paule to Timothie and Titus*, trans. L. T. (London: G. Bishop and T. Woodcoke, 1579), pp. 754, col. 1; 806, col. 2; and note Calvin to Somerset, 22 October 1548, in *CO* 13, cols. 70–71 (*Letters*, II, p. 190).

10. Contra Bouwsma, "Calvinism as *theologia rhetorica*," 12. See Calvin's comments on the style of his commentaries in the prefatory letter to his Romans commentary, "Calvinus Grynaeo," in *CO* 10, col. 402–403; *brevitas* can equally well be paired with *claritas* or *sinceritas* in Calvin's view of style: see Pannier, *Calvin Écrivain*, 10–11. Cf. Richard Gamble, "*Brevitas et facilitas*: Toward and Understanding of Calvin's Hermeneutic," in *Westminster Theological Journal*, 47 (1985), 1–17.

11. John Calvin, *Sermons sur le livre de Moyse, nommé Deutéronome*, in *CO* 25, col. 587; in translation, *Sermons of M. Iohn Calvin upon the Fifth Book of Moses called Deuteronomie*, trans. Arthur Golding (London: Henry Middleton, 1583; facsimile repr., Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1993), fol. v, recto.

12. Parker, *Calvin's Preaching*, 66–68.

13. See Debora K. Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric: The Christian Grand Style in the English Renaissance* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988).

14. Andreas Gerardus Hyperius, *De formandis concionibus sacris seu de interpretatione scripturarum populari libri II* (Marburg, 1553); also printed at Dortmund (1555), Marburg (1562), Basel (1563, 1579) and in English translation as *The Practis of Preaching* (London, 1577). On Hyperius's approach to homiletics, see Petrus Biesterveld, *Andreas Hyperius, voornamelijk als homileet* (Kampen: Zalsman, 1895); and Graham Allan David Scott, "La première Homilétique Protestante: Le 'De formandis concionibus sacris seu de interpretatione scriptuarum populari libri II,' 1553 et 1562, d' André Gérard Hyperius (1511–1564)," introduction, traduction, et notes (PhD thesis: Protestant Faculty of the University of Strasbourg II, 1971); also note Ernst Christian Achelis and Eugen Sachsse, *Die Homiletik und die Katechetik des Andreas Hyperius* (Berlin: Reuther & Reichard, 1901), which offers an introduction and a German translation of *De formandis concionibus.*

15. John Calvin, *Institutio christianae religionis nunc vere demum suo titulo respondens* (Strasbourg: Wendelin Rihel, 1539), 1:12–13; cf. John Calvin, *Institutio christianae religionis* (Geneva: Robert Stephanus, 1559), I.viii.1.

16. Calvin, *Institutio* (1559), I.viii.2.

17. Calvin, *Comm. in priorem Epist. ad Corinthios*, in *CO* 49, col. 297, 304 (*CTS 1 Corinthians*, 37, 46).

18. Calvin, *Comm. in priorem Epist. ad Corinthios*, 1:17 in *CO* 49, col. 320(*CTS 1 Corinthians*, 75); the bracketed words "and rhetoric" are found in the French version only: Jean Calvin, *Commentaires de M. Jehan Calvin sur toutes les Epistres de l'Apostre S. Paul, et aussi sur l'Epistre aux Hebrieux. Item sur les Epistres canoniques de S. Pierre, S. Jehan, S. Jaques, et S. Jude* (Geneva: Conrad Badius, 1556), 182.

19. Calvin, *Comm. in priorem Epist. ad Corinthios*, 1:17 in *CO* 49, col. 320 (*CTS 1 Corinthians*, 75).

20. Calvin, *Comm. in priorem Epist. ad Corinthios*, 1:17 in *CO* 49, col. 321 (*CTS 1 Corinthians*, 76).

21. Calvin, *Comm. in priorem Epist. ad Corinthios*, 1:17 in *CO* 49, col. 322 (*CTS 1 Corinthians*, 77–78).

22. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge, (Edinburgh, 1845; repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), I.viii.1; cf. Calvin, *Institutio* (1559), I.viii.1, where Calvin's phrase is "tanto intervallo superunt."

23. Calvin, *Institutio* (1559), I.viii.2; on the impact of the more simple style of Scripture on Christian rhetoric, see Debora K. Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric: The Christian Grand Style in the English Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

24. Parker, *Calvin's Preaching* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1992), 30; Raymond A. Blacketer, *The School of God: Pedagogy and Rhetoric in Calvin's Interpretation of Deuteronomy* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006), 30–32.

25. Cf. Blacketer, *School of God*, 23–27, 52–59, 84, 98–99, et passim.

26. Calvin to Somerset, 22 October 1548, in *CO* 13, cols. 70–71 (*Tracts and Letters*, 5:190).

27. Calvin to Somerset, 22 October 1548, in *CO* 13, cols. 70–71 (*Tracts and Letters*, 5:190).

28. John Calvin, *Sermons de M. Jean Calvin sur le v. livre de Moyse nommé Deuteronome* (Geneva: Thomas Courteau, 1567), in *CO* 26, col. 473–474; in translation, *Sermons of Calvin upon the Fifth Book of Moses*, trans. Golding, p. 292, col. 1.

29. See Parker, *Calvin's Preaching*, 65–8. Also see the survey of Calvin's homiletical efforts in Wulfert de Greef, *The Writings of John Calvin: An Introductory Guide*, trans. Lyle D. Bierma (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 110–120.

30. See John Calvin, *Sermons sur le livre de Iob: recueillis fidelement de sa bouche selon qu'il les preschoit* (Geneva: Jean de Laon, 1563); in translation, *Sermons of Maister Iohn Calvin, upon the Book of Iob*, trans. Golding (London: George Bishop, 1574).

31. The "incredible" (and ongoing) story of the loss and rediscovery of the large bulk of Calvin's sermons is recounted in Bernard Gagnebin, "L'incroyable historie des sermons de Calvin," in *Bulletin de la Société d'Historie et d'Archéologie de Genève* 10, no. 4 (1955): 311–34; Richard Stauffer, "Les sermons inédits de Calvin sur le livre de la Genèse," in *Revue de Théologie et de Philosophie*, 3 ser., 15 (1965): 26–

36; and Max Engammare, “Calvin Incognito in London: the Rediscovery in London of Sermons on Isaiah,” in *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society* 26, no. 4 (1996): 453–462.

32. See the modern edition in *Supplementa Calvniana*, ed. Max Engammare (Neukirchen: Neukirchner Verlag, 1961ff.), vol. 11: *Sermons sur la Genèse*, two parts published, pt. 1, ch. 1:1–11:4; pt. 2, ch. 11:5–20.

33. See *CO*. The locations of Calvin’s sermons on Melchizedek and Abraham are as follows: the three sermons on Melchizedek, vol. 23, cols. 641–82; the four sermons on Abraham’s faith, vol. 23, cols. 683–740; the three sermons on Abraham’s obedience, vol. 23, cols. 741–84.

34. Jean Calvin, *Dixhuict sermons auquels, entres autres poincts, l’histoire de Melchisédech et la matiére de la iustification, sont déduites, avec l’exposition de trois cantiques, assavoir de la V. Marie, de Zacharie et de Simeon* (Geneva: Bonnefoy, 1560).

35. Jean Calvin, *Traité de la prédestination éternelle de Dieu* (Geneva: Durand, 1560); also in *CO* 58, cols. 1–206.

36. Jean Calvin, *Trois sermons sur le sacrifice d’Abraham* (Geneva: Girard, 1561).

37. Jean Calvin, *Sermons sur l’histoire de Melchisedec, la justification et le sacrifice d’Abraham* (Geneva: Durand, 1565).

38. John Calvin, *Thirteen Sermons of Maister Iohn Calvin, Entreating of the Free Election of God in Iacob, and of Reprobation in Esau. A treatise wherein every Christian may see the excellent benefites of God towardes his Children, and his marvellous iudgements towards the reprobate*, trans. Iohn Fielde (London: Dawson, 1579); *The Sermon of Maister Iohn Caluin on the Historie of Melchisedech: Wherein is also handeled, Abrahams courage in rescuing his Nephew Lot: and his Godliness in paying tithes to Melchisedech. Also, Abrahams Faith, in belieuing God: comprehending foure Sermons. And, Abrahams Obedience, in offering his sonne Isaak; in three Sermons*, trans. Thomas Stocker (London: John Windet, 1592) [hereafter cited as *Sermons on Melchisedech and Abraham*].

39. Calvin, *Sermons sur l’histoire de Melchisedec*, in *CO* 23, col. 747, 748.

40. See John Calvin, *In primum Mosis librum, qui Genesis vulgo dicitur, commentarius* (Geneva, 1554), in *CO* 23, col. 210–215; in translation, *CTS Genesis*, 1:403–411.

41. Calvin, *In primum Mosis librum*, *CO* 23, col. 210–215, citing in the comment on v. 6, Rom. 4:3; Ps. 106:31; Lev. 7:18 and 17:4; 2 Sam. 19:19; 2 Kings 12:15; Rom. 4:4; and (in v. 7) 2 Tim. 2:12; cf. *CTS Genesis*, 1:403–411.

42. Calvin, *Sermons sur l’histoire de Melchisedec*, in *CO* 23, col. 683–740, referencing without overt citation: in the first sermon, Gal. 4:23; Isa. 10:22–23; Ps. 147:4; 2 Cor. 3:14–15; Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6; Rom. 10:17; Gen. 15:1; 1 Tim. 4:8; Jer. 30:22; Ps. 32:2; in the second sermon, Prov. 21:2; Luke 16:15; Acts 15:9; Ps. 130:7; 2 Cor. 9:7; Rom. 3:10–18; Rom. 8:7–8; Ps. 132:15; Isa. 61:1; Matt. 11:28–29; Eph. 2:8–10; 2 Tim. 3:16; Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 2 Cor. 7:9–11; Rom 4:15; Lev. 18:5; Rom. 7:9–10; Ex. 20: 13–15, 17; Ex. 20:3; Deut. 27:26; Gal. 3:12; Eph.1:4–6; Rom. 3:9, 19; Gal. 3:17; Eph 1:6?; John 1:16?; Ps. 32:1; Lev. 18:5; Luke 17:10; Ps. 51:17; in the third sermon, Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; John 1:12; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 5:5; Eph. 1:13–14; 2 Cor. 1:22; Rom. 4:14; Ps. 143:2; Lev. 18:5; James 2:11; Matt. 19:6; Prov. 20:9; Gen. 22:10; Rom. 10:9, 11; Rom. 10:6; John 14:2; Matt. 27:46; Rom. 8:33; Rom. 4:24–25?; Luke 18:11–13; Eph. 3:12; Rom. 7:19; 8:30; Ps. 19:12; John 3:16; 2 Cor. 5:19–21; John 17:19; 1 Cor. 13:13; Rom. 3:21?; John 6:29; Rom. 8:10; and in the fourth sermon: Matt. 9:13; 1 Tim. 1:13; 2 Tim. 1:9?; Titus 3:5; Num. 25:7; Ps. 106:30–31; Col. 1:5: Rom. 3:24–25; James 2:24; Eph. 5:27; 1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 11:6; Ps. 90:4; 2 Peter 3: 3, 4, 8; see also Calvin, *Sermons on Melchisedech and Abraham*, 93–218, where the texts are identified.

43. See Blacketer, “*L’École de Dieu:* Pedagogy and Method in Calvin’s Interpretation of Deuteronomy” (PhD diss.: Calvin Theological Seminary, 1998); on the method of the commentaries, also see Gamble, “*Brevitas et facilitas*,” in *Westminster Theological Journal* 47 (1985): 1–17.

44. Calvin, *Sermons sur l’histoire de Melchisedec*, in *CO* 23, col. 687–688.

45. Calvin, *Sermons sur l’histoire de Melchisedec*, in *CO* 23, col. 688.

46. “Et voila pourquoy les Papistes sont ainsi entortillez en leurs erreurs: car combien qu’ils confessent en partie que nous soyone iustifiez par foy, si est-ce qu’ils ne peuvent recevoir ny accepter que ce soit du tout. Et la raison? C’est qu’ils n’entendent point ce mot de Foy, ou ce mot de Croire.” Calvin, *Sermons sur*

l'histoire de Melchisedec, in *CO* 23, col. 689.

47. Calvin, *Sermons sur l'histoire de Melchisedec*, in *CO* 23, col. 689.

48. Calvin, *Sermons sur l'histoire de Melchisedec*, in *CO* 23, col. 689, naming the apostle and referencing the text (Rom. 10:17) without direct citation.

49. "Qu'est-ce donc de Croire? C'est de recevoir ce qui nous est proposé de la bouche de Dieu, avec telle reverence…que toute doute soit excluse de nous." Calvin, *Sermons sur l'histoire de Melchisedec*, in *CO* 23, col. 689.

50. "Adam mesmes a bien ouy ceste voix: Où es-tu? mais il a esté saisi d'epouvantement et d'effroy, il e'est caché, et eust voulu trouver quelque absyme pour fuir le presence de Dieu. Il ne suffira pas donc que nous recevions la parole qui nous est donnée de Dieu en telle authorité qu'elle merite: mail il faut que ceste parole soit qualifiéem c'est à dire, il faut que ce soit une certaine parole pour nous faire approcher de Dieu, et pour nous faire participans de sa bonté: que nous ne doutions point qu'il nous sera Pere et Sauveur, et que là dessus nous ayons la hardiesse de le reclamer, et ous tenir pour ses enfants, et avoir nostre refuge à luy." Calvin, *Sermons sur l'histoire de Melchisedec*, in *CO* 23, col. 689.

51. Calvin, *In primum Mosis librum*, *CO* 23, col. 213, citing Rom. 4:4 on faith as counted for righteousness (cf. *CTS Genesis*, 1:406–407).

52. Calvin, *Institutio* (1559), III.ii.7.

53. Calvin, *In primum Mosis librum*, *CO* 23, col. 211–212 (*CTS Genesis*, 1:405).

54. "Or en nostre langage françois Imputer se prens tousiours en mauvaise part: on ne dira pas qu'une vertu soit imputée à un homme, car le mot d'Imputer emporte quelque reproche et quelque coulpe: on dira, cela luy sera imputé à faute." Calvin, *Sermons sur l'histoire de Melchisedec*, in *CO* 23, col. 691.

55. "Or l'Escriture a un mot commun tant pour le bien que pour le mal, c'est que Dieu impute iustice, et n'impute point les pechez." Calvin, *Sermons sur l'histoire de Melchisedec*, in *CO* 23, col. 691–692.

56. "Car quand it est dit que les pechez nous sont imputez, c'est à dire que les registres demeurent là, que nos procez soint faicts, qu'il ne reste que donner sentence et la mettre en execution." Calvin, *Sermons sur l'histoire de Melchisedec*, in *CO* 23, col. 692.

57. Calvin, *Sermons sur l'histoire de Melchisedec*, in *CO* 23, col. 692.

58. Calvin, *Sermons sur l'histoire de Melchisedec*, in *CO* 23, col. 694.

59. "Venons à l'article que i'ay toouché, cest qu' Abram n'a rien apporté qui soit pour estre accepté de dieu: mais il s'est du tout appuyé sur la pure grace et liberalité qui estoit contenue en la promesse…. Et ansi it sensuit de là, qu' Abram donc tout le temps de sa vie a esté iustifié par se seul moyen de la foy." Calvin, *Sermons sur l'histoire de Melchisedec*, in *CO* 23, col. 694.

60. "Les mensonges de la Papauté, et les erreurs doont toutes ces escoles infernales son infectées." Calvin, *Sermons sur l'histoire de Melchisedec*, in *CO* 23, col. 694.

61. Calvin, *Sermons sur l'histoire de Melchisedec*, in *CO* 23, col. 689.

62. "La Loy, dit il, ne peut avoir nulle convenance avec la foy, ce sont desu choses incompatibles. Et en quelle sort? Dieu n'est-i; pas autheur de la Loy comme de l'Evanglie? Y a-il contrarieté ni repugnance en luy? Il est bien dertain que non, it est immuable. Et pourquoy donc est-ce aue sainct Paul trouve une telle contrarieté entre la Loy et l'Evangile? C'est au regard de nous iustifier. Autant en est-il entre la foy et les oeuvres…." Calvin, *Sermons sur l'histoire de Melchisedec*, in *CO* 23, col. 704.

CHAPTER 4

Calvin's Lectures on Zechariah: Textual Notes

Al Wolters

As a preliminary to a broader study of Calvin's exegesis of the book of Zechariah, the following essay deals with some questions of textual criticism regarding Calvin's lectures on this biblical book.[1] Although in general the Latin text of these lectures in the *Corpus Reformatorum* series[2] (which is the one that is most readily available) can be considered reliable, there are a few places where errors have crept in, some of which affect the sense. In what follows I will discuss the places where I believe it needs to be corrected. To make these corrections, I will draw on three previous editions of the Latin text (those of 1559, 1581, and 1610), as well as the three translations known to me (French, English, and Dutch).

T. H. L. Parker speaks of "three forms of exposition" with respect to Calvin's published work on the Old Testament: sermons, lectures, and commentaries.[3] It is clear that his exposition of Zechariah belongs to the middle category. It is part of the series of hour-long lectures on the Minor Prophets he delivered to students at the Geneva school, which preceded the academy, in the late 1550s. Of the 182 lectures on the Minor Prophets, the ones on Zechariah comprise numbers 134 to 168, and can be dated to the years 1558–1559.[4] The published form of the lectures is a verbatim transcript of Calvin's oral delivery, taken down in shorthand by two of his students, and thus retains something of the informal style of his lectures.[5]

For the following text-critical notes on the lectures on Zechariah, I have consulted these editions of Calvin's lectures on the Minor Prophets:

> **1559** *Ioannis Calvini Praelectiones in duodecim prophetas (quos vocant) minores…: reconditam harum commentationum doctrinam facile commonstrabunt indices in calce operis adiecti.* Genevae: apud Joannem Crispinum, M. D. LIX.
>
> **1581** *Ioannis Calvini Praelectiones, in duodecim prophetas (quos vocant) minores…Ad serenissimum Suetiae & Gothiae regem. Reconditam harum commentationum doctrinam facile commonstrabunt indices in calce operis*

adiecti. Genevae: apud Eustathium Vignon, M.D.L.XXXI.

1610 *Ioannis Calvini Praelectiones in duodecim prophetas (quos vocant) minores…: reconditam harum commentationum doctrinam facile commonstrabunt indices in calce operis adiecti.* Genevae: apud Joannem Vignon, 1610.6

In addition, the following translations have been compared:

1560 *Leçons et expositions familieres de Iehan Caluin sur les douze petis Prophetes…traduites de Latin en Francois.* Geneve: Par Nicolas Barbier, & Thomas Courteau. M. D. LX.7

1849 *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets. By John Calvin. Now first translated from the original Latin. By the Rev. John Owen…Volume Fifth. Zechariah and Malachi* (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1849).8

1978 *Verklaring van de Bijbel door Johannes Calvijn. De kleine profeten, deel V: Zacharia* (trans. W. de Graaf; Goudriaan, The Netherlands: De Groot, 1978).9

It is important to bear in mind that the 1560 French translation appeared in Geneva almost immediately after the publication of the *editio princeps*, and may well have been produced under Calvin's supervision, if not by his own hand. One indication of this is the fact that the translation is often quite free, occasionally adding material not found in the Latin.10 A few representative examples are the following.11

(1) On Zechariah 1:13.

Latin (14312): *Hoc est dare verba.* (This is to utter only words.)

French (46213): *il ne le fait point, mais il parle seulement. Or cela ne sont que parolles, comme il semble.* (he does not do it, but he only speaks. Now these are only words, as it seems.)

(2) On Zechariah 1:15.

Latin (146): *Et hunc etiam locum arripuit ille qui scripsit nuper contra Dei providentiam, quasi impii lasciviant et non cohibeantur manu et potentia Dei.* (And that fellow who recently wrote against the providence of God has also seized upon this passage, as though the ungodly do as they please, and are not restrained by the hand and power of God.)

French (463). *Et ce brouillon aussi lequel a escrit dernierement & désgorgé*

ses blasphemes contre la Providence de Dieu, n'a point eu honte de prendre ce passage, comme si les meschans & contempteurs se desbordoyent a leur plaisir, & qu'ils ne fussent point reprimez de la main & puissance de Dieu. (And that *muddlehead* too who recently wrote *and spat out his blasphemies* against the providence of God, *was shameless enough to* adduce this passage, as though the wicked and irreverent indulged in *whatever excess they like*, and that they were not restrained by the hand and power of God.)

This is no doubt a reference to the anonymous author (probably Sebastian Castellio) of a now-lost tract attacking Calvin's views on predestination, to which the latter had replied in his *Calumniae nebulonis cuiusdam de occulta providenta Dei* in 1558, just months before. The French translator's additions to the text here (here printed in italics) have all the marks of Calvin's own polemical style, notably the word *brouillon* (the French equivalent of *nebulo*) to describe Castellio.

(3) On Zechariah 14:20.

Latin (387): *ita factum est ut violenter verba ad sensum suum traherent.* (thus it has come about that [interpreters] have distorted the text violently to yield their own meaning.)

French (563): *De là est advenu qu'ils ont tiré comme par les cheveux les mots pour les faire servir à ce qu'ils avoyent imaginé* (Hence it has come about that they have pulled the words by the hair, as it were, to make them subservient to what they had imagined.)

Here the translator gives a colorful elaboration of Calvin's use of the verb *trahere*, "to distort," literally, "to drag" or "pull."

There is even reason to believe that the French translation was based not on the printed Latin text, but on a manuscript copy which preceded the printing.[14] We can deduce this from the fact that, generally, the French translation faithfully reflects the Latin text as printed, but occasionally differs from it, and does not take into account the list of *errata* printed at the end of the 1559 edition.

The latter are mistakes in the printed Latin text of 1559, together with their corrections. With respect to Zechariah, these corrections involve the following six places.[15]

(4) On Zechariah 1:16, referring to the Hebrew word *qaw* in Isaiah 28:17.

1559 edition (607.27): *ut Iesaiae 29* (as in Isaiah 29).

Correction: *Isa 28.*

French (464): *comme en Isaie au 29. chap.* (as in Isaiah 29).

(5) On Zechariah 3:7, apparently referring to 1 Corinthians 11:10.

1559 edition (623.2): *ut Paulus docet 14. cap. prioris Epistolae ad Corinthios* (as Paul teaches in 1 Cor. 14).

Correction: *docet 11. cap.*

French (476): *ainsi que sainct Paul en parle au 14. de la premiere aux Corinthiens* (as St. Paul speaks of it in 1 Cor. 14).

(6) On Zechariah 3:9, referring to the precious stone of Isaiah 28:16.

1559 edition (624.38): *capite octavo Iesaiae* (in the eighth chapter of Isaiah).

Correction: *cap. 28*

French (477): *en ce 8. chap. d'Isaie* (in this eighth chapter of Isaiah).

(7) On Zechariah 13:9, referring to Matthew 3:12.

1559 edition (721.25): *Nam et stipula in ignem coniicitur et paleae, quemadmodum Christus docet* (For also straw and chaff are thrown into the fire, as Christ teaches).

Correction: *Ioannes Baptista* (John the Baptist).

French (552): *car la paille est iettee au feu, comme nostre Seigneur Iesus enseigne* (for the chaff is thrown into the fire, as our Lord Jesus teaches).

(8) On Zechariah 13:9, referring to Hebrews 12:11.

1559 edition (722.7): *quemadmodum etiam apostolus admonet ultimo cap. ad Hebr.* (as also the apostle warns in the last chapter of Hebrews).

Correction: *12. cap.*

French (552): *comme aussi l'Apostre en advertit au dernier chapitre des Hebrieux* (as also the apostle warns of it in the last chapter of Hebrews).

(9) On Zechariah 14:21, referring to Matthew 3:12.

1559 edition (738.3): *Et ideo Christus eam comparat areae, ubi paleae mixtae sunt tritico* (And therefore Christ compares it [the church] to a threshing floor, where chaff is mixed with wheat).

Correction: *Ioannes Baptista* (John the Baptist).

French (565): *Et c'est pourquoy nostre Seigneur Iesus l'accompare à une aire en laquelle la paille est meslee parmi le bon grain.* (And that is why

our Lord Jesus compares it to a threshing floor, where the chaff is mixed with the good grain.)

It will be observed that all six of these corrections have to do with faulty Scripture references. Since Calvin was lecturing without notes and relied entirely on his memory when giving Bible references, he occasionally got them wrong. In four cases (nos. 4, 5, 6, and 9) he refers to the wrong biblical chapter, and in the remaining two cases (nos. 7 and 8) he mistakenly attributes the words of John the Baptist in Matthew 3:12 to Christ. It is not clear whether it was Calvin himself who caught the mistakes and corrected them in the list of *errata* before the printed volume left the press in late 1559. However, it *is* clear that the French translator was not aware of them, and thus appears not to have been working from the 1559 printed edition. However, the printed edition of 1581 did incorporate the corrections into the body of the Latin text, as did all subsequent editions and translations.

Ironically, however, one result of incorporating these corrections into the text was that a further error was inadvertently introduced. Immediately following the sentence quoted in example 9 above we find the words: “He also compares it to a net. If many fish are gathered into it, there will be found some that are spoiled, and others that are tasteless.”16 Since the subject of the previous sentence was corrected from “Christ” to “John the Baptist,” these words are no longer true, because in this case it was not John who made the comparison, but Christ (see Matt. 13:47–48). The English translation by Owen covers over the difficulty by translating the verb as a passive: “and it is also compared to a net.”17 Apart from this fresh mistake, we see again that Calvin was somewhat careless in the way he quoted Scripture, since the parable in Matthew speaks of good and bad fish, not of two kinds of bad.18

Although the French translation thus retains some errors in the Latin text which subsequent editions have corrected, it also corrects a number of other factual errors in the Latin, some of which have remained unobserved in later editions and translations. I have noticed the following examples:

(10) On Zechariah 1:5.

Latin (13319): *ubi dicitur initio quarti versus*, Patres vestri ubi sunt? (when it is said at the beginning of the *fourth* verse, “Your fathers, where are they?”).

French (458): *quand il est dit au commencement du 5. verset* (when it is said at the beginning of the *fifth* verse).

This slip has been undetected in subsequent editions, and is not noticed in the

translations by Owen and de Graaf.

(11) On Zechariah 4:10.

> Latin (189): *quemadmodum apud Nehemiam legimus, senes flevisse ita ut fere omnes proiicerent sua instrumenta, et discederent a templi aedificatione* (as we read in Nehemiah, that the old men wept, so that almost all threw away their tools and departed from the building of the temple).
>
> French (481): *comme nous lisons en Esdras que les vieilles gens pleuroyent* (as we read in Ezra that the old people wept).

The French version, which also has the marginal annotation "Esdras 3" at this point, silently corrects the mistaken biblical reference in the Latin here. The story of the old men weeping at the time of the building of the Second Temple is found in Ezra (3:12), not Nehemiah. The rest of Calvin's reference here is unclear. Neither Ezra nor Nehemiah speak of workers throwing down their tools and abandoning the rebuilding of the temple.

(12) On Zechariah 11:1.

> Latin (300): *Existimant fere omnes sub nomine Libani templum intelligi, quia compositum erat ex arboribus illius montis.* (Almost all interpreters think that under the name Lebanon the temple is understood, because it was composed of trees of that mountain.)
>
> French (528): à cause *qu'il estoit basti en partie des arbres de ceste montaigne* (because it was built *in part* of the trees of this mountain).

The translator silently adds the words "in part" in order to correct Calvin's unqualified statement that the temple in Jerusalem was built of trees from Lebanon. No doubt the translator was thinking of 1 Kings 6, where it is made clear that the temple was built of stone (see vv. 7 and 36) as well as cedar and cypress wood from Lebanon.

All these examples are cases where the original Latin text of 1559 contained factual mistakes that needed to be corrected. However, none of them necessarily dealt with *textual* mistakes in the sense that they did not faithfully represent what Calvin actually said in his lectures. Generally speaking, there is good reason to believe that the transcripts of his lectures were very faithfully done, and that the mistakes we have been discussing so far were errors Calvin himself made as he lectured, many of them simple lapses of memory. It would not be difficult to cite other examples of this kind of error in the lectures on Zechariah.

However, there is also another class of error, which belongs more properly to the domain of textual criticism. These involve errors of transmission, where the text does not represent what Calvin said, or what his transcribers wrote down. They are generally more like misprints or typographical errors, and can often be cleared up without much difficulty or debate. However, they are sometimes more complicated, and may on occasion make a significant difference to what the text is saying. In the nature of the case, the various proposals for replacing a printed reading with another are not all equally plausible. Nevertheless, a good case can be made for many of them.

The question of choosing between competing readings is inescapable when the available witnesses to the text disagree among themselves. In our case those witnesses consist of the four printed editions we have mentioned (published respectively in 1559, 1581, 1610, and 1890).20 Furthermore, when all the witnesses agree, it may still be possible (though more precarious) to suggest alternatives to the printed text; these will be more like conjectural emendations, although many have the support of the French translation.

In what follows I shall first list a number of examples of the first kind in Calvin's lectures on Zechariah, and then proceed to the more precarious examples of the second. I do not claim to have made an exhaustive list of either kind. There are no doubt textual variants that I have not noticed or thought of, just as the ones I do discuss (and the readings I favor) will not be convincing to everyone.

I begin, then, with textual variants in the four witnesses to the text that I have identified. The most significant variant of this kind, as well as the most puzzling one, is found in Calvin's translation of Zechariah 7:14. Since this requires a more extensive discussion, I will postpone my treatment of it until I have first listed the more straightforward examples in order. For the following examples I will simply give the column number of the 1890 *Corpus Reformatorum* edition.

(13) 136 *ob ortu* (1890) is an ungrammatical misprint for *ab ortu* (1559, 1581, 1610).

(14) 157 *ne praetereant tempus beneplaciti Dei* (1581, 1610, 1890), "lest they [the Jewish exiles] let the time of God's good pleasure pass by" is a misprint for *ne praetereat tempus* (1559), "lest the time…pass by." It is true that either reading makes sense in the context, but the authority of the earliest edition and of the French translation, which agrees with it ("de peur que le temps du bon plaisir de Dieu ne se passé") should here prevail. Owen's English also follows the 1559 edition ("lest the season of God's favour should pass away"), while de

Graaf's Dutch reflects the other reading ("opdat zij de tijd van het welbehagen van God niet laten voorbijgaan").

(15) 162 *sentiunt promissiones in animis* (1581, 1610, 1890), "they feel the promises in their souls," is a misprint for *sanciunt promissiones in animis* (1559), "they confirm the promises in their souls." Not only does this reading make better sense, but it is also supported by the 1559 edition and the French translation ("ils *ratifient* les promesses en leurs esprits"). Owen follows the 1559 edition ("they thus *confirmed* the promises made to them"), while de Graaf reflects the other reading ("dan *denken* zij in hun hart aan de beloften").

(16) 220 *in hox exsilio* (1890) is an ungrammatical misprint for *in hoc exsilio.*

(17) 240 *Quum ergo sepulta esse memoria foederis* (1581, 1890), is an ungrammatical misprint for *Quum ergo sepulta esset memoria foederis* (1559, 1610), "Since the memory of the covenant had been buried."

(18) 312 *sint minus* (1581, 1890) is an ungrammatical misprint for *sin minus* (1559, 1610), "if not." Notice that the idiomatic expression *sin minus* is repeated in the following sentence, and is the equivalent of what Calvin in his translation of Zechariah 11:12 had rendered *quod si non*, "but if not." The French, English, and Dutch translations all reflect the correct text.

(19) 314 *videmus* (1581, 1610, 1890), "we see," is a misprint for *vidimus* (1559), "we have seen." The French and English translations ("nous avons veu" and "We have seen," respectively) reflect the perfect tense, while the Dutch reflects the present ("Wij zien").

(20) 319 *inultis* (1890), "unrevenged," is a misprint for *invitis* (1559, 1581, 1610), "unwilling." The translations all reflect the correct text.

(21) 333 *rabidos* (1581, 1610, 1890), "raving," is a misprint for *tabidos* (1559), "wasting away." The correct reading is reflected in the French ("pourris & consumez") and English ("almost consumed"). The Dutch reflects *rabidos* ("waanzinnig").

(22) 349 *monarchi* (1890), "monarchs," is a misprint for *monachi* (1559, 1581, 1610), "monks." The translations all reflect the correct reading.

(23) 359 *afflionibus* (1581, 1890) is a meaningless misprint for *afflictionibus*

(1559, 1610). The correct reading is reflected in the translations.

(24) 387 *si consentiamus* (1559, 1581, 1890), “if we agree,” is a misprint for *nisi consentiamus* (1610), “if we do not agree.” This is an example of a misprint in the *editio princeps.* That it is a misprint is clear from the meaning of the resulting sentence: “For if we agree to the true and legitimate worship of him [the Lord], we here see that our whole life is cursed.”21 The French translation already corrected the error (“si nous *n’*accordons *point*”), and it is followed on this point by the English (“when we assent *not*”) and the Dutch (“wanneer wij ons *niet* houden”).

The foregoing twelve examples (nos. 13–24) are all relatively straightforward cases of inadvertent typographical errors, which can be explained as involuntary clerical mistakes due to carelessness or fatigue, and which can be easily corrected. However, there is one case of textual variation in the witnesses to Calvin’s lectures on Zechariah that is of a different kind. It has to do with a deliberate change in Calvin’s translation of a biblical text, and requires a more extensive discussion.

In his lectures on the Minor Prophets it was Calvin’s habit to go through the biblical text in short sections, usually dealing with only one or two verses at a time. He would begin each section with his own oral translation, made on the spot, of the verse or verses in question (the *lemma*), and then proceed to give an exposition of that textual unit (the *commentary*). It was not uncommon for him, as he was giving his extemporaneous translation of the Hebrew text, to insert parenthetical remarks about other possible renderings. These parenthetical remarks are all faithfully preserved in the transcription of his lectures that were subsequently published. We see an example of this at the beginning of the last section of lecture 147, which begins with Calvin’s translation of Zechariah 7:14, and reads as follows.

(25) 231 *Et affligar cum illis* (vertunt quidam) *super omnes gentes*, (alii melius, *dispellam illos ad omnes gentes quas non noverunt;* (alii vertunt, *quae non noverunt eos;) et terra desolata erit post eos, ne sit transiens, nec revertens; et posuerunt terram desiderabilem in vastitatem* (1559).

This may be translated as follows: “And I shall be afflicted together with them (*so some translate*) over all the nations (*others translate better:* I shall scatter them to all the nations) which they have not known (*others translate:* which have not known them) and the land will be desolate after them, so that there will be no one passing through or returning. And they turned the attractive land into a

wasteland."

It is clear that Calvin is here comparing various alternative renderings of the Hebrew of Zechariah 7:14. Of particular interest for our purposes is his rendering of *we'esa'arem*, the difficult Hebrew verb with which this verse begins. He first mentions the translation *Et affligar cum illis*, "And I shall be afflicted with them," and then the translation *dispellam illos*, "I shall scatter them," which he says is better. In the exposition of this verse which follows he explains his reasons for preferring the translation "scatter" or "disperse."

Now it is a remarkable fact that the 1581 edition of Calvin's lectures, followed by the subsequent editions of 1610 and 1890, has replaced the words *affligar cum illis* with the words *exturbavi eos*, meaning "I drove them out." This is a significant change, because it alters both the lexical meaning and the tense of the Hebrew verb in question. How can we account for this change?

The likeliest explanation is that the editor of the 1581 edition wanted to remove the discrepancy between the lemma (Calvin's Latin translation of the biblical text) and the commentary which followed it. The relevant part of the commentary reads,

> [God] therefore says that they [the Jews] had been dispersed (*dispersos*). For that is how I prefer to translate it, and the context also seems to require it. Interpreters differ about this word; in fact even the Jews themselves say that this passage is difficult, because according to the rules of grammar this verb can hardly be made to fit the context. But first we must inquire what it is that the prophet is dealing with; then in the second place we must inquire, since this verb has many meanings, which meaning is most suitable. There is no doubt that the prophet is here referring to God's punishment, because the Jews had been dispersed (*dispersi*) among various peoples—not only carried off into exile, but also scattered (*dissipati*) far and wide. If this verb is understood transitively there will be no ambiguity. For *s'r* means to move spatially, or to scatter, and to do so violently, because it is derived from "whirlwind" (*turbo*). Therefore, since it can here be a transitive verb, I do not see why we should look for other convoluted meanings, when there is sufficient certainty about the mind and intent of the prophet.[22]

It is clear from this commentary that Calvin both firmly rejects the translation *et affligar cum illis*, and understands the verb to refer to the past, not the future (despite the future tense of his preferred rendering *et dispellam* in the lemma). The editor of the 1581 edition apparently sought to alleviate both difficulties by substituting the translation *Et exturbavi eos*, "and I drove them out," which allowed him at the same time to retain in Latin the etymological connection with

turbo, "whirlwind," which Calvin had pointed out for the Hebrew verb.23 In doing so, he was tacitly revocalizing the Hebrew form here as a consecutive imperfect, as was done in the Vulgate (*et dispersi eos*).24

This is the only example I know of where a later editor has deliberately emended the text of Calvin's lectures on Zechariah. The editor of the 1581 edition may have seen his intervention here as part of his overall task of integrating the *errata* corrections of the *editio princeps* into the body of the text, each of which (as we saw above) served to remove inadvertent mistakes on Calvin's part. Whatever the case may be, the 1581 editor introduced into the Latin text of these lectures a significant emendation, which has been perpetuated in all subsequent editions.

However, Calvin's original wording was not altogether lost. It is still preserved in the French translation ("Et seray affligé avec eux"). It is also preserved in the English version of the lectures prepared by Owen, but only in the Latin lemma of Zechariah 7:14, which he quotes on page 187. In the English translation of Calvin's Bible text which Owen gives as an appendix to his work, we find only "And I will scatter them" (p. 646), reflecting Calvin's preferred alternative *et dispellam illos*. The Dutch of de Graaf, on the other hand, reflects the revised reading first introduced in 1581 ("En ik heb hen weggestormd").

I turn now to the somewhat more hazardous undertaking of suggesting a number of emendations to the Latin text which are not attested in any of the printed editions. Some of these are based on the French translation, but others are more or less plausible guesses based only on some difficulty in the received Latin text.

(26) 150 *contundet quasi sub incude cornua illa*, literally "he will smash those horns as *under* an anvil." Instead of *sub*, "under," we should read *super*, "on." The image is clearly that of a smith pounding the horns as *on* an anvil. That is how the phrase has been understood by all translations, beginning with the French ("*sur* une enclume"). It is probable that the typesetter of the *editio princeps* misread the abbreviation for *super* as *sub*.

(27) 176 *non dubium est quin significet Deus exercituum sacerdotem*, "there is no doubt that the God of hosts is indicating a priest." This text also underlies the translations of Owen and de Graaf. However, the French translation is different: "Il n'y a nul doute que Dieu ne signifie *qu'il viendra* un Sacrificateur" (there is no doubt that God is indicating that a Priest will come). Instead of a noun corresponding to *exercituum* we have a verb meaning "will come." There are good reasons to believe that this is based on a Latin text which originally read

significet Deus exoriturum sacerdotem [scil. *esse*], “God is indicating that a priest will arise.” For one thing, the expression “the God of hosts” is unusual. Calvin elsewhere almost always speaks of “the Lord of hosts” (*Dominus exercituum*), following biblical precedent. For another, Calvin often uses *significare* with this construction (e.g. in the next column: “Significat enim Deus…hoc…fore ratum”). Furthermore, the context here speaks repeatedly of the messianic figure who will “arise” (*orior* or *exorior*). Finally there is the close parallel in column 178: “promittit exoriturum…sacerdotem,” which the French renders in almost the same way: “il promet qu’il viendra un Sacrificateur.”

(28) 284 *Petita a Iehova pluvium tempore serotino* (vertunt), “Ask rain of Jehovah in the late time (*they translate*).” This is part of Calvin’s translation of Zechariah 10:1. The parenthetical statement “they translate” seems to make little sense, and is not reflected in either the English or Dutch versions. The French, however, has “comme on translate.” It is probable that the text should read *vertunt quidam*, “some translate,” as in his rendering of 7:14 (see no. 25 above). Calvin is here alluding to the fact that the translation *tempore serotino* is used at this point by others as well (for example the Vulgate and Oecolampadius), although it is potentially misleading. The phrase could in fact be understood to mean “in the evening” (and is in fact so understood in the French version, which has “au temps du soir”), though Calvin in his commentary on this verse makes it clear that it should be understood here to refer to the springtime (*verno tempore*).

(29) 298 *Hic tandem concludit totam summam doctrinae quam videmus, nempe satis esse auxilii in Deo ut populum suum erigat et sustentat.*“Finally he sums up the whole substance of his teaching which we are seeing, namely that there is enough help in God to lift up and sustain his people.” The present tense “we are seeing” makes little sense in the context, since the substance of the teaching to which Calvin refers is something he discussed earlier, in his comments on the previous verse. It is better to read *vidimus*, “we have seen,” a reading confirmed by the French, which has “nous avons veuë.” Also Owen’s translation has the past tense at this point (“we have noticed”). The case is very similar to no. 19, except that here even the *editio princeps* has the present tense.

(30) 300 *Scimus Libanum fuisse propinquum Ierosolymae, ut procul esset ab omni hostili incursu*, “We know that Lebanon is close to Jerusalem, so that it is far from every hostile attack.” This is a strange statement, since Mount Lebanon is not at all close to Jerusalem, nor would its alleged closeness increase the distance between “it” (whether this refers to Lebanon or Jerusalem) and any

threatened attack. To make sense of the sentence we need to insert a negative: *Scimus Libanum non fuisse propinquum*, "we know that Lebanon is *not* close to Jerusalem." The subject of the following result clause could be either Lebanon itself (far from attack because invading armies would be more interested in the capital city than a faraway mountain) or Jerusalem (far from attack because Lebanon was like a fortress protecting Israel against invaders from the north). It is clear from the context that Calvin is depicting Lebanon in Zechariah 11:1 as a powerful bulwark, in the far north of the promised land, which, humanly speaking, could hold out against hostile invaders. The dropping out of *non* was no doubt facilitated by the fact that it is preceded by the final syllable of *Liba**num***, which Calvin two sentences earlier had pronounced in the French way as *Liba**non***.

(31) 301 *Vox ululatus pastorum, quia praestantia eorum, aut fortitudo*, "The voice of the wailing of the shepherds, because their excellence, or strength…." This is clearly an incomplete sentence, since a verb is missing. The missing verb can be easily supplied from the lemma at the head of this section: *quia vastata est praestantia eorum*, "because their excellence has been devastated." The verb has inadvertently fallen out of the printed text, and needs to be restored. The French translation does not omit them, but renders the relevant clause "pource que leur excellence, ou force, *est gastée.*"

(32) 313 *proiice, proiice ad figulum*, "throw it, throw it to the potter." This is a straightforward case of dittography. Calvin is here citing his own translation of Zechariah 11:13, which only has *proiice* once, and it is unlikely that he would want to alter the wording of Scripture. Consequently, the second occurrence of the verb should be deleted from the text. Oddly enough, all editions and translations have retained the repetition.

(33) 317 *Neque enim ullus est verus pastor, nisi quem Dominus gubernat suo spiritu et qui eius est minister.* "For neither is anyone a true shepherd except he whom the Lord governs by his Spirit, and who is his [i.e. the Spirit's25] minister." It is probable that the last clause should read *qui eius verbi est minister*, "who is a minister of his [the Spirit's] *Word.*" That *verbi* should be added to the text can be deduced from the French translation, which renders the relevant clause as follows: "qui est vray ministre de sa *Parolle.*" Of course it also fits well with Calvin's theology, in which the ministry is a matter of the Word as much as of the Spirit.

The foregoing eight examples (nos. 26–33) will suffice to illustrate the point that the printed texts of the editions, even when they all agree, are not always reliable. It is especially the French translation that can sometimes help us to clear up a difficulty by suggesting a different reading.[26] Nevertheless, it should be stressed that cases like these are highly unusual; they only affect a tiny fraction of the Latin text of Calvin's lectures on Zechariah, which overall has been transmitted to us with considerable accuracy.

A concluding word about punctuation: It would be too tedious to deal extensively in the present context with this element of the textual tradition of Calvin's lectures on Zechariah. Nevertheless, punctuation can be an important factor in conveying or obscuring the intended meaning of a text's author. Let me give two examples where the punctuation of the printed editions has been misleading.

(34) 348 *quanto praestantior est Dei cultus et fama, et opibus mortalium?* All the printed editions have a comma after *fama*, which would suggest the awkward translation "how much more excellent is the worship and fame of God, and to the wealth of mortals?" However, if the comma is placed after *cultus*, we realize that *fama* is in the ablative, not the nominative case, yielding the meaning: "how much more excellent is the worship of God than both the fame and wealth of mortals?" Fortunately, all of the translations have rendered this sentence correctly, despite the misleading punctuation of their text.

(35) 359 *Caeterum, haec consolatio semper aptanda est ad dolores nostros leniendos, ubi caro nostra vel ad contumaciam vel ad desperationem nos impellit, occurrat hoc remedium, nempe etiam si castigatio dura sit dum sentitur, debere tamen aestimari a suo fine…*

Here the comma after *leniendos*, which is found in all editions of the text, has misled translators into construing the *ubi*-clause with what precedes, rather than with what follows. Instead, there should be a period or colon after *leniendos*, with *ubi* beginning a new sentence. The translation should therefore be, "For the rest, this comfort must always be applied to alleviate our sufferings. When our flesh drives us either to rebelliousness or hopelessness, let this remedy come to mind: even though the chastisement is hard as it is being experienced, it ought to be considered from the point of view of its purpose."

The foregoing evidence is sufficient to establish the fact that the received Latin text of Calvin's lectures on Zechariah needs to be used with discretion. Our discussion has also shown that the French translation of 1560 is a valuable resource for establishing the original text when the printed editions disagree—or

even sometimes when they all have the same reading. If a critical edition of these lectures is ever prepared, this translation will need to be given its due weight. In the meantime we will have to make do with the 1890 edition of the *Corpus Reformatorum*, which is perhaps the least satisfactory of all the editions to date.

APPENDIX:
RELATIONS OF DEPENDENCE BETWEEN THE EDITIONS AND TRANSLATIONS

The foregoing discussion has put us in a position to come to some conclusions respecting the filiation of the various editions and translations we have been comparing. On the basis of the examples we have cited, it is possible to come to the following conclusions.

A. The 1890 edition in the *Corpus Reformatorum* series is based on the 1581 edition, repeating its mistakes (see nos. 14, 15, 19), even when these were corrected in the more recent 1610 edition (see nos. 17, 18, 23, 24). It also introduces new mistakes of its own (see nos. 13, 16, 20).

B. The 1610 edition is also based on the 1581 edition, repeating some of its mistakes (see nos. 14, 15, 25), but also correcting it on a number of points (see nos. 17, 18, 23, 24).

C. The 1581 edition is based on the *editio princeps* of 1559, incorporating the corrections indicated in the latter's printed list of *errata* (see nos. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9), but missing some others (see no. 24). It also introduced new errors of its own (see nos. 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21, 23), as well as the apparently deliberate emendation of Calvin's translation of Zechariah 7:14 (no. 25).

D. The French translation of 1560 is apparently based, as we saw, on an independent manuscript, perhaps the one which also formed the basis of the *editio princeps.* It agrees with the latter, against all subsequent editions, not only in not including the *errata* corrections in the body of the text (see nos. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8), but also in preserving some correct readings (see nos. 19, 21, 25). On the other hand, it also contains some correct readings not found in the 1559 edition (see nos. 24, 27, 28, 29, 31, 33). The French also silently corrects a number of factual errors found in the Latin text (see nos. 10, 11, 12).

E. The English translation by Owen (1849) is based on the *editio princeps.* This is immediately clear from the fact that it preserves the reading *Et affligar cum illis* in Zechariah 7:14 (no. 25), but also from many other distinctive readings (see nos. 14, 15, 18), though at one point the context leads Owen to adopt the correct reading against his *Vorlage* (see no. 29). Note too that Owen's English version, unlike the 1559 edition, did incorporate into the body of his text the corrections of *errata* printed at the end of the latter.

F. The Dutch translation by de Graaf (1978) appears to be based on either the edition of 1581 or that of 1610. The *editio princeps* can be ruled out, because many of its distinctive readings are not reflected in de Graaf's version (see nos. 14, 15, 25). The edition of 1890 can be ruled out for the same reason (see nos. 20, 22), and also because de Graaf includes in his translation the prayers which Calvin offered at the conclusion of each of his lectures (which are not printed in the 1890 edition). I have found no conclusive evidence to decide between the edition of 1581 and that of 1610 as the basis for the Dutch translation. It is true that the latter at one point reflects a distinctive 1610 reading (no. 24), but this cannot be considered decisive, because the other translations, though based on earlier versions of the text, also silently correct the obvious error in their *Vorlage*.

1. The present article arises out of my work in preparing a commentary on Zechariah (Leuven: Peeters, forthcoming). I offer it as a tribute to Jim De Jong, my classmate at Calvin College some fifty years ago, whose work over the years has consistently sought to honor the legacy of John Calvin.

2. *Ioannis Calvini Opera quae Supersunt Omnia*, ed. Guilielmus Baum, et al. (Brunsvigae: Schwetschke, 1890), cols. 125–392, in *Corpus Reformatorum*, vol. 72.

3. See T. H. L. Parker, *Calvin's Old Testament Commentaries* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), 9–41.

4. I follow the numbering of the lectures found in John Calvin, *A Commentary on the Twelve Minor Prophets,* trans. John Owen (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1849). I do not know why Parker (p. 29) indicates that there were only 134 lectures on the Minor Prophets. That the 35 lectures on Zechariah were delivered in the years 1558–1559 can be deduced from the fact that Calvin regularly lectured on three successive days in alternate weeks (see Parker, p. 17), and that the lectures on the Minor Prophets, which were published in 1559, appeared soon after Calvin delivered his last lectures on Malachi (Parker, pp. 16–17).

5. Parker, *Old Testament Commentaries*, 20, 27–28.

6. I have consulted the copies of these three editions which are in the Hekman Library of Calvin College (H. H. Meeter Center) in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

7. I have used the reprint of this version published in 1563 in Lyon, "par Sebastien Honorati," which is in the Hekman Library of Calvin College (H. H. Hekman Center). I am grateful to Paul Fields, theological librarian at the Hekman Library, for making it possible for me to acquire a photocopy of this translation. On the French translation see Rodolphe Peter and Jean-François Gilmont, *Bibliotheca Calviniana. Les* œuvres *de Jean Calvin publiées au XVIe siècle. II.* Écrits *théologiques, littéraires et juridiques, 1555–1564* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1994) 764–766, 1010–1012.

8. I have used the reprint published in Edinburgh by the Banner of Truth Trust in 1986.

9. I am grateful to Professor Gert Kwakkel of the Theologische Universiteit in Kampen (Broederweg) for supplying me with a photocopy of this translation.

10. It should also be noted that the French translation generally paraphrases or simplifies Calvin's references to the Hebrew text and its grammar.

11. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are my own.

12. In references to the Latin text I give the column number of the *Corpus Reformatorum* edition.

13. In these references to the French text I give the page number of the 1563 edition.

14. It may even have been the very manuscript which the printer used for the 1559 *editio princeps.* The original text was very long, and it would have been very expensive to have the entire manuscript copied by hand. A possible scenario is that the French translator (or translators) received portions of the manuscript after they had been typeset. We know that the printer had typeset most of the lectures on the Minor Prophets even before Calvin had finished his lectures on Malachi (Parker, p. 17), so that the manuscript from which the typesetter was working could then have gone to the translator(s).

15. Underlinings in the quoted text are my own, serving to highlight the specific textual points at issue.

16. "Comparat etiam sagenae, in quam si contracti fuerint multi pisces, reperientur alii putridi, alii nullius saporis." *CR*, 72:390.

17. See Calvin, *Minor Prophets*, 5:454. The Dutch translation by de Graaf supplies "Jesus" as the subject.

18. Owen again smooths over the difficulty, following Matthew rather than Calvin in his translation: "a net, into which are gathered many fishes, some good, some bad" (p. 454).

19. Where I am unaware of differences in the Latin editions I simply quote the *Corpus Reformatorum* text, giving the number of the column where it appears.

20. Strictly speaking, the French translation of 1560 is also an independent witness to the Latin text, but for this part of my discussion I will cite it only when it supports a variant reading already attested in one or more of the printed editions.

21. *Nam si consentiamus in verum et legitimum eius cultum, hic videmus totam vitam nostrum esse maledictam.*

22. Calvin is here in dialogue with the interpretation of the medieval Jewish exegete Joseph Kimchi (c. 1105–1170), as reported by his son David Kimchi. The elder Kimchi had proposed the translation "I will be afflicted with them." See A. M'Caul, *Rabbi David Kimchi's Commentary upon the Prophecies of Zechariah* (London: James Duncan, 1837), 74–75. It is, no doubt, to Joseph Kimchi's rather tortured construal of the verb here that Calvin refers when he speaks of "convoluted meanings" (*sensus perplexos*). He is also tacitly rejecting the exegesis of Oecolampadius, who had accepted Joseph's Kimchi's interpretation in his recently republished commentary; see Ioannes Oecolampadius, *In minores quos vocant prophetas* (Geneva: E typographia Crispiniana, 1558), 193, 195.

23. The Hebrew verb *s'r* is related to the noun *sa'ar*, meaning "whirlwind," Latin *turbo.*

24. For a detailed discussion of the Hebrew form here, and a defence of construing it as a consecutive imperfect, see Albert Petitjean, *Les oracles du Proto-Zacharie. Un programme de restauration pour la communauté juive après l'exil* (Études Bibliques; Paris: Gabalda/Louvain: Imprimerie Orientaliste, 1969), 354–57. The verb is translated in the past tense also in the NIV and NRSV.

25. As indicated by the use of *eius* rather than *suus.*

26. This is not to say that the French translation, where it reflects a different Latin text from that of the *editio princeps*, necessarily has the superior reading. For example, the French *domptez* appears to translate the reading *domati*, "subdued," instead of *donati*, "favored," in col. 339, and the French *on prefere* seems to render *praefertur*, "is preferred," instead of *profertur*, "is brought forward," in col. 348, but in neither case should the received text be emended, in my judgment.

CHAPTER 5

Adopted in Christ, Appointed to the Slaughter: Calvin's Interpretation of the Maccabean Psalms

Keith D. Stanglin

> *Because of you we are being killed all day long, and accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*
>
> —Psalm 44:22

> *But many in Israel stood firm and were resolved in their hearts not to eat unclean food. They chose to die rather than to be defiled by food or to profane the holy covenant; and they did die. Very great wrath came upon Israel.*
>
> —1 Macc. 1:62–64

> *Therefore, lest the severity of the cross should terrify us, let this condition of the church always remain before our eyes, insofar as we are adopted in Christ, we are appointed to the slaughter.*
>
> —John Calvin, Ps. 44:23[22], in loc.; *CO* 31:447[1]

In the eighth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, the apostle Paul quotes from Psalm 44 on account of its suitable application to the life of the first-century church. Ever the victims of marginalization and persecution within a hostile society, and therefore under the shadow of the cross, the followers of Christ found a voice in the lament of Psalm 44. "Because of you," Paul recites, "we are being killed" (Rom. 8:36, quoting Ps. 44:22). Paul and his audience, like the psalmist, are prepared to suffer for no other reason except their devotion to God. But as Jesus pronounced a blessing on those suffering for righteousness (Matt. 5:10), Paul proceeds to declare with confidence that the church, on the other side of patient suffering, will overwhelmingly conquer through Christ (Rom. 8:37).

As John Calvin approaches the epistle to the Romans to do what many before and after him have done, he first spells out a method for this and all his subsequent commentaries. In addition to the much-acclaimed attention he pays to perspicuous *brevitas* and *facilitas,* Calvin states in the prefatory letter to his commentary that it is almost the sole task of the interpreter to lay open the mind of the writer (*mens scriptoris*).[2] Even if the exposition of the human author's

intention is not atypical among premodern exegetes, especially among those trained in rhetoric, at least Calvin's skill in accomplishing this goal with consistency is unsurpassed.

Thus, when Calvin comes to Romans 8:36, his self-appointed task as a commentator is to understand two *scriptores:* Paul and the psalmist whom Paul quotes. It is only in the third and final edition of his Romans commentary (1556), however, that Calvin deals with the mind of the psalmist. In this last revision of his first biblical commentary he adds the following lines: "It is probable that in that Psalm [44] the miserable oppression of the people under the tyranny of Antiochus is described; because it is expressly said that the worshippers of God were cruelly treated, for no other cause but through hatred of true piety. There is also added a remarkable declaration that they had not departed from the covenant of God; which Paul, I think, had especially in view."3 In passing, Calvin notes the occasion of the psalm quoted by Paul as taking place under the reign of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. These lines were not present in the first two editions of 1540 and 1551. But in the final edition of 1556, Calvin was much more attuned to the situation of the psalmist, for he would publish his commentary on the Psalms the following year (1557).4

Turning to the Psalms commentary itself, we find that not only did Calvin think that Psalm 44 described the Maccabean period, but he also believed that it was composed during that same era. Moreover, this late dating of Psalm 44, according to Calvin, is not peculiar among the Psalms. It is perhaps well known only to the readers of Calvin's Psalms commentary that he dates certain psalms to the second century BC. This fact has seldom been recorded in secondary scholarship,5 and I have not found any works pursuing this topic with any depth. Therefore, the purpose of this essay is to examine Calvin's interpretation of the psalms he assigns to the time of the Maccabean revolt and to explore some questions and implications that arise from this exegetical move. Why did Calvin think these psalms describe a second-century BC situation, and why did he dissent from the common opinion and instead claim that they must be dated to that period? What are the implications for authorship and the so-called "silent period" of prophecy? Finally, how did Calvin's attention to the original situation affect his application of these psalms to his own day? Our goal is to show how Calvin not only builds on but also goes beyond traditional interpretations of the text in order to apply these psalms of communal distress to the church of the sixteenth-century Reformation.

A Maccabean Reading of the Psalms

As with all of Calvin's thought in general, his interpretation of the Psalms in

particular can be understood accurately only in the context of the history of interpretation he inherited. For the purposes of the present essay, there is much to be gained from the history of exegesis. Therefore, an important part of our method of investigation will be to compare and contrast Calvin with the commentators who preceded him. As De Greef writes, Calvin was well read in the church fathers and in contemporary commentaries, but it is difficult to determine exactly which commentaries he employed.[6] Here we will consult a variety of commentators throughout the church's history, some of which Calvin is known to have read, and others that simply illustrate the tendencies of the greater tradition that Calvin knew, whether he directly read them all or not.[7]

Like interpreters before him, in some psalms Calvin finds situations that simply do not correspond as well to the reign of David as to other historical situations. If an anonymous psalmist laments and speaks of individual suffering in the first person singular, then it very well could be a description of David. However, when the psalmist speaks of collective suffering, indicated by the first person plural, it cannot refer to the corporate nation under David's prosperous reign.[8] This principle is strengthened when it comes to psalms that speak of the destruction of the temple. There Calvin will note that the situation is more suitable to the time of the Babylonian exile. However, if the psalm speaks more generally of the suffering of God's people and the desecration or defilement (not destruction) of the temple, alongside the Babylonian invasion another proposal seems likely: the period of oppression under Antiochus IV.

How does Calvin decide between these occasions, both of which produced communal lament? Sometimes he does not make a firm judgment about which of the two situations is being described, but leaves the question open or inclines to one without dismissing the other. The evidence that does function as a kind of clinching argument is when the reason for the suffering is revealed. If the suffering seems to come as a result of sins present or in the immediate past, the situation is probably Babylonian; but if the suffering seems particularly unjust or not directly connected to the sins of the people, then the situation is Maccabean. It is especially clear when the psalmist describes God's people being faithful to the covenant. In the commentary on Romans 8, after Calvin claims that Psalm 44 describes the Maccabean situation, he supports his theory by alluding to a verse that appears earlier in the psalm, but not quoted by Paul, which refers to the faithfulness of God's people during the suffering (Ps. 44:17). Such corporate covenant faithfulness does not fit the occasion of the Babylonian captivity, for then God was specifically punishing the people for their unfaithfulness to him.[9] In contrast, Calvin says that, under Antiochus, "religion was then the cause of the afflictions."[10] Throughout his commentary, Calvin identifies the distinctions

among different “forms of prayers.” A psalm that addresses the situation of the Babylonian captivity is a different *forma precandi* than one that addresses the situation under the oppression of Antiochus.11 Hence, the description of people suffering for God’s sake, especially when combined with language about the defilement of the temple, suggests the occupation under Antiochus, who famously defiled the temple and violently persecuted and killed the Jews who refused to conform to his program of Hellenization (1 Macc. 1).12 In the course of his Psalms commentary, Calvin claims with varying degrees of confidence that seven psalms describe the Maccabean situation: Psalms 44, 74, 79, 85, 106, 123, and 129.13

When Calvin assigned a Maccabean *Sitz im Leben* to certain psalms, he was simply following a long-standing and revered tradition of interpretation. The point is rarely made in modern commentaries,14 but a long line of interpreters—at least, those who show interest in the situations depicted in the Psalms—has regarded these same psalms as a description of the situation under Antiochus. The church historian Eusebius of Caesarea (d. c. 340), in his comments on Psalm 79, mentions possible occasions, including the destruction of the temple by the Romans and that by the Babylonians. After dismissing these scenarios, he claims that Psalm 79 refers to none other than the time of Antiochus.15 The greatest of the Antiochene exegetes, Theodore of Mopsuestia (d. 428), was not hesitant to see Maccabean situations being described in the Psalter; he assigned a Maccabean context to fourteen psalms.16 Comparing Theodore’s list of Maccabean psalms to Calvin’s list, three overlap: Psalms 44, 74, and 79. Indeed, in our survey, these three psalms stand out as the ones most often identified as Maccabean by premodern exegetes.

It did not take long for this Maccabean line of interpretation to become commonplace in the Western church. The Psalms commentary of Cassiodorus (d. c. 580) was, apart from Augustine’s *Enarrationes*, the first full-scale exposition of the Psalms in the West.17 Like Eusebius and Theodore before him, Cassiodorus viewed Psalm 79 as a detailed description of the Jewish oppression under Antiochus, cross-referencing 1 Maccabees throughout his exposition.18 Later, the Venerable Bede (d. 735), who relied heavily on Cassiodorus’s commentary, often employing direct quotes, also identified Psalm 79 as a description of the Maccabean situation.19 In addition, Bede, who began each psalm by noting the various *voces* contained therein, posited that Psalm 62 includes, among others, *verba Machabaeorum*.20

From the high medieval period we may take two Psalms commentaries as illustrations of the continuing tendency to read some select psalms in light of the Maccabean history. Gerhoh of Reichersberg (d. 1169), whose commentary

begins each psalm by revealing its *materia* and *intentio,* writes that Psalm 79 is a lament for the temple defiled under Antiochus.21 Like Cassiodorus before him, Gerhoh extensively comments on the details of Psalm 79 in light of 1 Maccabees.22 He specifies that the whole psalm was written from the perspective of the Maccabean history.23 As an opponent of the corruption of the church and a reformer among the clergy, Gerhoh emphasizes the zeal of Mattathias in defense of the true faith.24

The second medieval commentator is Nicholas of Lyra (d. 1349), perhaps the greatest of medieval exegetes, whose comments on Scripture were influential well into the sixteenth century.25 When Nicholas discusses the *materia* of Psalm 44, he mentions the state of Babylonian captivity as well as the state of the people in captivity under the Romans. He rejects these possible settings in favor of the situation of "persecution which the Jewish people sustained under Antiochus."26 Throughout the psalm, Nicholas refers to the story of Antiochus and the Maccabean revolt as related in 1–2 Maccabees. Israel being put to shame (*confudisti nos,* Ps. 44:9) is associated with King Antiochus placing the abominating idol of desolation over the altar of God (1 Macc. 1).27 Israel's retreat before the enemy (Ps. 44:10) Nicholas links with Mattathias, his sons, and their followers fleeing to the mountains (1 Macc. 2).28 Nicholas dismissed the possibility that Psalms 74, 79, and 85 speak primarily about the Maccabean situation, favoring instead the Babylonian captivity.29 Interestingly, though, he posits a Maccabean occasion for Psalm 123.30 Previous commentators we have checked do not take this short psalm to be about the Maccabean period. Yet, as noted above, Calvin, whose exegesis was influenced by Nicholas, posits the same occasion for Psalm 123.

Calvin's own contemporaries continued the tradition of reading certain psalms with a Maccabean occasion in mind. The two Reformed commentators Calvin mentioned in his preface are Martin Bucer and Wolfgang Musculus. Bucer introduces Psalm 79 with the following comment: "In this Psalme Asaph complayneth of the calamyte and wretchednesse done to Hierusalem of Antyoch, and desyreth the helpe of god againste him."31 Musculus believed that Psalm 44 does not refer to the time of David, but either to the Assyrian or Babylonian captivity, or the calamities during the times of the Maccabeans, in which the people of Israel certainly suffered because of God's name (Ps. 44:22).32 Similarly, Musculus concludes that Psalm 74 clearly describes the sufferings that took place "either under the Babylonian king or under Antiochus."33 When he comes to Psalm 79, Musculus again claims that this is the history of either the Babylonian captivity or the devastation of Antiochus.34 He then proceeds to expound the first four verses with the Maccabean occasion in mind.35

Calvin, who writes subsequent to all the above figures, is merely following in the steps of his predecessors when he reads certain psalms as an account of the Jewish situation during the Maccabean revolt against the persecution of Antiochus. Even after Calvin's generation, into the following century, Reformed commentators occasionally affirmed a Maccabean situation for some psalms.[36] So far, although his interpretation is surprising to many contemporary readers, there is nothing unique about Calvin's interpretation of these psalms.[37]

Authorship of Maccabean Psalms

Although 50 of the 150 psalms come without a name attached, and a few other psalms contain different names, David is of course the main personality associated with the book of Psalms. He is named in the superscriptions to seventy-three individual psalms.[38] The conclusion of Psalm 72 states that the prayers of David are now ended (Ps. 72:20), apparently giving him some kind of credit for the first seventy-two, including those with other names attached. He is also the named author in many New Testament references to the Psalms.

Because of this close connection between David and the Psalms, many interpreters preceding Calvin contended for Davidic authorship of the whole Psalter.[39] Even those who acknowledged the name Asaph in the superscriptions to Psalms 74 and 79 did not necessarily rule out the authorship of David or one of his contemporaries. Asaph comes from the Hebrew word for "gatherer," so it was widely understood to represent the voice of the gathered community of God's people. Augustine notes that "Asaph" may be translated as "synagogue," which is interchangeable with "congregation" and "church."[40] Cassiodorus, who believes David composed all the psalms, says, "Asaph signifies the synagogue, which can fit with the catholic church."[41] Gerhoh agrees that Asaph is a cipher for synagogue, which is the Lord's congregation.[42]

At any rate, the prevailing voice of the tradition is that these psalms originated with David or his close contemporaries. How then does this fit with the Maccabean situation that these same commentators affirm? Whether a commentator thought the Psalms were written by David or by one of his contemporaries, they all appealed to the prophetic role of the Spirit in the inspiration of the Psalms. This role of the Psalms is based in the New Testament, where David, as author of the Psalms, is explicitly called a prophet (Acts 2:30). Eusebius, with reference to Psalm 79, says that the author, "Asaph," is a "prophet" speaking by "the divine Spirit."[43] For Theodore of Mopsuestia, David prophesies in Psalm 47 the events of the Maccabees well in advance.[44] Augustine supposes that Psalm 79 was sung in the times of King David, but since it speaks about the temple and other calamities not applicable to David's

time, this psalm is a “prophecy.” “It is therefore said as though past, what in the Spirit was seen to be future.”45 Cassiodorus claims that Psalm 79 “laments future times as if past.”46 This technique is possible “by the Spirit of prophecy.”47 Although David, the author of Psalm 79, lived long before the times of King Antiochus, he was enabled by the Holy Spirit to foresee these things to come.48 With respect to this same psalm, Gerhoh notes that Asaph, in the Spirit, foresees the persecution of the church under Antiochus.49 These testimonies are consistent with the medieval commentator Hugh of St. Cher (d. 1263), who classified David, along with Daniel, as the kind of prophet who predicted the future and revealed secret things.50 Our last medieval commentator, Nicholas of Lyra, claimed that the authors of Psalm 44 (the sons of Korah) “spoke for a people then future, because it was fulfilled in the time of the Maccabeans.”51 Commentators during and after the Reformation continued to emphasize the prophetic role of David in the Psalms.52

More specifically, many of these commentators explained the authorship of these psalms in terms of prosopopoeia, that is, the rhetorical technique of role playing or impersonation, the author speaking in the “person” or “personality,” indeed wearing the “mask” (prÒswpon, *persona*), of some other absent—and in this case, future—figure.53 Theodore uses the language of prosopopoeia in his discussion of authorship. David prophesies in the “person” (prÒswpon) of various figures during and after the Babylonian exile, including the Maccabees and Onias.54 Cassiodorus says that Asaph (that is, David) wears the “personality of the faithful people” throughout the whole of Psalm 79.55 Bede, discerning various voices in Psalm 79, follows Cassiodorus in identifying the primary *persona* as the Maccabeans.56 Gerhoh specifies that Asaph, in this same psalm, is speaking in the person of Mattathias.57 Nicholas of Lyra claims that the author of Psalm 123 was a foreseeing prophet who “spoke in the person of the people” in their affliction.58 The seventeenth-century exegete Matthew Poole, commenting on Psalm 44, writes, “For it does not follow, if the ‘argument’ is of another time, that it is not a Psalm of David, who was a prophet, the likes of which often speak in a foreign personality.”59 There can be no doubt that, throughout the history of exegesis, prosopopoeia was the dominant method for internally reconciling an early, usually Davidic, authorship of psalms with their situations that describe much later events.60

The tradition of interpretation that Calvin received is clear. This interpretation posits a prophet (usually David) foreseeing and foretelling situations that, in the case of these Maccabean psalms, would not actually occur for another eight centuries. Therefore, the lamentations and pleas for deliverance contained therein, and all their concomitant raw emotion, did not arise from the events

themselves, but from someone who was personally far removed from them.

The question about Calvin's own opinion of the authorship of the Psalms does not yield a simple answer. He does ascribe to David those psalms that have his name in the superscription. Calvin is even inclined to ascribe the majority of the Psalms of Ascents (Psalms 120–134) to David,[61] even though only three of them have David's name fixed to them. At Psalm 72, Calvin affirms the simple meaning of the concluding verse, that David composed these first two books of the Psalter. However, since Psalm 72 has Solomon's name in the superscription, Calvin must acknowledge that the superscription of the psalm does not necessarily designate its author.[62] He believes that this psalm was a prayer of David that was put in poetic meter by his son Solomon. Calvin is well aware that the prepositional l can mean "on behalf of" Solomon, and he chooses this meaning.[63]

Where David's name does not appear, Calvin usually does not feel obliged to attribute these psalms to David. In such cases, he is often quite unconcerned with the authorship of individual psalms. "It is uncertain who the author of the Psalm was," as he says at the beginning of Psalm 44, is not an uncommon phrase in the commentary.[64] Indeed, with Psalm 44 and the other six Maccabean psalms, none of which mention David in the superscription, naming the particular author is not important to Calvin.[65]

What makes Calvin's contribution unusual—and, in our survey, unique—is not that he attributes a Maccabean situation to these psalms, but that he is unwilling to assign these psalms to any tenth-century BC author. For Calvin, these particular psalms are not compositions of David, but are products of the second-century BC community that was undergoing the very hardships being depicted in the text. As noted above, most interpreters, from the church fathers to Calvin's own contemporaries, explicitly claimed that these psalms were written by David, who spoke proleptically of the time of the Maccabean revolt through the Spirit of prophecy. A few commentators, such as Wolfgang Musculus, underscored the Maccabean occasion without specifying any particular author or time of composition at all.[66] However, Calvin is unwilling to allow that the anonymous author is anyone other than a second-century Jew in the midst of the hardships described in these psalms.[67]

One obvious implication of Calvin's late date for these select psalms must be addressed: the so-called "silent period." The statement of Josephus may be cited as emblematic: "From Artaxerxes to our own time the complete history has been written, but has not been deemed worthy of equal credit with the earlier records, because of the failure of the exact succession of the prophets."[68] On similar grounds, some Protestant commentators of the following century rejected

Calvin's late date for these psalms.[69] Calvin himself, though he held a similar opinion of the centuries immediately preceding Christ, did not view this period as entailing a strict cessation of the prophetic Spirit. The *prima facie* dissonance in Calvin's position on this question is noticeable in his comments on Psalm 74:9. One reason he leans toward a Maccabean date for Psalm 74 is the statement in verse 9 that there were no prophets, a statement that suits the time under Antiochus better than under Nebuchadnezzar.[70] It appears at first glance that Calvin wants it both ways, on the one hand acknowledging the absence of prophets, yet on the other hand claiming the canonical Psalm 74 was being written in this time. However, Calvin explains his opinion more carefully in his comments on Psalm 106:

> And although subsequent to the times of Haggai and Malachi, no famous prophets appeared among the people, it is nevertheless probable that some of the priests were endued with the prophetic Spirit, in order that they might direct them to the source whence they might receive all needful consolation. It is my opinion, that after they were dispersed by the tyranny of Antiochus, this form of prayer was adapted to the present necessity, in which the people, by reflecting upon their former history, might acknowledge that their fathers had, in ways innumerable, provoked God to wrath, since the time he had delivered them.[71]

Calvin qualifies the common opinion about the silent years by saying that there were no "famous prophets," but the prophetic Spirit still worked to inspire some priests and Levites during the Maccabean period, when Psalm 106 may have been written. For Calvin, it would be difficult to call this a cessation or silent period at all, but rather a decrease in the Spirit's work, resulting in, say, a "quieter period." The writers of these psalms, even if not "famous," can still be called prophets.[72] More importantly, despite the common opinion then and now, Calvin's exegesis affirms that God's prophetic Spirit had not abandoned His people during this time of oppression.[73]

To summarize up to this point, we have seen how Calvin's exegetical method of consistently attending to the mind of the author compelled him to posit a Maccabean *Sitz im Leben* for seven psalms. This judgment is in conformity with all the major exegetes who preceded him. In a departure from the tradition of premodern exegesis, however, he rejects the idea that these were written as prophecies by David or anyone else besides a second-century BC Jew in the midst of the righteous struggle. What, then, compelled Calvin to defend this unique view?

Reasons for Maccabean Date of these Psalms

Calvin is familiar with the strategies of other commentators who claim that an earlier author prophesied concerning the coming situation under Antiochus. Yet Calvin positively rejects that the prophetic Spirit has foretold these circumstances.74 Why is it important for him that these psalms actually be written from within the struggle? One suggestion that can be ruled out is that Calvin somehow thought predictive prophecy impossible. Descriptions of second-century events can, through the prophetic Spirit, be foretold centuries beforehand; the prophecies of the latter half of Daniel are sufficient proof. Furthermore, Calvin believed that David excelled in the prophetic Spirit among all others and that he was the teacher of the whole church, a distinguished instrument of the Spirit.75 In addition, Calvin was not opposed to David, as a prophet, occasionally speaking "in the person of others."76 It is worth pointing out that many critical commentators of the modern period have shared Calvin's judgment about the late date of these psalms.77 It thus may be tempting to view Calvin as a forerunner of this type of historical-critical exegesis. Although Calvin's interpretive method is indicative of a transition between medieval and critical exegesis, there is at least one discontinuity that precludes pursuing this line of reasoning very far—it is the acknowledgment that many of the historical-critical exegetes would dismiss Calvin's high view of predictive prophecy.78 In other words, many modern scholars would regard Davidic authorship as metaphysically impossible, whereas Calvin apparently sees Davidic predictive prophecy as a possible, even if an implausible, explanation for these psalms.

Calvin does provide some hints as to why he thinks these psalms were not predictions, but were written simultaneously with the events they reflect. If we look closely, we can discern two grounds for his theory. The first reason for assigning a second-century BC date is based on Calvin's grammatical exegesis. After he rejects Davidic authorship of Psalm 79 and recognizes that it pertains to events long after David's death, Calvin goes on to explain that it is not usual for the prophets "to speak historically (*historice*) in their prophecies."79 This isolated passage is perhaps ambiguous enough to be open to interpretation. According to De Greef, Calvin does not think that the prophetic psalmist would employ "such concretely historical" references to future events.80 De Greef seems to be saying that Calvin does not expect concrete details in predictive prophecy. Against this interpretation, we must again appeal to the book of Daniel, considered by Calvin to be predictive, which includes more concretely historical details than Psalm 79.

To acquire a firmer grasp on Calvin's meaning and why he believes that speaking "historically" rules out this psalm and others as predictive prophecy, it

is worth comparing the other uses of *historice* in Calvin's Psalms commentary. Calvin uses this word in his discussion of Psalm 9:3, which he translates, "While my enemies are turned back, they fall and are overthrown before your face."[81] Calvin explains that, in the first part of the verse, David "narrates historically," but David afterward claims what can only be understood "from the sense of faith," namely, that God's presence was the real and decisive factor.[82] Calvin here seems to juxtapose narrating *historice* with narrating *ex fidei sensu*, that is, historical report as opposed to its theological interpretation.[83] Before leaving this verse, Calvin notes and justifies his translation of these Hebrew future tense verbs into the Latin present tense.[84] This point at least emphasizes that the psalmist, in speaking historically, is describing past events where he has detected divine action.

The Reformer uses this term again in his comments on Psalm 124. Against those who contend that Psalm 124 describes the Babylonian exile, Calvin notes that the superscription refers to David. Given Davidic authorship, a situation after David is ruled out because the psalm "historically narrates" (*historice narret*) the deliverance that the people obtained from great danger. As he did in his earlier comments on Psalm 79, Calvin once again insists that the prophets usually speak of future things in another mode.[85] It is clear that Calvin's use of *historice* here has lost any connotation of "merely historical report," which he seems to signify in Psalm 9, for Psalm 124 is an overtly theological interpretation of deliverance coming from the Lord. Instead, *historice* signifies a narration of past events in contrast to future predictions. The use of the term does not entail anything particularly concrete or narrow, for Calvin says the situation described in this psalm could refer to many past events when God rescued His people.[86] To narrate *historice* simply means the recounting of past events.

The word *historice* is not used in Calvin's comments on Psalm 137, but he again draws the same contrast without using the term. In contrast to the view of many commentators, he says that this is not David speaking "by the prophetic Spirit" (*prophetico spiritu*) concerning the coming exile, "because the prophets usually speak in another way concerning future events. But here it is discussed as concerning a known event and verified by experience."[87]

In view of this evidence, we may call this Calvin's grammatical basis for his interpretation. This different mode of speaking to which Calvin repeatedly refers must relate to the future and past tenses. The reason, therefore, that Calvin will not allow these psalms to be predictive prophecies from centuries before is that these texts describe the events in question, which he and most of his predecessors grant as having a Maccabean provenance, as if they occur in the

immediate past. It is not necessarily the concrete nature of the descriptions as much as the use of the past tense that seems to rule out predictive prophecy for Calvin. In his preface to Daniel, which Calvin does acknowledge to be predictive prophecy, he says that the prophet speaks "almost historically" (*historice propemodum*) concerning future things. He goes on to imply that the book of Daniel was an extraordinary circumstance, a method necessary for getting the attention of a people in the midst of great upheaval. Calvin claims that, in such a time, the prophet ought to speak of future things as if they have already happened.88 Presumably, the extraordinary circumstances of Daniel's time do not apply to the Psalms, whose descriptions of the past are to be taken at face value. Furthermore, we may add that many of the prophecies of Daniel, in contrast to the psalms in question, are grammatically future and are given in highly symbolic language, including the ones regarding Antiochus in Daniel 9 and 11.89

Thus, Calvin has given a simple grammatical reason for assigning these psalms to the Maccabean period. Not only is the situation Maccabean, but the straightforward use of the past tense reveals the time period in which these psalms were composed. The descriptions of the suffering of God's people under Antiochus are historical as opposed to proleptic.

The second reason for Calvin to emphasize the late date of these psalms can be summarized as a teleological motivation. Calvin's attention to the historical situation of the psalmist is never intended to be a scholarly end in itself. This method serves as a bridge to the end he has in mind, namely, the application of the Psalms to his own day.90 Not only did Calvin consistently seek to *identify* the historical circumstances of the psalmist, but he also consistently *identified with* the circumstances of the psalmist. For Calvin, the proper identification *of* must logically precede the identification *with,* for the latter is an extension of the former. At the same time, one cannot help but wonder whether Calvin's identification *with* the psalmist in turn increased his motivation to seek that *Sitz im Leben.*

It is not uncommon for Bible readers to identify with the life and writings of David. Indeed, the Psalter calls the worshipper to take ownership of its prayers. Moreover, when the reader's own historical situation resembles that which is portrayed in the biblical text, the reader will inevitably draw connections. Gosselin, who argues that such comparisons appealed to Protestant Reformers at large, says, "The case of John Calvin is perhaps the most striking of all."91

Near the beginning of his preface to the Psalms commentary, Calvin states that he usually calls the book of Psalms "an anatomy of all parts of the soul," for the whole range of human emotions is represented in it. In other parts of Scripture

God commands humanity, but here the prophets speak to God.92 The reader is invited, as it were, to share this same range of emotions with the psalmist. So David, the chief psalmist, becomes an example of imitation and point of comparison for Calvin. From this point of departure, Calvin proceeds to give the most revealing autobiographical information in any of his works.93 Calvin, like David, has suffered from the enemies of God's people. In David, Calvin sees a reflection of his own career, from the commencement of his calling through the continued course of his work. Along the way, he humbly acknowledges that he falls short of David's virtue.94 All this autobiography, including the famous *subita conversio* passage and all the sufferings that followed, is occasioned by the comparison with David. Calvin concludes, "This experience has been not a small service for me in understanding the Psalms, so that in my meditation upon them I did not wander in an unknown region."95 In other words, when Calvin approaches the Psalms, he is not in unfamiliar territory. The soul and the emotions that are exposed in the Psalter he recognizes as his own. More than just interesting information from a man who said precious little about himself, this constant back-and-forth comparison between David and Calvin in the preface sets the tone for the commentary's direct application to the sixteenth-century Christian.96

Not only does Calvin make the individual comparison with David, but his reflection on the Psalms also causes him to reflect in his preface on the unjust suffering and martyrdom of the church in France.97 These statements about the circumstances of the sixteenth-century church will set the stage for seeing the situation of the whole community of God's people reflected in the Psalms. The same tendency of Calvin to read his personal struggles into the Psalms will allow him to see in the ancient text the struggles of the contemporary church as well.

Following the lead of Nicholas of Lyra, Calvin and other Reformers gave increasing attention to the literal sense of Scripture. But compared to much of the tradition of interpretation preceding Calvin, his de-emphasis on David's status as predictive prophet in favor of the immediate situation of the psalmist is remarkable.98 Gosselin contrasts Calvin's method with that of Faber Stapulensis, who stressed the prophetic role of David. "Lefèvre's prophet, David, does not stand as a *viator,* nor as a model to men of faith. He utters, rather forecasts, what is to come in the Christian era without seeming to partake of it."99 This interpretation by Faber, argues Gosselin, leads to a de-emphasis on the historical situation, and, as a result, on the worth and use of David and Israel, looking ahead to the truly worthy and useful time of God's people under and after Christ.100 It could very well be that Calvin is reacting against this tendency in the exegetical tradition that is exemplified so strongly in Faber.

Calvin goes to great lengths to show that the psalmist himself, like Calvin, is out on the spiritual battlefield, not merely prophesying about someone else's emotions centuries later.[101] The same principle that prompted Calvin to appreciate David's own situation before leaping to the messianic application also obliged him to reject Davidic authorship of certain psalms and to date them to the Maccabean age. In light of the connection Calvin makes between the Psalms and his own time, it is perhaps more understandable why he rejects the old idea that posits David composing the entire Psalter and foretelling situations that he himself did not experience. As Calvin's preface implies, the actual experience of life is what prepares a person to engage the Psalms. How could these psalms be a genuine expression of the range of emotions if the psalmist himself did not personally experience the emotion, and, indeed, was far removed? David was much more distant from the Maccabeans chronologically than we are from Calvin. Thus, in addition to his linguistic and historical reasons for dating some psalms to the Babylonian, Persian, and Hellenistic periods, this is for Calvin simply the best way to read and interpret the Psalms with a view to appropriating them in the present.

Application of the Maccabean Psalms

Now that we have investigated Calvin's exegetical program in the Psalter, it is possible to appreciate more fully the application he builds from it. In other words, as stated above, his exegetical search for the occasion of these psalms serves as a bridge to the application, which was his goal.[102] With Calvin's premise that certain psalms reflect and address the situation under Antiochus, and indeed, that they were written by the very people under such distress, an immediate application to the church is now made possible that otherwise would be more complicated. The remnant in Maccabean Israel, suffering persecution for no other reason than faithfulness to the covenant, is a mirror of the sixteenth-century Protestant church that is threatened with violence by hostile magistrates who represent the interests of the pope. Note, for example, the ease with which Calvin can move from a discussion of the oppression under Antiochus to the ones who presently scorn the church and cause her distress.[103]

Thus, in Calvin's interpretation, there are at least three types of lament psalms with their respective historical situations and applications. First, David documents the frequently innocent but personal suffering he endured at the hands of his enemies, especially Saul. On an individual level, Calvin readily identifies with these psalms. Second, other psalmists during the captivity record their communal suffering at the hands of the Babylonians, offering laments that, significantly, are often joined with confession of sin, for their suffering came as

the result of their corporate transgressions of injustice and idolatry. On the corporate level, these apply only so far as the church is guilty of wandering from God. In the third place, what the Maccabean psalms provide is a case of communal suffering at the hands of Antiochus and his supporters, who persecuted a people who were simply following their conscience and striving to worship God in peace. These Maccabean psalms apply directly to the sixteenth-century Protestant church in a way that the Davidic and captivity psalms cannot. If David is Calvin's individual model of virtue and faithfulness in the face of suffering, the Maccabean church points to and is the exemplar for the church under the cross.

If this thesis is correct—that Calvin truly did regard the Protestant church (persecuted in France and threatened elsewhere) as the present and proper subject matter of these psalms and the Maccabean history—then one would expect some corroboration of this perspective elsewhere in Calvin's writings. Indeed, a decade before his Psalms commentary, it is clear that Calvin employs a specifically Maccabean lens in interpreting the political and religious situation of his own day. The following four examples illustrate the point. In a 1547 letter to De Falais, Calvin writes in the postscript about "our Antiochus, who presses us at present."[104] The next year, when writing to Farel of the troubles in Bordeaux, where he states that "examples of extreme cruelty have been exhibited," Calvin refers again to Antiochus.[105] In another letter to John Sturm in which he writes about the dangers facing the church, Calvin declares, "The power of Antiochus will be ruined; our Pharaoh, being conquered, will turn his violent assaults elsewhere, and relax perchance somewhat of his severity at home."[106] Finally, in a 1549 letter to Bullinger, Calvin notes, "My first fear is that our Pharaoh, shut out from all hope of contracting friendship with you, may betake himself to Antiochus."[107]

These examples illustrate Calvin's striking predilection for viewing contemporary events through a biblical lens. In these letters alone, he freely refers to Antiochus, Caesar, and Pharaoh, rather than using the actual names of the different magistrates whom they represent. Admittedly, in a context where the general culture—including especially any recipient of Calvin's correspondence—is biblically literate, such analogical interpretation of current events is perhaps not unusual. Indeed, the recipients presumably had no problems discerning Calvin's symbolic names.

Even if not unique, it is in conjunction with the evidence from his Psalms commentary that Calvin's epistolary use of "Antiochus" (as opposed to the name of any other oppressive ruler) is particularly revealing. The Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (r. 1519–56) is the referent of Antiochus.[108] In the 1540s he

was increasing his influence through campaigns and victories over Protestants, with the goal of winning them back to the Roman Church.[109] When Calvin wrote the letters cited above in the late 1540s, it was surely unknown how the actions of the emperor would ultimately affect the progress of the Reformed Church. All Calvin knew was that godly people were being unjustly persecuted.

Thus, with a view to the Psalms commentary that he would write in the next decade, it is noteworthy that Calvin does not refer to Charles V as "my Saul" or "our Nebuchadnezzar," but as "our Antiochus." Since Calvin is apparently interpreting contemporary events through the lens of biblical events, he could have used the names of either of these two rulers, both of whom represent the enemies of God's people in various texts of the Psalms. However, as we have seen from Calvin's interpretation of the Psalms, neither of these figures would fit the situation of the church in sixteenth-century Europe. The emperor was not in personal pursuit of Calvin as Saul was of David. Moreover, in Calvin's view, the Protestant church was not suffering primarily because of sin or turning away from God, as the community of Israel did before being subdued by Nebuchadnezzar. Instead, God's people were collectively suffering for their faithfulness to God, at the hands of a tyrant who would think nothing of trampling the innocent. Antiochus IV and Charles V were, in Calvin's view, two of a kind.

In his survey of Calvin's New Testament commentaries, T. H. L. Parker remarked, "In Calvin's commentaries the first and sixteenth centuries are so intertwined that it is often quite impossible to separate them."[110] We might add to those reference points the second century BC. In some ways, in contrast to psalms that arose from other situations, the Maccabean psalms contain the prayers of lament and petition and trust that resonated most with the context of the sixteenth-century Protestant church. For this reason, Calvin reiterates not only the Maccabean context, but also the second-century BC date of composition. Just as the original authors actually suffered, asked troubling questions, and trusted in God and His promises, the faithful church that bears her cross in Calvin's day can make these psalms her own. Furthermore, these psalms serve as reminders to the church of every age that election does not entail prosperity, but that "insofar as we are adopted in Christ, we are appointed to the slaughter."[111] True believers will suffer, and they can legitimately ask, "Why?" and "How long, O Lord?" Then, in accordance with these psalms, as the Maccabean martyrs and the whole people of God have always done, they will endure patiently, knowing that nothing will separate them from God's love, trusting that victory stands on the other side of the suffering, and cherishing "the hope God gives of being raised again by him" (2 Macc. 7:14).

1. When they diverge from the numbering in the sources, I have modified the psalm and verse numbers in the main text to correspond with English Bibles. In the footnotes, I have preserved the numbering in the souces cited and included the English numbering in brackets.

2. “Et sane quum hoc sit prope unicum illius officium, mentem scriptoris, quem explicandum sumpsit, patefacere.” “Calvinus Grynaeo,” in *Ioannis Calvini opera omnia denuo recognita et adnotatione critica instructa notisque illustrate* (Geneva, 1992–), 2/13:3 [hereafter cited as *COR*]. On the style and method of *brevitas* and *facilitas,* see Richard A. Muller, *The Unaccommodated Calvin: Studies in the Foundation of a Theological Tradition,* Oxford Studies in Historical Theology (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 111–113, 236 n. 94. The literature on Calvin’s exegetical method is extensive. For some helpful surveys, see David C. Steinmetz, “John Calvin as an Interpreter of the Bible,” in *Calvin and the Bible*, ed. Donald K. McKim (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 282–291; John L. Thompson, “Calvin as a Biblical Interpreter,” in *The Cambridge Companion to John Calvin,* ed. McKim (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 58–73; Muller, “The Hermeneutic of Promise and Fulfillment in Calvin’s Exegesis of the Old Testament Prophecies of the Kingdom,” in *The Bible in the Sixteenth Century,* ed. Steinmetz (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), 68–82; Hans-Joachim Kraus, “Calvin’s Exegetical Principles,” trans. Keith Crim, *Interpretation* 31, no. 1 (1977): 8–18; Alexandre Ganoczy and Stefan Scheld, *Die Hermeneutik Calvins: Geistesgeschichtliche Voraussetzungen und Grundzüge,* Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte Mainz 114 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1983).

3. Calvin, Rom. 8:36, in loc.; *COR* 2/13:184.

4. On Calvin’s revisions of 1551 and 1556, see T. H. L. Parker, *Calvin’s New Testament Commentaries,* 2nd ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 36–59. On p. 46, Parker notes that the section on Rom. 8 approximately doubled in length by 1556.

5. A notable exception is Wulfert De Greef, *Calvijn en zijn uitleg van de Psalmen: Een onderzoek naar zijn exegetische methode* (Kampen: Kok, 2006), 128–129, who mentions this fact in passing.

6. De Greef, “Calvin as Commentator on the Psalms,” trans. Raymond A. Blacketer, in *Calvin and the Bible*, ed. McKim, 86–90.

7. “So, too, must the complex of Calvin’s theological program—the *Institutes,* commentaries, sermons, lectures, and treatises—be set into the context of the exegetical and theological tradition on which he consistently drew and the contemporary intellectual movement of which he was a part. Calvin’s originality (or lack of originality) can be discerned only through examination of the work of his predecessors and contemporaries, not only those whose works he cites but particularly those whose works he probably examined and did not cite but with whom he surely engaged in a fairly consistent and continuous dialogue. Nicholas of Lyra and Philip Melanchthon are but two of the most significant examples.” Muller, *Unaccommodated Calvin,* 187. Cf. Muller, “Calvin’s Exegesis of Old Testament Prophecies,” 82.

8. E.g., Calvin, Ps. 44:1 [inscriptio], in loc.; *Ioannis Calvini opera quae supersunt omnia,* ed. Guilielmus Baum, Eduardus Cunitz, and Eduardus Reuss (Brunswick: Schwetschke, 1863–1900), 31:436 [hereafter cited as *CO*]; Ps. 74 inscriptio, in loc.; *CO* 31:690.

9. Calvin, *In librum Psalmorum commentarius,* Ps. 44:18[17], in loc.; *CO,* 31:444.

10. Calvin, Ps. 44:23[22], in loc.; *CO* 31:447.

11. Calvin, Ps. 79:5, in loc; *CO,* 31:749. “Form of prayer,” an expression Calvin uses repeatedly throughout his commentary, seems to mean something like a model of prayer useful in various situations.

12. These corporate generalizations hold true despite the fact that the Old Testament recognizes that Nebuchadnezzar swept away innocent people (the remnant) along with the unjust and idolaters and, conversely, not every Jew remained faithful to the covenant during the Maccabean revolt. The very first victim of Mattathias’s zeal was an apostate Jew (1 Macc. 2:23–24)! Furthermore, the faithful martyrdoms were often interpreted as vicarious punishment because of the people’s sins (2 Macc. 7:18, 32, 38). Cf. Cassiodorus, *In Psalterium expositio,* in Psalmum 78:9–10 [79:8–9]; J.-P. Migne, ed., *Patrologia Latina* (Paris: Imprimerie Catholique, 1844–1865), 70:576c–577a [hereafter cited as *PL*]; Nicholas of Lyra, *Postilla super totam Bibliam* ([Nuremberg: Anton Koberger, 1481]), in Psalmum 43:17 [44:16].

13. The reasons summarized above are gleaned from Calvin’s discussions of these seven psalms in his

commentary.

14. James L. Mays, *Psalms,* Interpretation (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1994), 179, notes that there is an "old and venerable opinion" that Ps. 44 expresses the sentiments of Jews under oppression from Antiochus, but he does not give any names or details.

15. Eusebius, *Commentaria in Psalmos,* in Psalmum 78 [79]; J.-P. Migne, ed., *Patrologia Graeca* (Paris: Imprimerie Catholique, 1857–1866), 23:941d: "Oὐk œstin ἕteron eἰpe‹n crónon, À tÕn ἐpˆ ἈntiÒcou, kaq᾽ Ön ¹ tîn Makkabaíwn graf¾ tᾖ metᾖ ce‹raς prolegÒmena di᾽ œrgwn kecwrhkÒta deíknusi" [hereafter cited as *PG*]. Eusebius does not mention the Maccabean situation at Psalms 43 [44] or 73 [74].

16. Theodore of Mopsuestia , *Commentary on Psalms 1–81,* trans. Robert C. Hill, Writings from the Greco-Roman World (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), passim. This helpful edition is a Greek text with facing pages of English translation. Theodore's Maccabean psalms are 43 [44], 46 [47], 54–59 [55–60], 61 [62], 68 [69], 73 [74], 78–79 [79–80], 143 [144]. See also Harry S. Pappas, "Theodore of Mopsuestia's Commentary on Psalm 44 (LXX): A Study of Exegesis and Christology," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 47 (2002): 68.

17. P. G. Walsh, introduction to *Explanation of the Psalms,* by Cassiodorus, trans. Walsh, Ancient Christian Writers, 51–53 (New York: Paulist Press, 1990–91), 1:19.

18. Cassiodorus, *In Psalterium expositio,* in Psalmum 78 [79]; *PL* 70:573b–579b. Cassiodorus, like Eusebius, does not mention the Maccabean situation at Pss. 44 and 74, but notes that the situation of Ps. 74 is the destruction of Jerusalem under the Romans: "Sed sciendum quod septuagesimus tertius captivitatem continet quam pertulit sub Romanis: iste vero Antiochi regis deflet sacrilegam et crudelissimam vastitatem." *PL* 70:578d–579a.

19. Bede, *De Psalmorum libro exegesis,* in Psalmum 78 [79]; *PL* 93:910b. On Bede's use of Cassiodorus, cf. *PL* 92:849c, with Walsh's introduction 1:19.

20. "Verba Machabaeorum, quando ab Antiocho sacrificare, et profanari cogebantur. Aliter vox Christi de passione." Bede, *De Psalmorum,* in Psalmum 61 [62]; *PL* 93:801c.

21. "Verba mutuata videntur de historiis Machabaeorum, ubi gentes templum Dei polluerunt, sanguinem iustorum ut aquam effuderunt." Gerhoh, *Commentarius aureus in Psalmos et cantica ferialia,* in Psalmum 78 [79]:1; *PL* 194:487c.

22. Gerhoh, *Commentarius,* in Psalmum 78 [79]; *PL* 194:485c–492a.

23. "Unde et hic versus, *Effuderunt,* in historia Machabaeorum pro eadem causa introducitur, ut totus psalmus inde scriptus non dubitetur." Gerhoh, *Commentarius,* in Psalmum 78[79]:3; *PL* 194:488a.

24. Gerhoh, *Commentarius,* in Psalmum 78[79]:5; *PL* 194:489a. Cf. Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis: The Four Senses of Scripture,* trans. Mark Sebanc (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998–2000), 1:65, speaking of Gerhoh: "rough polemicist and all too morose reformer that he was."

25. For useful essays on Nicholas's exegesis, though with nothing on the Psalms in particular, see Philip D. W. Krey and Lesley Smith, eds., *Nicholas of Lyra: The Senses of Scripture,* Studies in the History of Christian Thought, vol. 90 (Leiden: Brill, 2000). Calvin was familiar with Nicholas and his "double-literal" hermeneutic. See Muller, "Calvin's Exegesis of Old Testament Prophecies," 68; Steinmetz, "John Calvin as Interpreter," 284; Thompson, "Calvin," 69.

26. "Et imo salvo meliori iudicio mihi vident melius dicendum quod psalmus iste sit factus de persecutione quam sustinuit populus iudaicus sub antiocho nobili." Nicholas of Lyra, *Postilla super totam Bibliam* [(Nuremberg: Anton Koberger, 1481)], in Psalmum 43 [44].

27. Nicholas, *Postilla,* in Psalmum 43:10 [44:9].

28. "Id est, fugere nos fecisti et inimicos nostros nos insequi, unde dicitur 1 Mach. 2 quod Mathathias et filii eius fugerunt ad montes et qui multi secuti fuerunt eos." Nicholas, *Postilla,* in Psalmum 43:11 [44:10].

29. E.g., see his consideration and rejection of a Maccabean occasion for Ps. 79, based on the statement at the beginning of the Psalm that the temple was not only defiled, but the city was destroyed. Nicholas, *Postilla,* in Psalmum 78 [79]: "De materia vero huius dicunt alique expositores nostri, quod loquitur de persecutione iudeorum sub antiocho rege, qui polluit templum, ponendo ibi abominandum ydolum: et populum israhel occidit…. Sed huic expositioni non consonat quod dicitur in principio psalmi."

30. “Et videtur psalmus iste esse orationem alicuius sancti prophetae pro liberatione populi israel ab afflictione inducta per Antiochum illustrem in qua populus mirabiliter fuit afflictus et despectus, ut habetur 1 Machabeorum et secundo quod praevidens propheta dixit in persona populi in illa afflictione futuri.” Nicholas, *Postilla,* in Psalmum 122 [123].

31. [Martin Bucer,] *The Psalter of David in Englyshe, purely and faythfully translated after the texte of Felyne* [trans. George Joye] [London: Thomas Godfray, 1534]. Martin Bucer’s commentary has been called the most influential commentary on the Psalms during the first half of the sixteenth century. See R. Gerald Hobbs, “How Firm a Foundation: Martin Bucer’s Historical Exegesis of the Psalms,” *Church History* 53/4 (1984): 477. See also the extensive study of Bucer’s commentary in Hobbs, “An Introduction to the *Psalms* Commentary of Martin Bucer,” 2 vols. (Ph.D. diss., University of Strasbourg, 1971).

32. Wolfgang Musculus, *In Davidis Psalterium sacrosanctum commentarii* (Basel: Sebastian Henricpetri, [1618]), 346b.

33. Musculus, *In Davidis Psalterium,* 507a.

34. “Quod ad historiam attinet, incertum est, ad temporane Babylonicae captivitatis, vel vastationis per Antiochum factae, respiciatur.” Musculus, *In Davidis Psalterium,* 566a.

35. Musculus, *In Davidis Psalterium,* 567.

36. E.g., John Mayer, *A Commentary upon the Holy Writings of Job, David, and Salomon: That Is, These Five, Job, Psalmes, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs* (London: for Robert Ibbitson and Thomas Roycroft, 1653), 325, 389–390, 398, which includes Pss. 44, 74, and 79 as descriptions of the Maccabean period.

37. It is worth noting that, even when a specific Maccabean situation is not noted, the events recorded in 1–2 Macc. are frequently raised as illustrations in precritical Psalms commentaries. E.g., see Ambrose, *In Psalmum CXVIII expositio* XVIII.12; *PL* 15:1457a; Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos,* in Psalmum 78 [79]3; *PL* 36:1011; Bede, *De Psalmorum,* in Psalmum 68 [69]; *PL* 93:848a; Hugh of St. Cher, *Postilla super Psalterium* ([Venice: Gregorium de Gregoriis, 1496]), in Psalmum 78 [79]. When compared to later Protestants, the more frequent reference to the Maccabean period evinced in earlier commentaries may be due to a greater consciousness of these events, indicative of the more fluid status of the Old Testament Apocrypha in the church before the sixteenth century and its positive rejection and then neglect by Protestants after the sixteenth century.

38. See De Greef, *Calvijn en zijn uitleg,* 115.

39. Diodore of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, John Chrysostom, Augustine, Cassiodorus, and Bede regarded all the Psalms as Davidic in origin. Some fathers, including Hilary of Poitiers and Jerome, acknowledged that David was not the author of every psalm. For Hilary, the superscriptions indicated authorship, and, when a psalm is anonymous, it should be attributed to the last named author. Cf. Hilary, *Tractatus super Psalmos, Prologus* 2–3, in *PL* 9: 233–234; Matthew Poole, *Synopsis criticorum aliorumque S. Scripturae interpretum* (London: Flesher, 1669–76), 2:500; Frances Young, “Alexandrian and Antiochene Exegesis,” in *A History of Biblical Interpretation,* vol. 1, *The Ancient Period,* ed. Alan J. Hauser and Duane F. Watson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 350; Walsh, introduction to *Explanation of the Psalms,* by Cassiodorus, 1:5; De Greef, “The Psalms,” 91 n. 20.

40. “Quanquam enim Asaph Synagoga interpretetur, quae est congregatio, idque nomen usitatius insederit genti Iudaeorum; tamen et Ecclesiam istam posse dici congregationem, et illum veterem populum dictum esse Ecclesiam, jam in alio psalmo satis aperteque monstravimus.” Augustine, *Enarrationes,* in Psalmum 78 [79].3; *PL* 36:1011.

41. Cassiodorus, *In Psalterium expositio,* in Psalmum 78 [79]; *PL* 70:573b: “*Asaph* vero significat Synagogam, quae tamen catholicae convenire possit Ecclesiae.” As usual, Bede follows Cassiodorus. Bede, *De Psalmorum libro exegesis,* in Psalmum 78 [79]; *PL* 93:910b.

42. “Asaph dicitur Synagoga, quod est congregatio Dominica.” Gerhoh, *Commentarius,* in Psalmum 80:1 [81 inscriptio].

43. Eusebius, *Commentaria,* in Psalmum 78 [79]; *PG* 23:944.

44. Theodore, *Commentary,* 614. Frances Young, “Alexandrian and Antiochene Exegesis,” in *A History*

of Biblical Interpretation: vol. 1, *The Ancient Period,* ed. Alan J. Hauser and Duane F. Watson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 348–350, argues that the Antiochenes were "fascinated by" prophecy.

45. "Prophetiam vero quam hic praemissam legimus, evidenter scimus impletam. Cum enim ista canerentur temporibus regis David, nihil tale adhuc contigerat ex adversitate Gentium civitati Jerusalem, nec templo Dei, quod nec aedificatum adhuc erat. Post mortem quippe David, filium ejus Salomonem Deo templum fecisse quis nesciat? Dicitur ergo tanquam praeteritum, quod in spiritu videbatur esse futurum." Augustine, *Enarrationes,* in Psalmum 78:1 [79 inscriptio]; *PL* 36:1009.

46. "Est ergo et iste psalmus totus in lamentatione positus, sicut et septuagesimus tertius, qui futura tempora velut praeterita deplorat, et propter duritiam cordis sui genti graviter affligendae, pietatis studio precatur Christum Dominum subvenire." Cassiodorus, *In Psalterium expositio,* in Psalmum 78 [79]; *PL* 70:573b–c.

47. Cassiodorus, *In Psalterium expositio,* in Psalmum 78 [79]; *PL* 70:573d.

48. "Quamvis longis ante temporibus David fuerit, quam rex existeret Antiochus, omnia tamen more suo quasi transacta refert, quae Spiritu sancto repletus praevidebat esse ventura." Cassiodorus, *In Psalterium expositio,* in Psalmum 78[79]:1; *PL* 70:573d. Cf. Cassiodorus, *In Psalterium expositio,* in Psalmum 78:6 [79:5]: "Prophetiae quoque spiritu denuntiat fieri quae praevidebat esse ventura."

49. "Vel fidelis Asaph ante Christi adventum hic loquitur, id est prophetae, et alii perfecti in populo Dei praevidentes in Spiritu Ecclesiae persecutionem, quam significat illa persecutio sub Antiocho in Jerusalem facta." Gerhoh, *Commentarius,* in Psalmum 78:1 [79 inscriptio]; *PL* 194:487b.

50. Hugh of St. Cher, *Postilla,* prohemium.

51. "Et imo loquuntur pro populo tunc futuro, quo impletum fuit tempore machabeorum. Quo populus existens in magna afflictione, recolebat beneficia antiquis prioribus collata." Nicholas of Lyra, *Postilla,* in Psalmum 43[44]:1: Cf. Nicholas of Lyra, *Postilla,* in Psalmum 73 [74], where Nicholas affirms that Asaph foresees (*praevidet*) the future Babylonian captivity and prays for Israel's liberation.

52. As will be shown below, this was Calvin's assumption. See also Henry Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the Five Bookes of Moses, and the Booke of the Psalmes* (London: John Haviland for Benjamin Fisher, 1622), A2v.

53. See the description of prosopopoeia in Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria,* trans. H. E. Butler, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953), 9.ii.30–33. See also De Greef, "The Psalms," 102.

54. Theodore, *Commentary,* 538, 706, 722, 782, 1084, et passim. For a discussion of prosopopoeia in Theodore, see Pappas, "Theodore of Mopsuestia's Commentary," 62–67.

55. "Quapropter *Asaph* (quem diximus personam gestare fidelium populorum) per totum loquitur psalmum." Cassiodorus, *In Psalterium expositio,* in Psalmum 78 [79]; *PL* 70:573c.

56. "In persona Machabaeorum canitur, qui sub Antiocho Epiphane patrias leges moeniaque patre Matathia auctore, ultimis coacti malis, defendere aggressi sunt. Aliter, vox apostolorum de passione Christi. Aliter anima poenitens contra pessimos vicinos, id est daemones, Deo supplicat." Bede, *De Psalmorum,* in Psalmum 78 [79]; *PL* 93:910b.

57. "Asaph, id est fidelis populus, sub persona Mathathiae hic loquitur." Gerhoh, *Commentarius,* in Psalmum 78:1 [79 inscriptio]; *PL* 194:487c.

58. Nicholas of Lyra, *Postilla,* in Psalmum 122 [123].

59. "Neque enim, si Argumentum sit alterius temporis, sequitur non esse Psalmum Davidis, qui Propheta fuit, quales saepe loquuntur in aliena persona." Poole, *Synopsis criticorum,* 2:827.

60. See also the survey of interpretation given in John Pearson, *Critica sacri, sive annotata doctissimorum virorum in Vetus ac Novum Testamentum* (Amsterdam, 1698), 3:247, 3:479, 3:577.

61. Calvin, Ps. 120 argumentum; *CO* 32:295; but Calvin will reject Davidic authorship of Ps. 123 (Calvin, Ps. 123:1, in loc.; *CO* 32:308). Cf. Calvin, Ps. 42:1[inscriptio], in loc.; *CO* 31:425, where Calvin attributes Ps. 42 to David even though the "sons of Korah" are mentioned in the superscription.

62. "Calvijn beschouwt David soms ook als de dichter van een psalm, terwijl het opschrift een andere naam vermeldt." Cf. De Greef, *Calvijn,* 117.

63. Calvin, Ps. 72:1[inscriptio], in loc.; *CO* 31:663. See also Calvin, Ps. 3:9[8], in loc.; *CO* 31:57. Cf. De Greef, *Calvijn en zijn uitleg*, 115.

64. Calvin, Ps. 44:1[inscriptio], in loc.; *CO* 31:436. It is unclear how Calvin would harmonize this with his comments about the first seventy-two psalms cited above.

65. Cf. De Greef, "The Psalms," 91; with De Greef, *Calvijn en zijn uitleg*, 118: "Calvijn laat vaak in het midden wie de auteur van een psalm is." Cf. also the opinion of David Dickson, *A Brief Explication of the Psalms*, 2nd ed. (London: T. M., 1655), 1:271, on Ps. 44: "We are not to trouble ourselves about the name of the writer, or time of writing of any part thereof." He felt that God deliberately concealed the author so readers would not be distracted by such issues.

66. Musculus, *In Davidis Psalterium*, readily speaks of Pss. 44, 74, 79, and 89 being "referred to" the Maccabean situation. However, in his ambiguity about the authorship question *per se*, Musculus seems to allow for prophetic prosopopoeia. At Ps. 89, he entertains a Maccabean setting, but explicitly notes that it was written by a contemporary of David (672b).

67. This conclusion, about which Calvin is firm, would seem to undermine his less firm hypothesis that Ezra compiled the Psalter. See Calvin, Ps. 1 argumentum; *CO* 31:37: "Sive Ezra, sive alius quispiam Psalmos in unum volumen collegit…."

68. Josephus, *Contra Apionem*, trans. H. St. J. Thackeray, Loeb Classical Library (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1926), 1.viii.41: "pístewς d' oÙc Ðmoíac ºxíwtai toῖς prÕ aÙtîn di¦ tÕ m¾ genšsqai t¾n tîn profhtîn ¢kribÁ diadoc»n."

69. "Deinde, non habemus ullum scriptum Canonicum a temporibus Antiochi." Poole, *Synopsis criticorum*, 2:827. That this is a case of *petitio principii* goes without saying. Mayer, who accepts the Maccabean situation of Ps. 44 but rejects Calvin's notion that it was written during that period, writes, "And hitherto I add, that after the Captivity besides *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, and Daniell*…the Church of God had no Prophet, til the time of *John* the Baptist, which might be conceived to be a Pen-man of any part of the holy Scriptures, wherefore I conclude, that *David*, and not any other was the Author of this Psalme." *Commentary*, 325. Mayer later comes to the same conclusion about Ps. 74, concluding, "By *Antiochus*, or in his times, Prophets and Signes ceased" (390). Both Poole and Mayer appeal to the prophetic role of David that enabled him to describe these future scenarios.

70. Calvin, Ps. 74 inscriptio; *CO* 31:691.

71. Calvin, Ps. 106:47, in loc.; *CO* 32:134.

72. Calvin, Ps. 123:1, in loc.; *CO* 32:308.

73. Calvin's reluctance to affirm a strict cessationist view of prophecy during this period is arguably consistent with the self-understanding of many strands of second-temple Judaism, from the Hellenistic Jews who included the Apocrypha in their Scriptures (LXX) to the Qumran sect with their regulative documents and prophecies. Even the statement of Josephus cited above does not unambiguously represent a position of strict prophetic cessationism after Artaxerxes.

74. Calvin, Ps. 74 inscriptio, in loc.; *CO* 31:690; Ps. 79:1[inscriptio], in loc.; *CO* 31:746.

75. Calvin, Ps. 42:1[inscriptio], in loc.; *CO* 31:425.

76. Calvin, Ps. 20:1[inscriptio], in loc.; *CO* 31:207.

77. See Harlan Creelman, "Are there Maccabean Psalms? Part 1," *The Old and New Testament Student* 15, nos. 3–4 (September–October 1892): 94–104; Creelman, "Are there Maccabean Psalms? Part 2," *The Old and New Testament Student* 15, nos. 5–6 (November–December 1892): 192–201, argues that there are psalms composed in the Maccabean period. Charles Lee Feinberg, "Are there Maccabean Psalms in the Psalter?" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 105, no. 417 (1948): 44–55, rejects the notion of Maccabean psalms. Kraus, *Psalms 1–59: A Commentary*, trans. Hilton C. Oswald (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988), 97, notes that Duhm thought most of the psalms were written in the time of the Maccabees. Kraus, *Psalms 60–150: A Commentary*, trans. Hilton C. Oswald (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989), 97: "The majority of exegetes are of the opinion that Psalm 74 reflects events of the time of the Maccabees." Much of the debate hinges on the date of the Psalter's final redaction. Note also the use of LXX Psalms during the time of the Maccabean revolt, described in Arie van der Kooij, "The Septuagint of Psalms and the First Book of Maccabees," in

The Old Greek Psalter: Studies in Honour of Albert Pietersma, ed. Robert J. V. Hiebert, et al. (Sheffield, Eng.: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 229–247.

78. In nearly every respect, Calvin is closer to medieval exegesis than to modern critical exegesis, and should be interpreted in the former context. Muller, "Calvin's Exegesis of OT Prophecies," 69, notes other problems with seeing Calvin as a "harbinger of critical exegesis." After citing Kraus's elaboration of eight exegetical principles of Calvin, Muller claims that "not a single principle noted here separates Calvin definitively from the medieval exegete." Cf. Kraus, "Calvin's Exegetical Principles," 12–18. Furthermore, see Muller and Thompson, "The Significance of Precritical Exegesis: Retrospect and Prospect," in *Biblical Interpretation in the Era of the Reformation: Essays Presented to David C. Steinmetz in Honor of His Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Richard A. Muller and John L. Thompson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 339–342, who delineate some of the crucial differences between "precritical" (including Reformation era) and modern historical-critical exegesis.

79. "Neque enim ita in suis vaticiniis historice loqui prophetae solent." Calvin, Ps. 79:1[inscriptio], in loc.; *CO* 31:746.

80. De Greef, "The Psalms," 91.

81. "Dum vertuntur inimici mei retrorsum, concidunt et profligantur a facie tua." Calvin, Ps. 9:4[3]; *CO* 31:96.

82. "Priore membro historice narrat, hostes fuisse prostratos vel in fugam compulsos: postea ex fidei sensu adiungit hoc non accidisse humanitus vel fortuito, sed quia Deus contra ipsos in acie steterit." Calvin, Ps. 9:4[3], in loc.; *CO* 31:97.

83. Calvin similarly juxtaposes speaking "historically" with speaking as a "teacher" of divine truth in Dan. 5:23, in loc.

84. Calvin, Ps. 9:4[3], in loc.; *CO* 31:98. Indeed, the NRSV translates them as past tense.

85. "Prophetae enim alio modo de rebus futuris disserere solent." Calvin, Ps. 124:1, in loc.; *CO* 32:310.

86. Calvin, Ps. 124:4, in loc.; *CO* 32:311.

87. "Quia secus prophetae loqui solent de rebus futuris: hic autem disseritur de re nota et usu comperta." Calvin, Ps. 137:1, in loc.; *CO* 32:367.

88. Calvin, *Praelectiones in Danielem; CO* 40:530.

89. In the end, it is difficult to understand why Calvin allows for this kind of predictive prophecy in Daniel but not in the Psalms. The fact that he addresses the issue demonstrates that he is aware of the tension. Calvin appears to be stressing the differences between Daniel and the Psalms. It is the difference in genre between prayer and apocalyptic prophecy. Calvin does not raise the issue in Isaiah 53, where he might have a harder time justifying his future Messianic interpretation in a passage that speaks in the past tense.

90. "Calvin's critical interests extended to questions of authorship, historical background, philology, and rhetoric. Yet he never allowed such questions to dominate his exegesis, which had as its constant goal the edification of the church." Steinmetz, "John Calvin as Interpreter," 288.

91. Edward A. Gosselin, *The King's Progress to Jerusalem: Some Interpretations of David during the Reformation Period and Their Patristic and Medieval Background*, Humana Civilitas: Sources and Studies Relating to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance 2 (Malibu: Undena Publications, 1976), 5, 68–70; here, 69. See also Richard A. Hasler, "The Influence of David and the Psalms upon John Calvin's Life and Thought," *The Hartford Quarterly* 5, no. 2 (1965): 7–18.

92. Calvin, "Piis et ingenuis lectoribus salutem" [hereafter, "Lectoribus"], *CO* 31:15.

93. Muller, *Unaccommodated Calvin*, 25, calls the Psalms preface "the only major personal statement from the Reformer's pen."

94. Calvin, "Lectoribus," *CO* 31:19–21, 27. Cf. Barbara Pitkin, "Imitation of David: David as a Paradigm for Faith in Calvin's Exegesis of the Psalms," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 24, no. 4 (1993): 843–63.

95. Calvin, "Lectoribus," *CO* 31:33.

96. On the relationship between Calvin and David as indicated in Calvin's preface and commentary, see James A. De Jong, "'An Anatomy of All Parts of the Soul': Insights into Calvin's Spirituality from His

Psalms Commentary," in *Calvinus sacrae Scripturae professor: Calvin as Confessor of Holy Scripture*, International Congress on Calvin Research, ed. Wilhelm H. Neuser (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 1–14: "The Psalms commentary is primarily the anatomy of Calvin's soul. It is a rich source on the subjective spirituality of one who identified intimately with David" (14). See also Herman J. Selderhuis, *Calvin's Theology of Psalms*, Texts and Studies in Reformation and Post-Reformation Thought (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 13–14, 26–43; Mays, "Calvin's Commentary on the Psalms: The Preface as Introduction," in *John Calvin and the Church: A Prism of Reform*, ed. Timothy George (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1990), 195–204; W. Balke, "Calvijn over de geschapen werkelijkheid in zijn Psalmencommentaar," in *Wegen en gestalten in het Gereformeerd Protestantisme*, ed. W. Balke, et al. (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij ton Bolland, 1976), 89. Paul A. Riemann, "Dissonant Pieties: John Calvin and the Prayer Psalms of the Psalter," in *Inspired Speech: Prophecy in the Ancient Near East*, ed. John Kaltner and Louis Stulman (New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 354–400, approaches the relationship between David and Calvin from a different angle, detailing Calvin's discomfort with David along with the Psalms and their prayers that question God. On the "mirror of the soul" approach, see Carl J. Bosma, "Discerning the Voices in the Psalms: A Discussion of Two Problems in Psalmic Interpretation," *Calvin Theological Journal* 43, no. 2 (2008): 187–212.

97. Calvin, "Lectoribus," *CO* 31:23.

98. Pitkin, "Imitation of David," 844, 860, notes the connection between Calvin's attention to the *Sitz im Leben* and his downplaying of David's prophetic role.

99. Gosselin, *King's Progress*, 58. Gosselin argues that Nicolas of Lyra represents the *viator* model of David. Muller, "Biblical Interpretation in the Era of the Reformation: The View from the Middle Ages," in *Biblical Interpretation in the Era of the Reformation*, 11, points to a similar contrast between Nicholas and Faber.

100. Gosselin, *King's Progress*, 58.

101. Gosselin, *King's Progress*, 82–85. Cf. Pitkin, "David as Paradigm," 860: "Calvin wants and finds a David as completely entangled in the web of his own history as Calvin's listeners are caught up in theirs."

102. Cf. Muller, "Calvin's Exegesis of Old Testament Prophecies," 72–73: "Careful attention to the literal meaning and to the original context, far from being adumbrations of critical method which distance Calvin from the preceding exegetical tradition, now become manifest as tools for drawing out the meaning of the text for the present life of the kingdom." Cf. with Thompson, "Calvin," 71: "Calvin was driven by a passion for application."

103. Calvin, Ps. 123:1, 3, in loc.; *CO* 32:308–310, mentions the "papists," "Epicureans," and "Cyclopes," or giants.

104. Calvin, Epistola 882 (25 February 1547); *CO* 12:492: "Mais il est besoing que Dieu nous humilie de quelque coste que ce soit. Combien que iespere que nostre Antioche, qui nous presse maintenant sera serre de si pres, quil ne luy souviendra des gouttes de ses mains, ne de ses pieds; car il en aura par tout le corps." ET Letter 186, in *Letters of John Calvin: Compiled from the Original Manuscripts and Edited with Historical Notes*, ed. Jules Bonnet (Edinburgh: Thomas Constable, 1857), vol. 2: 83–86, here, 85–86.

105. Calvin, Epistola 1100 (27 November 1548); *CO* 13:109–110: "Edita enim sunt extremae crudelitatis exempla, quae forte brevi ebullient in maiores tempestates. Xantones insulis se tenent abditos. *Bucerus* nuper ad me scripsit Antiochum exspectari ad purificationis. Quantum ex literis eius intelligo, nihil illic est cordis in senatu." ET Letter 230 (27 November 1548), in *Letters*, 2:184–86, here, 185.

106. Calvin, Letter 231, in *Letters*, 2:186–187, here, 187. Bonnet assigns December 1548 to this undated letter. It does not appear in this chronology in *CO*.

107. Calvin, Epistola 1187 (7 May 1549); *CO* 13:267–268: "Hoc primum timeo ne Pharao noster, omni spe contrahendae vobiscum amicitiae exclusus, ad Antiochum se conferat. Quamlibet graves habeant dissidendi causas, mirus est artifex ad excogitandos praetextus hic posterior. Et qui hodie in aula nostra regnant nihil magis cupient quam imperiti iuvenis et parum cordati animum inflectere ad quasvis pacis conditiones recipiendas. Certe, nisi quid impetraverit, se brevi proiiciet. Nec deerunt qui eum praecipitent. Atque utinam non sint inter nos qui se et nos venales habeant Antiocho, si qua talis occasio data fuerit." ET

Letter 242, in *Letters,* 2:211–214, here, 213.

108. Cf. *Letters,* 2:85 n. 1, with *CO* 12:492 n. 11.

109. See Volker Press, "The Habsburg Lands: The Holy Roman Empire, 1400–1555," trans. Thomas A. Brady, Jr., in *Handbook of European History, 1400–1600: Late Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Reformation,* ed. Thomas A. Brady, Jr., et al. (1994–95; repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 1:454–455.

110. Parker, *Calvin's New Testament Commentaries,* 204.

111. Calvin, Ps. 44:23[22], in loc.; *CO* 31:447.

CHAPTER 6

Peter Martyr Vermigli and Aquinas's Justice of War Doctrine

Mark J. Larson

A renewed interest in Thomist theology arose in the sixteenth century. Catholic Thomists included Cardinal Cajetan, Sylvester of Ferrara, Francesco Vittoria, and Domingo Banez. A Thomist revival occurred even within Protestantism.[1] John Patrick Donnelly has given significant attention to this phenomenon in the thought of Jerome Zanchi.[2] He also draws attention to the fact that Thomistic elements are found in the teaching of the Italian Reformed theologian Peter Martyr Vermigli, but he does not develop this argument at any length. The purpose of this essay is to expand upon Donnelly's thesis and thereby to underscore its legitimacy with respect to the theology of Vermigli.

Vermigli (1499–1562) was trained in Scholastic theology in general and in Thomist theology in particular.[3] He entered the University of Padua at the age of nineteen, and he received his doctorate in theology, probably at the age of twenty-six.[4] While at Padua, Vermigli studied the theology of Thomas Aquinas in depth.[5]

This paper will argue that in Vermigli's treatise *Of War* he not only reflected the methodological style of medieval Scholastic theology, but he also made a deliberate attempt to reproduce the actual substance of Aquinas's teaching on the just war.[6] This is noteworthy in light of the observation Richard Muller has made that the "absence or direct citation of medieval sources is quite typical of Protestant theology."[7] This is also striking due to the fact that in a typical political *locus* in his *Common Places,* Vermigli's arguments, as Robert Kingdon notes, are "often explicitly anti-Catholic."[8] Frank James more specifically states, "Vermigli was quite sweeping in his criticism of the theological ideas of the leading late medieval Scholastic theologians. He says of Lombard, Thomas, Scotus or Ockham—'they filled everything with darkness.'"[9]

For Vermigli to reproduce the teaching of Aquinas on the just war is also interesting when one considers that Vermigli tended to quote from Augustine with great frequency.[10] It would have been easy for him to set forth his just war teaching by completely bypassing Aquinas, positioning himself entirely within the Augustinian tradition on the doctrine of the just war.[11]

Holy War and Luther

Before we proceed to an examination of the position of Aquinas and Vermigli on the subject of the justice of war, we shall briefly consider the historical setting in which Vermigli articulated his teaching. For the sake of comparison and contrast, we shall also at this point reflect upon the approach of Martin Luther in setting forth classical just war ideas in opposition to holy war practice in the sixteenth century.12

Vermigli expounded his just war doctrine against the background of holy war practice both on the part of the Catholic Church and the Ottoman Turks. While Vermigli insisted that only the proper civil authority can authorize a just war, the Catholic Church and the Ottoman Empire undertook wars under the leadership of religious figures—popes on the one hand and sultans on the other. Holy war advocates within the Christian political tradition had long believed that the church had the authority to declare war. The First Crusade had been proclaimed by Urban II in 1095 to liberate Jerusalem from Muslim control and oppression. The crusade mentality continued into the sixteenth century. A crusade league—including Spain, Venice, and the papacy—defeated the Turks in the Battle of Lepanto on October 7, 1571. The Ottoman Turks were likewise proponents of holy war in sixteenth-century Europe. Sultan Suleyman regarded himself as a central religious figure in world history. Like Mohammed, the founder of the Islamic religion, he prosecuted holy war with a vengeance in the Balkans.13

The history of Islam from the time of Mohammed in the seventh century to the Reformation era in the sixteenth century was one of holy war,14 conquest in the name of Allah.15 Indeed, the future territorial integrity of the European heartland looked ominous as the 1520s were drawing to a close.16 The Turks appeared to be invincible.17 No one had been able to stop them. Before the forces of Suleyman, two citadels had fallen in succession, Belgrade (1520) and Rhodes (1521). The Hungarians had been massacred at Mohacs (1526).18 When Luther penned his treatise *On War against the Turk* (1529), Suleyman—the religious head of the Islamic world—was poised to strike again. Luther wrote, "It is a fact that the Turk is at our throat."19

While Vermigli provided for the Protestant world a positive restatement of Aquinas's teaching on the justice of war, Luther expended his energies in repudiating holy war ideas as practiced by the Catholic and Islamic communities. He simply assumed the long-standing medieval just war tradition20—although he never conceded any legitimacy to any element of the political theology of Aquinas.21

Luther spoke strongly against the holy war tradition in the church.22 "The

pope and the bishops," he said, "would be destroying their calling and office to fight with the sword against flesh and blood."[23] He added, "They are not commanded to do this; it is forbidden."[24] He also focused upon the head of the Catholic Church: "It is not right for the pope…to lead a church army."[25] He even denounced Pope Julius and his "arms," and Pope Clement, "who people think is almost a god of war."[26] Luther had no use for the crusade ideology in which "the pope, along with his followers, wages war."[27]

Luther was equally vehement in his denunciations of Islam—particularly due to the fact that Suleyman and his predecessors waged war without a just cause. "Anyone can easily see," he added, "that Mohammed is a destroyer of our Lord Christ and his kingdom."[28] As to the Islamic scripture, Luther affirmed that it was "a fatal and shameful book," "a patchwork of Jewish, Christian, and heathen beliefs."[29] He contended, "The Turk's Koran or creed teaches him to destroy… the Christian faith."[30] The Turks themselves were nothing but "the army of the devil."[31] Luther forcefully stated, "When the spirit of lies had taken possession of Mohammed, and the devil had murdered men's souls with his Koran and had destroyed the faith of Christians, he had to go and take the sword and set about to murder their bodies."[32]

Thus, while Luther reflected his dismay that the Catholic world neglected the justice of war category of the proper civil authority for prosecuting war, he affirmed his outrage that Islamic rulers disregarded the justice of war constituent requiring a just cause. With respect to Christian Europe, Luther insisted that the civil magistrate alone is authorized by God to make war. In his piece *Against the Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants* (1525), he went so far as to chastise the emperor for his inactivity pertaining to the threat of Suleyman and his Turkish horde. "It is not difficult to show," Luther complained, "that up to now the banner has been regarded as a mere piece of silk, for otherwise the emperor would long ago have unfurled it, the princes would have followed it, and the Turks would not have become so mighty."[33] With respect to the Islamic Turks, on the other hand, Luther referred to them as a "wild and barbarous people." Their lifestyle was "carnal" and "dissolute."[34] Their warfare did not meet the *jus in bello* criteria. Their wars were therefore nothing more than "robbing and murdering, devouring and destroying more and more of those that are around them."[35]

Vermigli, then, contrasts with Luther in the manner in which he presented his just war position. While Luther assumed the legitimacy of the classical Augustinian just war doctrine and castigated others for their deviations from it, Vermigli self-consciously reproduced the Thomist tradition. He worried less about the refutation of erroneous contemporaneous practices, choosing instead to

present positive instruction on the classical justice of war doctrine for the benefit of the Reformed churches of his own time.

Aquinas and the Augustinian Tradition

Before we examine Vermigli's exposition, let us briefly consider Aquinas's essay *Of War*.[36] In this famous discussion, Aquinas stated, "In order for a war to be just, three things are necessary."[37] He then mentioned the first of three necessary constituents that must be included in a war that is just: "First, the authority of the sovereign by whose command the war is to be waged." He stated, "For it is not the business of a private individual to declare war, because he can seek for redress of his rights from the tribunal of his superior." He then added, "Moreover it is not the business of a private individual to summon together the people, which has to be done in wartime."[38]

Aquinas's discussion in the thirteenth century was certainly nothing new. The same three elements of a just war were found in the teaching of Augustine of Hippo.[39] It seems evident that Aquinas moved the discussion back to the patristic framework after other medieval thinkers developed more complex discussions of what a just war actually is.[40] In his classic treatment in *Reply to Faustus,* Augustine affirmed that the justice or injustice of a particular war depended upon certain factors, which he then went on to develop. In one sentence, he specified the three constituents that Aquinas would later include as the three necessary things for a just war. Augustine wrote, "A great deal depends on the causes for which men undertake wars, and on the authority they have for doing so; for the natural order which seeks the peace of mankind, ordains that the monarch should have the power of undertaking war if he thinks it advisable, and that the soldiers should perform their military duties in behalf of the peace and safety of the community" (XXII.75).[41] Augustine here presented the crucial elements to which Aquinas would later appeal. While Aquinas would mention the authority of the sovereign, Augustine spoke about how the natural order ordained that the monarch had the authority to make war.[42] While Aquinas discussed the necessity of a just cause,[43] Augustine referred to the importance of the causes for which wars were undertaken.[44] While Aquinas stressed that there had to be a rightful intention,[45] Augustine wrote about seeking the peace of mankind and prosecuting a war in behalf of peace. There can be little doubt that the Augustinian just war trajectory gained additional momentum when it was promulgated once again by Aquinas in the thirteenth century. We may also draw the conclusion that the Thomist approach to just war thinking gained credence within the Reformed community after Peter Martyr Vermigli staunchly advocated it in the sixteenth century. We now turn our attention to a

consideration of his *locus* on the subject of war.

Scholastic Methodology

Vermigli's theological excursus on war originally appeared at the end of his biblical commentary on 2 Samuel 2. The structure of his commentaries was to include theological *loci* at strategic places in the midst of his running commentary on the biblical text.[46] After Vermigli died, the doctrinal *loci* scattered throughout his biblical commentaries were abstracted from their original setting, gathered together, and arranged in a format resembling Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.[47] The essay *De bello* was removed from its place at the end of his exposition on 2 Samuel 2, and was placed in the fourth part of what became *The Common Places.* The *locus* on war is presented in chapter seventeen, and it consists of thirty-three sections. *Of War*—the *locus* that Vermigli wrote on the doctrine of war—immediately presents the characteristic medieval order of teaching. With respect to the topic of war, Vermigli from the outset seems to be providing answers to the three traditional questions that the medieval mind would ask concerning any subject of discussion.[48]

As to the first question—Does it exist?—Vermigli seems to have been answering it by way of the opening statement in the *locus* (IV.17.1): "Because in the holie Historie, there is often mention made of war: I thought good to speake somewhat of that matter."[49] The simple point that he was making is that wars do exist. The second question of the medieval student—What is it?—was likewise answered in the opening section (IV.17.1): "And just warre maie thus not unaptly be defined. It is an Hostile dissention whereby through the Princes edict mischiefes are repressed by force and Armes, to the intent that men may peaceably and quietly live by justice and godlinesse."[50] The answer to the third question—Of what sort is it?—was likewise addressed in due order (IV.17.2). Vermigli wrote, "Hereof are gathered those three properties which commonly are ascribed unto right warfaring." He then specified, "First, that there is required the authoritie of the Prince: Secondly, an honest cause, to wit, that peace be sought for: Lastly that it be done with a good mind."[51]

This then is how Vermigli proceeded. He provided the answers to the customary questions that would be raised in a scholarly setting. His years of training in Scholastic theology at the University of Padua had decisively shaped his approach to theological reasoning.[52] Another methodological approach of the medieval schools appears throughout the *locus* on war—the introduction of the *quaestio,* followed by the *disputatio.*[53] The first of these questions raised concerns over whether or not it is lawful to wage war. The question and the disputation begin in section three. The second issue Vermigli raised relates to the

question of godly nations forming military alliances with the ungodly. The question and the disputation begin in section twenty-four. The third matter that is approached by this method concerns whether treason is ever lawful. This question and disputation begins in section twenty-nine. The style used by Vermigli closely resembles the approach that Aquinas employed.[54]

By way of example, let us observe what he did in the first *quaestio* and *disputatio.* After dealing with the existence, nature, and qualities of war in IV.17.1–2, Vermigli expanded upon the subject of war by posing a question, and then following it with a disputation. The question at hand in IV.17.3, as it has already been stated, is whether or not it is lawful to wage war. Vermigli initiated this debate with the statement: "Now come I to the Question."[55] The actual disputation begins with a presentation of the objections to war posed by the Anabaptists, identified as "the furies and plagues of our time."[56] Vermigli then moved from the *objectio* in IV.17.3 to his *responsio* in IV.17.4–13. Sounding very much like Aquinas, Vermigli began this section with the statement: "*But on the contrarie part*, that it is lawfull to make warre, it may be proved by most strong Arguments."[57] Finally, having given a positive presentation of the doctrine of war, in the style of Aquinas, Vermigli provided a direct rebuttal to the arguments of the Anabaptists (IV.17.14–20).

Thomist Doctrine

There is no question that Vermigli engaged in the writing of his theological essays in a style that is reminiscent of Aquinas himself. It also quite clear that the substance of his just war doctrine—pertaining to the category of the *jus ad bellum*—was heavily informed by Aquinas as well. This conclusion is more than probable even though he did not quote Aquinas by name in his *locus* on war, and even while the essay is replete with explicit references to Augustine by name.

There are two pieces of evidence that suggest that Vermigli framed his discussion on just war against the background of his training in Thomist doctrine. In the first place, Aquinas was the medieval theologian who pared down the just war requirements to three things. Vermigli was no doubt referring to this Thomistic conception in his statement that there are "three properties which commonly are ascribed unto right warfaring."[58]

In the second place, Vermigli's one-sentence definition of what a just war actually is follows the very order of Aquinas's delineation of the three things that are necessary for a just war—the authority of the sovereign, a just cause (specifically, that there is some fault in those that are attacked), and a rightful intention (namely, the advancement of the good). The just war, Vermigli contended, may be defined in this way: "It is an hostile dissension whereby

through the Princes edict mischiefes are repressed by force and Armes, to the intent that men may peaceably and quietly live by justice and godlinesse" (IV.17.1).[59] This statement shows that Vermigli did not embrace the holy war doctrine that the church has the authority to initiate armed conflict. He maintained the classic position of the just war tradition that the civil magistrate alone has the right given to him by God to declare and prosecute war when there is a just cause. Although the papacy continued to embrace the crusade ideology —that it is legitimate for a bishop, including the pope, to wage war—such a holy war perspective found no advocate in the thinking of Vermigli.

Before we consider in more detail Vermigli's teaching on the subject of a legitimate cause for war, let us reflect briefly upon the position of Aquinas on the same issue. Aquinas had laid down the general principle that "those who are attacked, should be attacked because they deserve it on account of some fault."[60] Aquinas alluded to a specific fault when he referred to that which a nation had "seized unjustly."[61] This was obviously a reference to an invasion, the naked aggression of one nation against another. It was an issue which he elaborated upon in his discussion of warfare and holy days. He argued from the lesser to the greater in his contention that there are times when fighting must occur on such days. He observed, "Physicians may lawfully attend to their patients on holy days."[62] He affirmed, "Now there is much more reason for safeguarding the common weal (whereby many are saved from being slain, and innumerable evils both temporal and spiritual are prevented), than the bodily safety of an individual."[63] He then drew this conclusion: "Therefore, for the purpose of safeguarding the common weal of the faithful, it is lawful to carry on a war on holy days, provided there be need for doing so."[64]

It is true that Aquinas "saw the just war as a defense of the community."[65] It should also be noted though that Aquinas referred in this passage to "safeguarding the common weal *of the faithful*"—protecting the *reipublicae fidelium*.[66] Obviously, to defend the commonwealth of the faithful, which is one of the bases for a just war, necessarily entailed the defense of the freedom to practice the Christian religion in public. Every defensive war is in fact a safeguarding of all the fundamental constituents of liberty—which includes the right to practice the true religion in its purity.

Vermigli sounded virtually an identical note on these issues regarding the constituents of a just war. As we have seen, Vermigli defined war as a state of hostilities instigated by the civil magistrate whereby "mischiefes are repressed by force and Armes." He then went on to unpack this definition in terms of Aristotle's four-fold causality.[67] "Here have we comprehended the foure kindes of causes," he noted.[68] He then gave these specifics: "The forme, is hostile

dissention: the matter are the mischiefes which ought to be repressed: the efficient cause is the Magistrate: the ende is, that wee maie live justly and godly."[69]

While Aquinas concentrated upon "some fault" which brought on a deserved attack,[70] Vermigli similarly focused upon the existence of "mischiefes which ought to be repressed."[71] Faults, mischiefs, and things that are amiss are the causes for a just war. But a just war is also defensive, both in relationship to the commonwealth and the true religion.

The necessity for defending the commonwealth, Vermigli contended, is rooted in natural law. Generally speaking, natural law teaches that "good men should be holpen, and evill men repressed."[72] Later, in the same *locus* on war, Vermigli provided more information as to what he regarded the content of natural law to be. Contextually, he was dealing with the subject of treason. He made the statement that "the Citizens are sworn unto the Magistrates, to defend the Citie or publike weale when need shall require."[73] He added, "And though they were not sworne, yet the naturall and common law requireth the same of them."[74] He then drew an analogy by directing attention at how a human being protects his or her own body: "And this doe the members of all living things testifie, which doe willingly and most readily indanger themselves for the body, and for the nobler parts thereof, I mean the head or heart."[75] The point that he was making was simply this: "The verie which thing Citizens are by the lawes of nature bound to doe for their countrie, if it be in daunger."[76]

Nature itself teaches that a citizen must rise to the defense of his country. What about a minister? At this point, we should point out that Vermigli dissented somewhat from Aquinas. The great Dominican theologian had maintained that for "bishops and clerics" it was "not lawful for them to fight."[77] In fact, it was not only "unbecoming for them to slay or shed blood," but "they should be ready to shed their own blood for Christ, so as to imitate in deed what they portray in their ministry."[78] Vermigli agreed that generally speaking "for the Ministers of the Church to beare armes" was "not lawful."[79] He did, however, contemplate the possibility of an exception to this general rule. What should a minister do "if an enemie upon the sudden besiege the Citie, and hath even now laide siege to the walles"?[80] Vermigli took this position: "The Minister of the Church may rightly take Armes and repell violence, and doe that which becommeth a good Citizen."[81] He did, however, set down this qualification: "Notwithstanding when other souldiers shall come, he must retire himselfe to his office."[82]

Standing in both the Thomist and the Reformed tradition, Vermigli believed that the magistrate was to defend the commonwealth and the true religion, "the Commonweale and the ordinaunce of God."[83] Reflecting upon the prince and

his duty, Vermigli affirmed, “He ought in no wise to seeke his owne but the glorie of God and safetie of the Church: and especially if the enemie be such, as mindeth either to destroy or pervert the worshipping of God.”[84]

A just war in the Thomist tradition necessitated not only the proper civil authority and a just cause, but it also required a right intention. Aquinas explained a “rightful intention” in terms of seeking “the advancement of good,” as having the “object of securing peace.”[85] The advancement of good—namely, the securing of peace—was an indispensable element in the teaching of Vermigli concerning the justice of war. Vermigli announced the object of a just war in his initial definition of war. A war is prosecuted “to the intent that men may peaceably and quietly live by justice and godlinesse.”[86] Later, in the same *locus*, he provided some elaboration: “Neither can a warre be justlie enough made, unlesse it be taken in hand for an other thing. And that other thing is, that safe peace may be kept.”[87] He then gave a memorable antithetical statement: “Insomuch as peace is not ordained for warre sake, but warre is taken in hand for peace sake.”[88]

A Last Resort

Vermigli, as we have seen, maintained the traditional Thomist position that a just war has three constituents—the proper authority, a just cause, and right intention. These three requirements relate to the necessary elements in a just war. Vermigli, however, added a fourth condition pertaining to the *jus ad bellum* that had to be met—the waging of war had to be an act of last resort.

He discussed this issue by using the metaphor of the human body. Having affirmed that war is undertaken for the sake of peace, he declared, “And of this thing we may have a similitude of our owne bodies. For who would so live, as he should perpetuallie wrestle against diseases.”[89] Warring, then, for the sake of peace is often necessary—in the same way that we must continually fight against disease in our own bodies. But warfare, although sometimes necessary, should be an act of last resort: “And although warre be just, yet must it not straightway bee taken in hande. All means must be attempted, rather than we shoulde come to battailes.”[90] Vermigli then reminded his readers: “For Phisitions doe not seare or cut, but when it seemeth that in a manner the whole bodie is put in hazard.”[91]

Vermigli cautioned about initiating warfare because it is not always easy to bring to a conclusion: “And besides that many terrible and cruell things doe happen in time of warre, thou canst not in verie deeded after thou hast once begun, appoint an ende when thou wilt.”[92] Vermigli urged that war be initiated with due care because of all the evils that accompany it. He envisioned a

situation in which a long list of dreadful consequences might well follow a war: “For warre being given in the stead of peace, might take away all the good thinges that were gotten.”93 He then specified, “Because thereby commeth to passe, that all Religion vanisheth away, good lawes and customes are abolished, good manners are corrupted, artes are overwhelmed by oblivion, Cities and Townes are overthrowen, the fieldes which were husbanded with great charges and labours, are destroyed.”94 As if this were not enough, he continued, “Treasures are forciblie taken away and unmeasurablie spent, men are slaine, or brought into servitude, women are defiled, or else enter in the yoke of bondage, or else have both evils done unto them.”95 On the basis of such evils as these that follow war, Vermigli exhorted “even private men to praie unto God, that he will set over them such Princes, as be godly, wise, modest, and favourers of peace.”

Conclusion

Peter Martyr Vermigli gave significant attention to the development of Reformed political thought in the sixteenth century. He showed a willingness to draw upon the methodology and even the substance of Aquinas’s theology at various points. He demonstrates that the Protestant Reformation did not hasten the disappearance of Scholasticism.96 A Thomist revival occurred even among the Reformed.

1. If we are to have an accurate understanding of the Reformation, it is important that we do not think that there was a rigid contrast between theology in the Middle Ages and the Reformation. For example, Alister E. McGrath, “Protestant Orthodoxy,” in *The Science of Theology,* vol. 1 of *The History of Christian Theology,* ed. Paul Avis (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 154, does not provide an entirely helpful perspective in his unqualified declaration that “the first phase of the Reformation witnessed intense hostility towards scholastic method.” Peter Martyr Vermigli—a major Reformed theologian in the first phase of the Reformation—firmly embraced the Scholastic method in his theology.

2. John Patrick Donnelly, “Calvinist Thomism,” *Viator* 7 (1976): 441–455. His piece “Italian Influences in the Development of Calvinist Scholasticism,” *Sixteenth Century Journal* 7 (April 1976): 81–101, is also helpful.

3. Frank A. James, “Peter Martyr Vermigli: At the Crossroads of Late Medieval Scholasticism, Christian Humanism and Resurgent Augustinianism,” in *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment,* ed. Carl R. Trueman and R. Scott Clark (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster Press, 1999), 63. Ralph Keen, *The Christian Tradition* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2004), 232, notes that Vermigli “wrote of works defending the use of Aristotle in the Protestant curriculum.”

4. Philip McNair, *Peter Martyr in Italy: An Anatomy of Apostasy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), 116–117.

5. Donnelly, “Calvinist Thomism,” 442–443. Cf., Robert M. Kingdon, “The Function of Law in the Political Thought of Peter Martyr Vermigli,” in *Reformatio Perrennis: Essays on Calvin and the Reformation,* ed. Brian A. Gerrish (Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1981), 166.

6. We are thus reminded that on the issue of the justice of war the political thought of Aquinas has been tremendously influential. This is a point made by Oliver O’Donovan and Joan Lockwood O’Donovan,

From Irenaeus to Grotius: A Sourcebook in Christian Political Thought (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 322.

7. Richard A. Muller, *God, Creation, and Providence in the Thought of Jacob Arminius: Sources and Directions of Scholastic Protestantism in the Era of Early Orthodoxy* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 37.

8. Kingdon, "The Function of Law in the Political Thought of Peter Martyr Vermigli," 161–162.

9. James, "Peter Martyr Vermigli," 66. Donnelly, "Calvinist Thomism," 442, draws attention to Vermigli's frequent disagreements with Aquinas.

10. Kingdon, "The Function of Law in the Political Thought of Peter Martyr Vermigli," 163.

11. In his discussion of the just war in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Calvin explicitly connected his teaching with Augustine by referring to him two times by name (IV.20.12). Unlike Vermigli, he did not make a deliberate attempt to reproduce the actual substance of Aquinas's teaching on the just war.

12. With respect to the matter of the justice of war, Luther believed in the classic Augustinian constituents. There had to be the proper authority, a just cause, and a right intention. We shall discuss only the first two of these elements as reflected in Luther's teaching in this essay. It should perhaps be noted, however, that Luther did maintain that the intention of a just war related to the seeking of peace. In his treatise *Whether Soldiers, Too, Can Be Saved*, in *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, Helmut Lehman, and Robert Schultz (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), 46:150, Luther reflected the traditional sentiment: "Why does anyone go to war," he asked, "except because he desires peace and obedience?"

13. Robert Irwin, "Islam and the Crusades, 1096–1699," in *The Oxford History of the Crusades*, ed. Jonathan Riley-Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 221, points out that the Koran itself commands holy war against the infidels. Specimen texts include Koran 2:216; 9:29; 9:36.

14. The renowned Islamic scholar Bernard Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror* (New York: Random House, 2003), 37, asserts, "Jihad is present from the beginning of Islamic history—in scripture, in the life of the Prophet, and in the actions of his companions and immediate successors. It has continued throughout Islamic history and retains its appeal to the present day."

15. Turkish holy war expansion efforts with respect to Europe continued into the seventeenth century. Muhammad IV tried to take Vienna in 1683 with a huge army of 150,000 men. The walls were breached, but the Turkish forces were not able to penetrate through them. Vienna was spared when a large force arrived under the command of the King of Poland, Jan Sobiesky. The victory of the Poles, Germans, and Austrians at Vienna was the beginning point for a series of battles which eventually resulted in the liberation of Hungary from Ottoman control. Cf., Thomas Munck, *Seventeenth Century Europe: State, Conflict and the Social Order in Europe, 1598–1700* (London: Macmillan, 1990), 367.

16. By way of historical notation, it should not be forgotten that Suleyman never got past Vienna in his attempt to conquer the European heartland. He had left Constantinople in May of 1529 with a massive army of some 75,000 men. He was not able to launch an attack upon the fortified city of Vienna until September 30. Bombardments and efforts to mine the walls followed. The walls withstood everything that was thrown at them. A couple of weeks later, he had to withdraw. What happened? The summer of 1529 brought torrential rains of a kind that had not been seen in many years. The deluge meant that Suleyman was unable to move his massive cannons, the kind of artillery that were useful in knocking holes in massive walls of cities. The rain kept coming, and the Turks were slowed down in their advance. Vienna was reinforced. Suleyman had neither the time nor the artillery he needed. The mighty Sultan gave up the siege. Central Europe was spared. Cf., Paul K. Davis, *Encyclopedia of Invasions and Conquests from Ancient Times to the Present* (London: W. W. Norton & Co., 1996), 150; Eugene F. Rice and Anthony Grafton, *The Foundations of Early Modern Europe, 1460–1559*, 2nd ed. (London: W. W. Norton and Company, 1994), 11; Matthew S. Anderson, *The Origins of the Modern European State System, 1494–1618* (New York: Longman, 1998), 227.

17. Gregory J. Miller, "Luther on the Turks and Islam," in *Harvesting Martin Luther's Reflections on Theology, Ethics, and the Church*, ed. Timothy Wengert (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 193, writes that

the news of the Turkish siege of Vienna actually made Luther physically ill.

18. Hugo Hantsch, "Zum ungarisch-türkischen Problem in der allgemeinen Politik Karls V," in *Festschrift Karl Eder zum Siebzigsten Geburtstag*, ed. Helmut J. Mezler-Andelberg (Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag Wagner, 1959), 58.

19. Luther, *On War against the Turk*, in *Works*, ed. Pelikan, et al., 46:204.

20. Gregory J. Miller, "Fighting Like a Christian: The Ottoman Advance and the Development of Luther's Doctrine of the Just War," in *Caritas Et Reformatio*, ed. David M. Whitford (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2002), 44, observes that Luther drew "heavily on Augustinian views of the just war."

21. Roland H. Bainton, *Christian Attitudes toward War and Peace: A Historical Survey and Christian Re-evaluation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1960), 136–140; James Turner Johnson, *The Quest for Peace: Three Moral Traditions in Western Cultural History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 116–117.

22. Miller, "Fighting Like a Christian," 48, makes the point that "Luther's opposition to the crusade became embedded in early Protestantism and should be regarded as an important contribution and development in the period."

23. Miller, "Fighting Like a Christian," 165.

24. Miller, "Fighting Like a Christian," 165.

25. Miller, "Fighting Like a Christian," 168.

26. Miller, "Fighting Like a Christian," 169.

27. Miller, "Fighting Like a Christian," 180.

28. Miller, "Fighting Like a Christian," 177.

29. Miller, "Fighting Like a Christian," 177.

30. Miller, "Fighting Like a Christian," 178.

31. Miller, "Fighting Like a Christian," 193.

32. Miller, "Fighting Like a Christian," 179.

33. Luther, *Against the Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants*, in *Works*, ed. Pelikan, et al., 46:190.

34. Luther, *On War against the Turk*, 175.

35. Luther, *On War against the Turk*, 178. In support of this particular charge, Luther could have appealed to what happened at Mohacs in 1526. Suleyman's policy of taking no prisoners resulted in the annihilation of some 30,000 soldiers. The captives that he temporarily held were put to death. Suleyman recorded the following in his diary entry for August 31, 1526: "The emperor, seated on a golden throne, receives the homage of the vizirs and beys: massacre of 2,000 prisoners: the rain falls in torrents." Quoted in Rice and Grafton, *Foundations of Early Modern Europe, 1460–1559*, 137.

36. Aquinas's influential treatment of the just war doctrine is presented in *Summa Theologica* 2a2ae, q. 40, art. 1–4. In question 40, Aquinas considered four fundamental questions: *First.* Are some wars permissible? *Second.* May clerics engage in warfare? *Third.* May belligerents use deception, such as an ambush? *Fourth.* May war be conducted on holy days?

37. *Summa Theologica* 2a2ae, q. 40, art. 1. All quotations from Aquinas's essay *Of War*, Q. 40, are from the five-volume English translation, *Summa Theologica* (Allen, Tex.: Christian Classics, 1948).

38. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1353.

39. It was Augustine who helped to change the thinking of the church on the subject of war. Until Augustine arrived on the scene, the church of the patristic era was dominated by the pacifist perspective. This is seen, for example, in the thinking of Tertullian. He put forth this question in "The Military Chaplet" (in *From Irenaeus to Grotius*, 27): "Shall a Christian be free to walk around in a sword, when the Lord has said that whoever takes the sword shall perish by the sword?" The church was not free to do such a thing, in Tertullian's view. Augustine, in contrast to the dominant pacifist teaching of the church, contended that war *per se* is not evil.

40. Alexander of Hales, for example, required six constituents for a war to be just in his *Summa*

Theologiae: there had to be the proper authority, attitude, intention, condition, merit, and cause. See Frederick H. Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 220, 269.

41. Augustine of Hippo, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean,* in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* 1st series, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Ware (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 4:301. Augustine's just war ideas are likewise scattered throughout *The City of God.* Already in book 1 he dealt with the proper authority that is necessary in a justice of war consideration. Augustine, *Concerning the City of God against the Pagans,* trans. Henry Bettenson (London: Penguin Books, 1972), 27, stated his position in adamant terms: "No one has a private right to kill even a guilty man." There must be, he affirmed, "the legitimate authority" who authorizes the activity of the soldier (37). In book 19, Augustine set forth the idea of a just cause. Something must have already happened that justifies going to war. His fundamental principle is this: "It is the injustice of the opposing side that lays on the wise man the duty of waging wars" (862). The third element that is necessary for a just war concerns a right intention. This constituent focuses attention upon what the state intends to achieve by going to war. What then is the proper and moral objective for deciding upon a course of war? The answer given by Augustine in book 15 is straightforward: "Peace is the aim of wars" (600).

42. David A. Lenihan, "The Just War Theory in the Work of Saint Augustine," *Augustinian Studies* 19 (1988): 56–57, draws attention to this element of the proper authority for the initiation of the just war in the thought of Augustine: "Augustine did recognize the possibility of just wars …and looked to the nature of the conflict to determine its justice. An aggressive, unjust invasion would permit a legitimate defense. Similarly, justice could call for a punitive action to redress wrongs or reclaim wrongfully taken territory. However, and most important for Augustine, the auspice of official authority was necessary in order to wage the war."

43. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* 1354.

44. In the teaching of Augustine, the constituent of a just cause with respect to the justice of a war is closely tied in with the element of the proper authority that is necessary to start a war. Herbert A. Deanne, *The Political and Social Ideas of St. Augustine* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 162, states, "Who is to decide that a state has so flagrantly violated the code of justice that it must be punished by a just war waged against it? In the case of retaliation against an aggressive attack, the answer is fairly simple…. When an offensive war is to be waged against a state that has refused to act justly, the decision is even more difficult. On one point Augustine is perfectly clear: it is the monarch, the chief of state, who has both the right and the duty to decide that a just war is to be undertaken. To him and to him alone belongs the responsibility of judging whether another country has so seriously violated the rules of just dealing that it must be punished by waging war against it. If he decides that war is necessary, he has the right to begin hostilities."

45. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* 1354.

46. John L. Thompson, "The Survival of Allegorical Argumentation in Peter Martyr Vermigli's Old Testament Exegesis," in *Biblical Interpretation in the Era of the Reformation,* ed. Muller and John L. Thompson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 256, states, "Such a format grew out of a widespread and considered view that Christian doctrines ought to emerge from the soil of Scripture itself." Cf. Kingdon, "The Political Thought of Peter Martyr Vermigli," in *Peter Martyr Vermigli and Italian Reform,* ed. Joseph C. McClelland (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1980), 123.

47. Robert M. Kingdon, "Peter Martyr Vermigli and the Marks of the True Church," in *Continuity and Discontinuity in Church History,* ed. F. Forrestor Church and Timothy George (Leiden: Brill, 1979), 203–204. Cf., James, "Peter Martyr Vermigli," 72.

48. Protestant scholastic theology, like its medieval antecedents, used a particular order in its teaching procedure. As J. A. Weisheipl, "Scholastic Method," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia,* 1967, notes, scholastic theology entailed an orderly procedure in examining a subject involving "raising the right question at the right time" (p. 114). Muller, *Scholasticism and Orthodoxy in the Reformed Tradition: An Attempt at Definition* (Grand Rapids: Calvin Theological Seminary, 1995), 9–10, makes the point that a proper

teaching procedure in the scholastic mentality asked these questions in the following order: Does it exist (*an sit*)? What is it (*quid sit*)? Of what sort is it (*quia sit*)?

49. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, in *The Political Thought of Peter Martyr Vermigli: Selected Texts and Commentary*, ed. Kingdon (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1980), 61. The *locus* provided by Kingdon in this volume presents paragraphs one through twenty of Vermigli's full *locus* of thirty-three paragraphs in *The Common Places*, trans. Anthony Martens (London, 1583). Most of the citations in this paper are from the more readily available edition prepared by Kingdon. I appeal in these instances to page numbers in *Of Warre or Battell*. Any citations from paragraphs twenty-one through thirty-three are referred to the page numbers in the sixteenth-century edition of *The Common Places*, along with the book, chapter, and paragraph. 2.

50. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 61.

51. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 62.

52. As James notes, "Peter Martyr Vermigli," 67, Vermigli was a "scholastic with respect to his methodology."

53. The traditional medieval method of argumentation involved the *quaestio* and the *disputatio*. This particular method of teaching is reflected in Aquinas's *Summa Theologica*. It entailed the presentation of a theological problem (*quaestio*), which was then followed by the actual disputation, including both objections to the correct answer (*objection*) and the correct answer to the initial question that had been raised (*responsio*). Thus each question under consideration is examined from opposing points of view, resulting in the reaching of a conclusion. Cf., Muller, *Scholasticism and Orthodoxy*, 3–4; Weisheipl, "Scholastic Method," 1145.

54. Marvin W. Anderson, "Vermigli, Peter Martyr," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, 1996.

55. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 63.

56. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 63.

57. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 64; emphasis added.

58. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 62.

59. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 61–62.

60. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1354.

61. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1354.

62. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1356.

63. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1356.

64. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1356–1357.

65. Russell, *Just War in the Middle Ages*, 290.

66. The Latin text of this passage is provided in St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* (London: Blackfriars, 1972), 35:92.

67. Donnelly, "Peter Martyr Vermigli's Political Ethics," in *Peter Martyr Vermigli: Humanism, Republicanism, Reformation*, ed. Emidio Campi (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2002), 61.

68. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 62.

69. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 62.

70. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1354.

71. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 62.

72. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 67.

73. Vermigli, *Common Places*, IV.17.30, 298.

74. Vermigli, *Common Places*, IV.17.30, 298.

75. Vermigli, *Common Places*, IV.17.30, 298.

76. Vermigli, *Common Places*, IV.17.30, 298.

77. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1355.

78. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1355, 1356.

79. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 71.

80. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 72.
81. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 72.
82. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 72.
83. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 70.
84. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 70.
85. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1354.
86. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 62.
87. Vermigli, *Common Places*, IV.17.21, 293.
88. Vermigli, *Common Places*, IV.17.21, 293.
89. Vermigli, *Common Places*, IV.17.21, 293.
90. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 69.
91. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 69.
92. Vermigli, *Of Warre or Battell*, 69.
93. Vermigli, *Common Places*, IV.17.22, 293.
94. Vermigli, *Common Places*, IV.17.22, 293–294.
95. Vermigli, *Common Places*, IV.17.22, 293.
96. Donnelly, “Calvinist Thomism,” 454.

CHAPTER 7

Beza's Two Confessions as Sources of the Heidelberg Catechism

Lyle D. Bierma

Over the past 450 years, the Heidelberg Catechism (1563) has come to be one of the most deeply loved and widely used confessions of the Protestant Reformation. Surprisingly, however, many of the details of its preparation are still enshrouded in mystery. Especially perplexing are questions about the authorship and literary sources of the catechism. Because of a dearth of surviving records from the period, scholars have had to base their conclusions largely on circumstantial evidence and comparative literary analyses, and have not yet reached any, or at least any lasting, consensus. On the question of authorship, for example, the role of Heidelberg University professor Zacharias Ursinus has evolved in the secondary literature from the writer of two preparatory documents for the Heidelberg Catechism (HC), to the composer of an initial Latin draft, to the primary author of the first German edition adopted in early 1563. Meanwhile, his colleague Caspar Olevianus was characterized first as the writer of a single preparatory document for the HC, later as the final redactor of the approved German edition, and more recently as simply one member of the drafting committee.1

The same is true when it comes to the literary sources of the catechism. Scholars have appealed to a variety of earlier documents in various combinations: works by Luther, Melanchthon, Bucer, Zell, Brenz, Bullinger, Jud, Calvin, à Lasco, Micronius, Beza, Erastus, and Ursinus.2 However, since the HC is, in Fred Klooster's words, not "a patchwork quilt" but "an original tapestry marvelously woven,"3 the threads of earlier sources are often lost in the final weave and design, and the task of unraveling them is exceedingly difficult. Small wonder that little consensus has been achieved on this issue either.

In 1961, however, the German Reformed theologian and historian Walter Hollweg published an essay on the sources of the HC that sought to carry these debates a step forward.4 Hollweg argued that two confessions by Theodore Beza, the *Confessio christianae fidei* (1560; French ed., 1559) and the *Altera brevis fidei confessio* (French ed., 1559?) ought to be reckoned as major influences on the structure, theological content, and even some of the wording of

the HC.5 Unfortunately, Hollweg's essay has provoked little scholarly discussion over the last fifty years. Nonetheless, it is our contention that although his thesis is in need of some modification, it is worth a closer look because of the light it sheds not simply on the sources of the HC but also on its authorship. In what follows, therefore, we shall look first at Hollweg's thesis itself and then at some implications it has for the question of authorship.

Hollweg's Thesis

Hollweg lays the groundwork for his argument by highlighting Beza's close ties to the Heidelberg community. Already in the years before the publication of the HC, Beza had developed friendly relations with electors Otto Henry and Frederick III, rulers of the Palatinate; Michael Diller, the court preacher; Peter Boquinus, one of the professors at Heidelberg University; and Ursinus and Olevianus, both future contributors to the HC. Between 1557 and 1559 Beza personally visited Heidelberg four times in search of assistance for two groups of persecuted Protestants, the Reformed Waldenses in the Piedmont region of Italy and the Huguenots in France. During these visits he also became more involved in the eucharistic debates in Heidelberg, and in 1560 he published satirical rebuttals to two polemical treatises on the Lord's Supper by the Gnesio-Lutheran Tilemann Hesshus, general superintendent of the Palatinate churches.6

Beza's trip to Heidelberg in November 1559 led to yet another important, if unexpected, development. Elector Frederick III apparently informed Beza through an intermediary of the need in the Palatinate for a brief summary of the Genevan understanding of the Protestant faith, preferably one not so difficult or diffuse as some of the other Swiss theological works (such as, presumably, Calvin's 1559 Latin edition of the *Institutes*). Less than half a year later, in March 1560, Beza's *Confessio chrisitanae fidei* appeared in Geneva. In the preface, Beza indicated that he had sought to steer a middle course between the breadth of the *Institutes*, on the one hand, and the brevity of the Genevan Catechism (1542), on the other—precisely what his Palatinate friends had asked of him. This *Confessio*, which according to Beza was actually a Latin revision of a 1559 French version of the work, was soon translated into Italian (1560), Dutch (1561), and English (1563), and was widely disseminated throughout Europe.7

Beza's shorter version of the *Confessio*, the *Altera brevis fidei confessio*, was also well known in Heidelberg. Although its exact date of origin is uncertain, it, too, was translated from French into Dutch in 1561 and accompanied Peter Dathenus's Dutch refugee congregation from Frankfurt to Heidelberg the same year. A German translation of the French text was published in Heidelberg in

1562, and the very next year it was reprinted there as an appendix to a German translation of the Gallican Confession.[8]

All of this data, Hollweg concludes, demonstrates the importance of Beza's two confessions in Reformed circles in the early 1560s and certainly suggests that the authors of the HC *could* have used them as resources in carrying out their assignment. But did they? They did indeed, Hollweg goes on to argue, as one can see from the organizational and linguistic similarities between the HC and Beza's confessions in a number of places:

HC	***Confessio christianae fidei* (C)/ *Altera brevis fidei confession* (Cb)**
Q/A 2	Cb 17–21
Q/A 4	Cb 2–3
Q/A 5	Cb 4
Q/A 6	C III.9
Q/A 7, 9	C III.10
Q/A 12	Cb 1, 5
Q/A 13	Cb 5
Q/A 14	Cb 6–7
Q/A 15	Cb 7
Q/A 16	Cb 6
Q/A 18	Cb 7–8
Q/A 19	Cb 1213; C III.17
Q/A 21	Cb 19; C IV.5
Q/A 35	C III.21
Q/A 41	C III.24
Q/A 46, 47	C III.25
Q/A 61	Cb 19
Q/A 74	Cb 29
Q/A 86	Cb 21; C IV.19
Q/A 88	Cb 20
Q/A 91	C IV.14–16
Q/A 116	C IV.16

The most important structural parallel for Hollweg was that between the threefold division of the HC (misery, deliverance, gratitude) and the threefold work of the Holy Spirit outlined in Beza's smaller confession, articles 17–21.

According to Beza, the Spirit makes us aware of our sinfulness through the law; he reveals the message of salvation through the gospel; and he sanctifies us. Hollweg acknowledged the dissimilarity between the third elements in each triad (gratitude in the HC, sanctification in Cb), but he argued that the structure of the HC required that sanctification be treated earlier in the catechism in the third section of the exposition of the Apostles' Creed ("God the Holy Spirit and our sanctification," HC 24), an exposition that Beza's confession does not contain. By substituting gratitude for sanctification, however, the authors of the HC were still indebted to Beza. The content and even some of the language of HC 86 and 116, which introduce the section on gratitude and the subsection on prayer, respectively, can all be traced to specific articles in Beza's larger and smaller confessions. The same can be said for a number of the questions and answers in HC Part 1 and at the beginning of Part 2.9

Evaluation of Hollweg's Thesis

There is much to commend in Hollweg's thesis. The ties between Beza and some of the principal figures in the preparation of the HC, the connection of both of Beza's confessions to the city of Heidelberg, and the textual similarities between those confessions and the HC together make a strong circumstantial case for some Bezan influence on the catechism. The linguistic parallels that Hollweg identified are especially compelling, as the following examples illustrate:

> **HC 12**: God requires that his justice be satisfied. Therefore the claims of his justice must be paid for in full either by ourselves or another.10
>
> **Cb 1, 5**: They do not fully satisfy the justice of God…. Therefore it necessarily follows either that all people without exception must be damned or that they must find someone to pay the debt for them.11
>
> **HC 13**: Can we pay the debt ourselves? Certainly not. Actually, we increase our guilt every day.
>
> **Cb 5**: Not only can they not pay for that of which they are guilty, they also increase their guilt every day in the face of the just judgment of God through further transgression.12
>
> **HC 14**: Can another creature—any at all—pay this debt for us? No. To begin with, God will not punish another creature for what a human is guilty of. Besides, no mere creature can bear the weight of God's eternal anger against sin and release others from it.
>
> **Cb 6**: Where does one find such a surety who can do this? Certainly nowhere among creatures…. God's justice does not permit him to demand

of angels that which humanity owes. Furthermore, since it is a question here of bearing the wrath of God, there is no doubt that even the angels themselves are not strong enough to bear such a heavy burden.13

HC 15: [A mediator] who is truly human and truly righteous, yet more powerful than all creatures, that is, one who is also true God.

Cb 7: It is absolutely necessary, therefore, that we find refuge in someone who is stronger and more powerful than all creatures, and yet at the same time is truly human.14

HC 18: And who is this mediator—true God and at the same time truly human and truly righteous? Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Cb 7: Thus it is necessary that one find a mediator who is both God and human. The only such mediator is the Lord Jesus Christ.15

HC 86: And we do good so that we may be assured of our faith by its fruits, and so that by our godly living our neighbors may be won over to Christ.

C IV.19: How good works benefit us before God and before men:… 1. First, in this way we profit our neighbors either by winning them over to Christ or by retaining them for Christ. 2. Second, by our good works we may be more certain of our salvation.16

HC 116: Prayer is the most important part of the thankfulness God requires of us.

C IV.16: Of all the fruits that faith universally brings forth in all true Christians, the invocation of the name of God through Jesus Christ is first and foremost. For we judge that no other work is more pleasing to him, whether [it be prayer in which] we request something from him, or sing his praise, or give him thanks for all the benefits we have received.17

Nevertheless, Hollweg's full list of literary links between Beza's confessions and the HC does require some modification—in at least three ways. First, several of the similarities he finds between the HC and either C or Cb might just as easily or better be explained by the influence of Ursinus's Smaller Catechism (*Catechesis minor*, 1562), commonly recognized as the primary source document for the HC. Why, for example, does one need to sift through various articles in both of Beza's confessions to locate the roots of the threefold division of the HC when the Smaller Catechism (SC) contains this very structure in a single question and answer?

HC 2: What must you know to live and die in the joy of this comfort?

> Three things: first, how great my sin and misery are; second, how I am set free from all my sins and misery; third, how I am to thank God for such deliverance.
>
> **SC 3**: What does God's Word teach? First, it shows us our misery; second, how we are delivered from it; and third, what gratitude ought to be shown to God for this deliverance.[18]

There are other examples, too, of a closer linguistic correspondence between the HC and the SC than what Hollweg found between the HC and Beza's confessions:

> **HC 16**: Why must he be truly human and truly righteous? God's justice demands that human nature, which has sinned, must pay for its sin; but a sinner could never pay for others.
>
> **SC 24**: Why did Christ have to be truly human? Because the justice of God demanded that the human nature that had sinned make satisfaction for sin.[19]
>
> **Cb 6**: Since the angels are not obligated to pay for human sin, God's justice does not permit him to demand of angels that which humanity owes. Furthermore, since it is a question here of bearing the wrath of God, there is no doubt that even the angels themselves are not strong enough to bear such a heavy burden.[20]

> **HC 35**: What does it mean that he "was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary"? That the eternal Son of God, who is and remains true and eternal God, took to himself, through the working of the Holy Spirit, from the flesh and blood of the Virgin Mary, a truly human nature so that he might become David's true descendant, like his brothers in every way except for sin.
>
> **SC 23**: Why do you say "conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary"? Because I have been taught by God's Word that through the operation of the Holy Spirit the Son of God assumed a human nature from the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary, so that he might at the same time be true God, as he was from eternity, and the true Son of David, in all things like us his brothers, except for sin.[21]
>
> **C III.21**: We know therefore that the one and only eternal Son of God the Father assumed the form of a servant, i.e., a true human nature subject to all human infirmities except for sin. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary without the intervention of a man.[22]

> **HC 46–47**: What do you mean by saying, "He ascended to heaven"? That Christ, while his disciples watched, was lifted up from the earth to heaven and will be there for our good until he comes again to judge the living and the dead. But isn't Christ with us until the end of the world as he promised us? Christ is truly human and truly God. In his human nature Christ is not now on earth; but in his divinity, majesty, grace, and Spirit he is not absent from us for a moment.
>
> **SC 34–35**: What do you believe about his ascension into heaven? That he exalted his human nature up above all the visible heavens, and is and remains in this nature not on earth but in heaven until the end of the world…. But isn't Christ with us always until the end of the world, as he promised? Since Christ is true God and truly human, he is always with the church in his divinity, majesty, grace, and Spirit; but in his human nature he is not now on earth but in heaven.23
>
> **C III.25**: We say that Christ really and truly carried his human nature or his true body from us into heaven, where it will remain until he comes to judge the living and the dead. Nevertheless, with respect to his divine nature and the efficacy of the Holy Spirit…we know that he is and will be present with his people until the consummation of the age.24

Second, there is at least a part of one question and answer from the HC on Hollweg's list that cannot be traced to Ursinus's Smaller Catechism but may reflect the influence of the so-called "Small Catechism" of Johannes Brenz ("Fragestücke des christlichen Glaubens," 1535). Addressing the same question as HC 86 does about why believers should do good works, Brenz's "Small Catechism" strips such works of any meritorious connotations and explicitly links them to gratitude:

> **HC 86**: We have been delivered from our misery by God's grace alone through Christ and not because we have earned it: why then must we still do good? To be sure, Christ has redeemed us by his blood. But we do good because Christ by his Spirit is also renewing us to be like himself, so that in all our living we may show that we are thankful to God for all he has done for us.
>
> **Small Catechism**: Why should we do good works? Not because we pay for sin and earn eternal life with our deeds—for Christ alone has paid for sin and earned eternal life—but rather because we should bear witness to our faith with good works and be thankful to our Lord God for his good deeds.25

If the authors of the HC were at all dependent on an outside source for this part of HC 86, the smaller catechism by Brenz would seem a more likely candidate than the smaller confession by Beza. Despite Hollweg's attempts to identify Beza as the "spiritual father" of the connection between good works and gratitude in the HC,[26] Beza's smaller confession never once uses the word *gratitude*. Furthermore, the only passage in his larger confession that employs the term (C IV.16) connects gratitude to good works only indirectly: prayer is the noblest of good works, and giving thanks is one kind of prayer.[27]

The third deficiency in Hollweg's list is one that actually strengthens his overall argument: the list of parallels between Beza's confessions and the HC could be even longer. There are at least three additional instances of similar wording between these confessions and the HC that cannot be traced to either the SC or any other known source of the HC:

> **HC 11**: But isn't God also merciful? God is certainly merciful, but he is also just. His justice demands that sin, committed against his supreme majesty, be punished with the supreme penalty.
>
> **C IV.10**: For if people bypass the justice of God by fleeing to his mercy, they are only deceiving themselves. God is most certainly merciful but in such a way that we must nevertheless confess his supreme justice as well.[28]

> **HC 30**: Do those who look for their salvation and security in saints, in themselves, or elsewhere really believe in the only savior Jesus? No. Although they boast of being his, by their deeds they deny the only savior and deliverer, Jesus. Either Jesus is not a perfect savior, or those who in true faith accept this savior have in him all they need for their salvation.
>
> **C IV.6**: Therefore, one of two things must follow: either everything that is required for our salvation is not in Christ, or, if everything is in him, then whoever has hold of Christ through faith has hold of all those things as well. But no one can say the former without execrable blasphemy, since that would entail that Christ is Jesus, that is, Savior, only in part.[29]

> **HC 60**: Even though my conscience accuses me of having grievously sinned against all God's commandments, of never having kept any of them, and of being still inclined toward all evil….
>
> **C IV.10,11,12**: The first insult of the first temptation [by Satan and our consciences] is that our innumerable sins are placed before us…. The second insult of this temptation is that nowhere within us can be found that righteousness that God rightly requires of us…. The third insult of this

> temptation is that by nature we are corrupt and thus detestable to God.30

In sum, Hollweg's list of linguistic parallels needs to be revised somewhat, but his basic thesis is sound: the literary influence of the Bezan confessions on the HC is unmistakable.

Authorship of the HC

What bearing might this connection then have on the question of the authorship of the HC? In the same volume in which Hollweg published his article on the Bezan sources of the catechism, he included another essay challenging the prevailing opinion that Olevianus was responsible for the final form of the German text of the HC.31 Hollweg argued that Olevianus lacked the catechetical gifts, the translation skills, and the spiritual character necessary to produce a document with the polish and piety of the HC, and that as late as 1570 Olevianus remained unhappy with some of the wording of the catechism.32 Since the appearance of this essay, Olevianus's reputation as a major contributor to the HC has declined rapidly, and although Hollweg himself refused to speculate about the identity of the final redactor, most scholars today are quite certain that it was Ursinus.33

However, in a response in 1968 to critics of his 1961 essay on Beza and the HC, Hollweg added some fascinating new details to the story of Beza's two confessions, all involving Olevianus.34 Hollweg had discovered in a letter from Olevianus to Beza, dated April 10, 1561, that during Olevianus's imprisonment in Trier in 1559, he had been greatly consoled by what he called Beza's "French confession." Hollweg also learned that Olevianus very much wanted this confession translated into German but that such a project really required "a better translator than I." Nevertheless, Olevianus was committed to producing such a translation within the next eighteen months.35 Less than a year later, a German translation of Beza's smaller confession was published in Heidelberg, and there can be little doubt, Hollweg concluded, that Olevianus was the translator. Moreover,

> this publication [of Beza's confession] appeared at the very time that people in Heidelberg were hard at work on the edition of the Heidelberg Catechism. [The translation of Beza's confession] was done by the same Olevianus who was also busily working on the edition of the HC. Is it not obvious, then, that the man who was involved in both projects simultaneously was responsible for the insertion of key ideas from the confession into the catechism? Olevianus's great love for Beza's confession made it a source for the Heidelberg Catechism.36

There is yet another link, however, between Beza's confessions and Olevianus that Hollweg never mentioned, namely, the influence of Olevianus's *A Firm Foundation* (*Vester Grundt*) of 1567. *A Firm Foundation* (FF) was, in Olevianus's own words, "a more detailed catechism" than the HC but one that sought to follow the HC's "method," i.e., the format, order, interpretation, and even wording of the HC, in its exposition of the Apostles' Creed.[37] The literary influences on FF are manifold—most prominently from the HC itself[38]—but there are a number of places in FF where the echoes of earlier sources can only have come from Beza's two confessions:

> **FF 6**: Accordingly, the mediator who would offer himself as a sacrifice for all had to be not only truly human but also truly God. Why? First of all, so that he could be a savior…. Second, he had to take upon himself unbearable pain for all creatures, since he had to satisfy the just judgment of God for the innumerable sins we have committed against God's infinite majesty. Therefore he had to be truly human in such a way that at the same time he was infinite, that is, true God.[39]
>
> **C III.20**: Why was it necessary that Christ be truly God? It was necessary that that same mediator be not only human but also true God for at least the following reasons: 1. First, if he were not true God, he would not be a savior but rather one who himself was in need of a savior. 2. Second, God's justice demands that the penalty be in proportion to the sin. If the majesty of God offended by sin is infinite, then that sin is also infinite and deserves an infinite penalty. Hence the one who was to pay the penalty as a man, at the same time had to be infinite, that is, true God.[40]

> **FF157**: Since, then, faith…possesses Christ and all his benefits as its own, and Christ is the one freely given us by God to be ours through faith, one of two things must follow: either Christ does not have all that is necessary for our salvation, or, if he does, one who possesses the crucified Christ through a true faith *also* has everything in Christ that is necessary for salvation…. He was not a partial but a complete Jesus, or Savior.[41]
>
> **C IV.6**: Faith embraces and appropriates to itself as its own Jesus Christ and all that is in him, since he is clearly offered to us to be ours on the condition that we believe in him. Therefore, one of two things must follow: either everything that is required for our salvation is not in Jesus Christ, or, if everything is in him, then whoever has hold of Christ through faith has hold of all those things as well. But no one can say the former without execrable blasphemy, since that would entail that Christ is Jesus, that is, Savior, only

in part.[42]

FF 175: What, then, is the basis or cause of why I have to accept the righteousness of Christ as my very own? The cause is the bond of faith and spiritual marriage between Christ and the Church, that is, all believers. This bond and marriage consists of his taking our sin and misery upon himself and our having everything in common with him.[43]

C IV.9: The reason [*causa*] why the Church, the community of the faithful, is called the bride of Christ, who is, as it were, her wedded husband, is that it makes clearer that most intimate fellowship and union between him and the faithful. For the underlying principle of this fellowship and spiritual union is that he takes all of our miseries upon himself whereas we, on the other hand, receive all the good treasures from his goodness and mercy.[44]

FF 170: Third, [good works] are useful because by the example of our good works we win others to Christ and keep those already won from falling away.[45]

C IV.19: First, [good works are beneficial because] in this way we may profit our neighbors either by winning them over to Christ or by retaining them for Christ.[46]

FF 1: But where shall we find such a mediator and surety? If we look around the entire world, we shall not find a single creature (a mere creature, that is) that can make satisfaction for us. For if we should look for a surety among the angels, we would immediately encounter two problems: First, since the angels are neither guilty nor obligated to suffer on humanity's account, the justice of God does not demand of them that they should pay what humanity owes…. Second, since our surety and mediator had to bear and overcome the infinite, eternal wrath of God, there is no doubt that an angel would have been too weak for that.[47]

Cb 6: Where does one find such a surety who is able to [make satisfaction for us]? Certainly nowhere among creatures. For if we look for one among the angels, we are rebuffed with two problems. [First,] since the angels are not obligated to pay for human sin, God's justice does not permit him to demand of angels that which humanity owes. Furthermore, since it is a question here of bearing the wrath of God, there is no doubt that even the angels themselves are not strong enough to bear such a heavy burden.[48]

There are also correlations between their treatment of the unfolding promise of salvation in Scripture (FF 2 and Cb 12), the differences between law and gospel

(FF 10 and C IV.22), and the definition of faith (FF 12 and Cb 19).

Perhaps the most striking parallel has to do with the believer's struggle with certain temptations outlined in Beza's *Confessio*, chapters 10–13, and then again in Olevianus's *A Firm Foundation*, pages 165–177.[49] The details in these relatively lengthy discussions are remarkably similar. Both texts, for example, divide the first temptation into three accusations by Satan and the conscience against the believer: (1) our sins are innumerable; (2) we fall short of God's law; and (3) we are by nature still corrupt. In the case of the first accusation, both C and FF begin by criticizing any response that bypasses God's justice and appeals to God's mercy. Both documents then reject any notion of merit by the saints. Finally, both provide the real antidote by stressing that a just God demands only one payment for sin—that made by Christ on the cross for the whole multitude of our sins. The discussions of the second and third accusations also contain parallel lines of argument and similar wording. Finally, when they reach what Beza calls the "second temptation" (a tendency to question the genuineness of our faith), both documents encourage the believer to look for the effects in one's life of true union with Christ through faith. Beza talks about two sorts of effects, the testimony of the Holy Spirit and a threefold fruit of regeneration: mortification of the old self, burial of the old self, and vivification of the new self. Olevianus calls it the threefold *effect* of regeneration: the testimony of the Holy Spirit, mortification of the old self, and vivification of the new self. The material is arranged slightly differently in each work, but the content is essentially the same. Furthermore, both speak of "ascending" from these effects (Beza) or climbing them "like stairs" (Olevianus) to the conclusion that we also possess the cause of these effects, namely, Christ through faith. And if we have such faith, then we can also be assured that we are among the elect.[50]

There seems to be little doubt, then, about the influence of Beza's two confessions not just on the HC but also on Olevianus's early "commentary" on the HC, *A Firm Foundation.* We return, then, to our original question: what bearing does all this have on the question of the authorship of the HC? Before us are the following facts: (1) One or both of Beza's confessions had deeply impressed Olevianus during a personal crisis in Trier in 1559. (2) Olevianus was very likely the translator of the German edition of Beza's smaller confession in 1562. (3) As one of the church superintendents in Heidelberg, Olevianus was a member of the HC drafting committee in 1562.[51] (4) Both of Beza's confessions exerted a discernable influence on the text of the HC. (5) The influence of Beza's confessions also on FF is unmistakeable.

Running through all of this data are two common threads: a literary relationship between Beza's two confessions, the HC, and FF; and a connection

between Olevianus and every one of these four documents. When these two threads are spliced, they suggest at the very least that Olevianus played a more important role in the composition of the HC than recent scholarship has recognized. If Olevianus greatly admired the Bezan confessions, translated one of them into German around the very time that the HC team was at work, and blended some of their ideas into his own catechetical expansion of the HC, is it not reasonable to suppose that, as a member of the HC drafting committee, he was also the one who wove some of that same Bezan language into the text of the HC itself?

Especially telling here are those passages in C and Cb that left their mark on *both* the HC and FF, since frequently Olevianus's expanded treatment of the HC in FF includes also an expanded use of the Bezan sources. Beza's lengthy treatment in C, for example, of the triple accusation of the believer's conscience appears in abbreviated form in HC 60 and then again in much greater detail in FF, Q/A 165–177. This looks very much like a contributing author of a document (HC) returning to his sources (C and Cb) as he prepares an enlarged version (FF) of the original work. Add to that Olevianus's adroit integration of a number of earlier catechetical texts (especially the HC) into FF, and it is difficult to escape the conclusion that he played a rather prominent part in the actual writing of the HC. Of all the members of the committee, Olevianus was the most familiar with the Bezan sources and the only one to use them again in his later writing on the catechism.

Conclusion

Hollweg may have been correct in his claim that Olevianus was not the final redactor of the German text of the HC—although that claim itself is not beyond question.[52] But even if Hollweg was right on that score, it does not necessarily follow (and Hollweg himself never claimed that it did) that Olevianus played no role or only a minor role in the preparation of the catechism. On the contrary, the evidence that Hollweg provides of a connection between Beza's two confessions, the HC, and Olevianus and that we have found confirmed in the further link between the Bezan confessions and FF suggests otherwise. Perhaps, in the final analysis, the tradition dating back to Heinrich Alting in the seventeenth century that Ursinus and Olevianus were the co-authors of the HC contains a kernel of truth after all.[53] Alting might not have been accurate in all the particulars, and the precise role that each man played on the drafting team is still unclear. But the gist of that tradition, that Olevianus, along with Ursinus, played a significant role in the composition of the HC, has not yet been convincingly discredited and, indeed, enjoys the support of a growing body of

circumstantial evidence.

1. For a fuller discussion of the changing views of the HC's authorship see Walter Hollweg, "Bearbeitete Caspar Olevianus den deutschen Text zum Heidelberger Katechismus?" in *Neue Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Heidelberger Katechismus*, Beiträge zur Geschichte und Lehre der Reformierten Kirche, ed. Paul Jacobs et al. (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1961), 13:124–152; Fred H. Klooster, "The Priority of Ursinus in the Composition of the Heidelberg Catechism," in *Controversy and Conciliation: The Reformation and the Palatinate, 1559–1583*, Pittsburgh Theological Monographs (New Series), ed. Dikran Y. Hadidian (Allison Park, Pa.: Pickwick, 1986), 18:73–100; and Lyle D. Bierma, "Olevianus and the Authorship of the Heidelberg Catechism: Another Look," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 13, no. 4 (1982): 17–27.

2. See, e.g., Maurits. A. Gooszen, *De Heidelbergsche Catechismus: Textus Receptus met Toelichtende Teksten* (Leiden: Brill, 1890), 1–241; August Lang, *Der Heidelberger Katechismus und vier verwandte Katechismen* (Leipzig: Deichert, 1907), 87–96; and Bard Thompson, "The Palatinate Church Order of 1563," *Church History* 23, no. 4 (1954): 339–354.

3. Klooster, "The Heidelberg Catechism: Origin and History" (photocopy, Calvin Theological Seminary, 1982), 177.

4. Hollweg, "Die beiden Konfessionen Theodor von Bezas: Zwei bisher unbeachtete Quellen zum Heidelberger Katechismus," in *Neue Untersuchungen zur Geschichte*, ed. Jacobs, et al., 13:86–123.

5. Hollweg, "Konfessionen," esp. 87, 98.

6. Hollweg, "Konfessionen," 87–88.

7. Hollweg, "Konfessionen," 88–92.

8. Hollweg, "Konfessionen," 92–94.

9. Hollweg, "Konfessionen," 100–110.

10. All quotations from the Heidelberg Catechism are taken from the 1975 translation by the Christian Reformed Church in North America in *Ecumenical Creeds and Reformed Confessions* (Grand Rapids: CRC Publications, 1988), 12–77.

11. "Sie der gerechtigkait Gottes nit volkommenlich gnug thůn…. Darauβ vnwidersprechlich eruolgt/daβ entweders alle menschen müssen/one ainegē auszůg/verdamt sein/oder aber jemand finden der für sie alle jre schuld bezale." My translations of Cb are based on the 1562 German text appended to Hollweg, "Konfessionen," 111–123 (Cb 1,5, pp. 111, 112).

12. "Sie nit allain das nicht zůbezalen haben was sie schüldig sind/ sonder werden auch durch neüwe übertrettung für dem rechten gericht Gottes von tag zů tag je lenger je mehr schüldig." Hollweg, "Konfessionen," 112.

13. "Wo findet man nun solchen bürgen der es vermöge: warlich an kainem ort vnder allen Creaturen…. So mag die grechtigkait Gottes nicht leidē/daβ von den Engelen abgefordert werd/ was die menschen schüldig sind. Ferrners dieweil es hie gilt den zorn Gottes ertragen/ so ist es gewiβ/ dass auch die Engel selber solche schwere bürde zůertragen/ nit gnug sind." Hollweg, "Konfessionen," 112.

14. "Der halben gantz vnd gar vonnöten/ daβ wir vnsere zůflucht etwa zů ainem haben der stärcker vnd gewaltiger seie denn alle Creaturen/ vnd doch zůgleich auch warer mensch seie." Hollweg, "Konfessionen," 112.

15. "Derhalben es vonnöten daβ man ainen mittler finde/ welcher gott vnd mensch sei: ain solcher aber ist allain Herr Jesus Christus." Hollweg, "Konfessionen," 112–113.

16. "Quorsum nobis utilia sint bona opera apud Deum et apud homines…. 1. Primum enim has ratione solemus proximos nostros vel Christo [lucrificare] vel in Christo retinere…. 2. Secundo, bonis operibus certiores simus nostrae salutis." My translations of C are based on the Latin text adopted (with minor alterations) by the Hungarian Reformed Church as an official confession in 1562 and reprinted in E. F. K. Müller, *Die Bekenntnisschriften der reformierten Kirchen* (Leipzig: Deichert, 1903), 376–449 (C IV.19, p. 399).

17. “Inter omnes fructus, quos fides universaliter in omnibus vere Christianis homnibus edit, principatum…est Invocatio Nominis Dei per Iesum Christum: Neque ullum opus ei gratius esse arbitramur, sive quid ab eo postulemus, sive Laudes ejus canamus, sive gratias ei agamus pro acceptis beneficijs.” Müller, *Bekenntnisschriften*, 394.

18. All quotations from the SC are taken from my translation in Bierma, ed., *An Introduction to the Heidelberg Catechism: Sources, History, and Theology*, Texts and Studies in Reformation and Post-Reformation Thought, ed. Richard A. Muller (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 141–162 (SC 3, p. 141). This translation is based on the Latin text found in Quirinus Reuter’s 1612 edition of Ursinus’s works and reprinted in Lang, *Heidelberger Katechismus*, 200–218.

19. Bierma, *Introduction*, 145.

20. “Dieweil die Engel nicht schüldig sind der menschen sünd zůbüssen: so mag die grechtigkait Gottes nicht leidē/ dass von den Engelen abgefordert werd/ was die menschen schüldig sind. Ferrners dieweil es hie gilt den zorn Gottes ertragen/ so ist es gewiβ/ daβ auch die Engel selber solche schwere bürde zůertragen/ nit gnug sind.” Hollweg, “Konfessionen,” 112.

21. Bierma, *Introduction*, 144.

22. “Agnoscimus igitur proprium illum unicum et aeternum Dei Patris Filium…forman servi assumisisse, id est, veram hominis naturam omnibus humanis infirmitatibus, excepto peccato, obnoxiam; conceptum in beatae Mariae virginis utero ex Spiritu sancto, Nulla viri actione interveniente.” Müller, *Bekenntnisschriften*, 382.

23. Bierma, *Introduction*, 146–147.

24. “Dicimus Christum naturam suam humanam sive suum illud verum corpus a nobis vere ac re ipsa attulisse in coelum, ubi permansurum est, donec veniat Iudicaturus vivos et mortuos. Verum divinae naturae respectu, et efficaciae Spiritus Sancti…agnoscimus eum esse, ac semper futurum praesentem cum suis ad consummationem usque seculi.” Müller, *Bekenntnisschriften*, 384.

25. “Frag: Warum sollen wir gute Werk tun? Antwort: Nicht darum, dass wir mit unserm Tun die Suend buessen und ewigs Leben verdienen—denn Christus hat allein die suend gebuesst und das ewig Leben verdient—sondern darum, dass wir den Glauben mit guten Werken bezeugen und unserm HERRN Gott fuer seine Guttaten dankbar sein sollen.” Johannes Brenz, “Fragstücke des christlichen Glaubens” (1535), in Christoph Weismann, *Eine Kleine Biblia: Die Katechismen von Luther und Brenz* (Stuttgart: Calver, 1985), 114.

26. Hollweg, “Konfessionen,” 104.

27. Müller, *Bekenntnisschriften*, 393–394.

28. “Nam…si praeterita Dei justitia ad ejus misericordiam confugerint, seipsos decipiunt. Certissimum enim est, Deum ita esse misericordem, ut interea summam ipsius justitiam oporteat nos profiteri.” Müller, *Bekenntnisschriften*, 388.

29. “Itaque duorum alterum necessarium est, Nempe, ut vel non insit Christo quicquid ad salutem nostram requiritur: Aut, si omnia in eo insunt, is omnia possideat, qui Christum per fidem possidet. Atqui prius illud nemo sine insigni blasphemia dixerit. Quoniam consequeretur, Christum non esse Iesum, id ist Servatorem, nisi aliqua ex parte.” Müller, *Bekenntnisschriften*, 386.

30. “De primae tentationis primo insultu, in quo nobis innumerabilia peccata nostra proponuntur… alterum ejusdem tentationis insultum, positum in eo, quod nusquam in nobis extet justitia illa quam Deus merito a nobis requirit…. De tertio ejusdem tentationis insultu, quod natura simus corrupti, ac proinde Deo exosi.” Müller, *Bekenntnisschriften*, 388–90. I have slightly emended the translation of HC 60 based on my reading of the German text.

31. Hollweg, “Olevianus,” 124–52.

32. Hollweg, “Olevianus,” 136–51.

33. See, e.g., J. F. G. Goeters, “Entstehung und Fruehgeschichte des Katechismus,” in *Handbuch zum Heidelberger Katechismus*, ed. Lothar Coenen (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1963), 15; Joachim Staedtke, “Entstehung und Bedeutung des Heidelberger Katechismus” in *Warum Wirst du Ein Christ Genannt?*, ed. W. Herrenbruck and U. Smidt (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1965), 15; Wulf Metz,

Necessitas Satisfactionis? Eine systematische Studie zu den Fragen 12–18 des Heidelberger Katechismus und zur Theologie des Zacharias Ursinus (Zurich: Zwingli Verlag, 1970), 63–64; Wilhelm H. Neuser, "Die Väter des Heidelberger Katechismus," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 35 (1979): 177; Gustav A. Benrath, "Zacharias Ursinus als Mensch, Christ und Theolog," *Reformierte Kirchenzeitung* 124 (1983): 155; and Klooster, "Priority of Ursinus," 73–100.

34. Hollweg, "Zur Quellenfrage des Heidelberger Katechismus," in *Neue Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Lehre des Heidelberger Katechismus: Zweite Folge*, Beiträge zur Geschichte und Lehre der Reformierten Kirche, ed. Hannelore Erhart, et al. (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1968), 28:38–47.

35. Hollweg, "Quellenfrage," 39–41.

36. Hollweg, "Quellenfrage," 41.

37. Caspar Olevianus, *Vester Grundt, das ist, die artikel des alten, waren, ungezweifelten, chrislichen Glaubens* (Heidelberg: Schirat, 1567). Olevianus's comments on FF are found in a letter to Bullinger (25 October 1563), which is reprinted in Karl Sudhoff, *C. Olevianus und Z. Ursinus: Leben und ausgewählte Schriften*, Leben und ausgewählte Schriften der Väter und Begründer der reformierten Kirche (Elberfeld: Friderichs, 1857), 8:485.

38. Bierma, "*Vester Grundt* and the Origins of the Heidelberg Catechism," in *Later Calvinism: International Perspectives*, ed. W. Fred Graham, Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies, ed. Charles G. Nauert, Jr. (Kirksville, Mo: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1994), 22:289–309.

39. All quotations from FF are taken from Olevianus, *A Firm Foundation: An Aid to Interpreting the Heidelberg Catechism*, ed. and trans. Bierma, Texts and Studies in Reformation and Post-Reformation Thought, ed. Richard A. Muller (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995). The quotation from FF 6 is on p. 6.

40. "Cur Christum oportuerit vere esse? Eundem illum Mediatorem oportuit non tantum hominem, sed etiam verum Deum esse, ob eas saltem rationes, quas subjiciemus:

1. Primum enim nisi verus Deus esset, servator non esset, ut qui potius servatore indigeret.

2. Deinde necesse est, ut coram justitia Dei inveniatur proportio inter peccatum et peccati poenam. Atqui si infinita est Majestas Dei, quae peccato offenditur, peccatum quoque infinitum est, ac poenam infinitam meretur. Ex quo efficitur, oportuisse, ut is, qui poenam, tanquam homo lueret, simul esset infinitus, id ist, verus Deus." Müller, *Bekenntnisschriften*, 382.

41. Olevianus, *Firm Foundation*, 108.

42. "Fidem amplecti, ac sibi ut proprium asserere Iesum Christum et quicquid ei inest, quoniam videlicet nobis possidendus offertur, cum hac conditione, si credamus in eum. Itaque duorum alterum necessarium est, Nempe, ut vel non insit Christo quicquid ad salutem nostram requiritur: Aut, si omnia in eo insunt, is omnia possideat, qui Christum per fidem possidet. Atqui prius illud nemo sine insigni blasphemia dixerit. Quoniam consequeretur, Christum non esse Iesum, id ist Servatorem, nisi aliqua ex parte." Müller, *Bekenntnisschriften*, 386.

43. Olevianus, *Firm Foundation*, 119.

44. "Haec enim causa ist, cur Ecclesia, id ist fidelium coetus, vocetur sponsa Christi, cui tanquam marito nupsit, nempe ut melius appareat arctissima illa societas ac conjunctio quae inter eum, et fidelis intercedit. Nam hujus societatis ac spiritualis conjugij eas lex est, ut omnes nostras miserias in se recipiat, Nos autem e contrario omnes bonorum thesauros ex bonitate ac misericordia ipsius percipiamus." Müller, *Bekenntnisschriften*, 387–388.

45. Olevianus, *Firm Foundation*, 117.

46. "Quorsum nobis utilia sint bona opera apud Deum et apud homines… 1. Primum enim has ratione solemus proximos nostros vel Christo [lucrificare] vel in Christo retinere." Müller, *Bekenntnisschriften*, 399.

47. Olevianus, *Firm Foundation*, 3.

48. "Wo findet man nun solchen bürgen der es vermöge: warlich an kainem ort vnder allen Creaturen: denn sůchen wir ainen vnder den Engelen/ so werden wir mit zwaierlai antwort abgewisen. Denn/ dieweil die Engel nicht schüldig sind der menschen sünd zůbüssen: so mag die grechtigkait Gottes nicht leidē/ daβ

von den Engelen abgefordert werd/ was die menschen schüldig sind. Ferrners dieweil es hie gilt den zorn Gottes ertragen/ so ist es gewiß/ daß auch die Engel selber solche schwere *bürde* zůertragen/ nit gnug sind." Hollweg, "Konfessionen," 112.

49. Müller, *Bekenntnisschriften,* 386–91; Olevianus, *Firm Foundation,* 112–122.

50. Müller, *Bekenntnisschriften,* 391; Olevianus, *Firm Foundation,* 122.

51. In the preface to the Heidelberg Catechism Elector Frederick III states that "with the advice and cooperation of our entire theological faculty here and of all the superintendents and chief officers of the church, we have composed and authorized a summary course of instruction or catechism of our Christian religion." Lang, *Heidelberger Katechismus,* 3.

52. For a critique of Hollweg's essay, see Bierma, "Olevianus and the Authorship," 21–23.

53. Heinrich Alting, *Historia ecclesiae Palatinae* [1644], in *Monumenta pietatis & literaria virorum in republica & literaria illustrium, selecta,* ed. Ludwig Christian Mieg and Daniel Nebel (Frankfurt: Maximillian, 1701), 1:189–190, cited in Klooster, "Priority of Ursinus," 73–74.

CHAPTER 8

Henry Ainsworth, Harried Hebraist (1570–1622)

Raymond A. Blacketer

The pioneering French encyclopedist of the seventeenth century, Louis Moréri, noted the existence of two British churchmen named Henry Ainsworth. The first was "the celebrated commentator on Holy Scripture" who was perfectly fluent in the Hebrew of the Old Testament and that of the rabbis. This Henry Ainsworth was exceptionally adept at the interpretation of difficult passages, explicating them by comparison with other biblical texts, and drawing heavily from the Greek and Chaldean (Aramaic) versions and rabbinic writings. Moréri even records a rumor that the great John Lightfoot pillaged most of his learned commentary from the pages of Ainsworth's *Annotations*. The second Henry Ainsworth, however, was a despicable heresiarch and schismatic, one of the chief "Brownists or separatists," clearly not worthy to be remembered.1

In fact, however, these two Henry Ainsworths were the same individual.2 Ainsworth was indeed a leading Christian Hebraist of the early seventeenth century, styled "the rabbi of his age" by Daniel Neal; and he was also a religious purist who could not find a home in the Church of England, and his convictions drove him not only to separation, but also exile. While many of the details of Ainsworth's life are lost to history, those that do remain tell the somewhat tragic story of a man whose scholarly writings are a testament to both his own genius and to the often overlooked sophistication of biblical scholarship in a period in Protestant history often summarily dismissed as arid and moribund.3 At the same time, however, Ainsworth's life as a church leader was wracked with controversy and recrimination. He could only tenuously, and temporarily, hold together the fractious congregation of which he was designated as a teacher, and which had taken refuge in relatively tolerant Amsterdam. It was under these turbulent circumstances that Ainsworth carved out an important place in the history of the Christian appropriation of Jewish biblical scholarship.

The Rise of Christian Hebraism

The seedling of sola Scriptura, planted by the Reformers of the sixteenth century, was cultivated into a mature tree of sophisticated biblical scholarship in the seventeenth. If scripture was to be the sole rule of doctrine, faith, and life in the

newly reformed churches, it was incumbent upon those churches to produce a robust and profound understanding of the Bible. This was particularly true in the study of Hebrew and the Old Testament. While many sixteenth-century Reformers and scholars had been respectably competent in Hebrew, and a few were pioneers in the Christian study of Hebrew and Hebraica, like Johannes Reuchlin, François Vatable, and Sebastian Münster, successive generations of scholars and churchmen made rapid strides in mastering not only the biblical languages, but ancient Near Eastern cognate tongues.4 Englishman Robert Wakefield (d. 1537) pioneered and advocated for the study of Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic years before the Reformation came to England.5 The early seventeenth century saw the publication of commentaries on the Pentateuch that far surpassed those of the previous generations in erudition and philological skill, as biblical scholars of the era of early Protestant orthodoxy delved ever deeper into the Jewish intellectual tradition and engaged on a substantive level the biblical exegesis of the rabbis.6

There were a number of churchmen who distinguished themselves as biblical scholars and competent Hebraists in the first decades of the seventeenth century, decades before the emergence of the better-known names of John Lightfoot (1602–1675) and Matthew Poole (1624–1679) (and even the lesser known John Trapp, 1601–1669), and upon whose shoulders those luminaries of biblical scholarship stood. On the European Continent these leaders in the adolescent field of biblical philology included the Dutch scholar Constantijn L'Empereur (1570–1648), who was a student of Joseph Scaliger and a professor of Hebrew at Leiden,7 as well as the father-and-son team of Johannes Buxtorf the Elder and the Younger at Basel.8 But the Anglophone world produced at least its share of erudite biblical scholars during this period, including the Scot John Weemse (1579–1636), John Mayer (1583–1664), Andrew Willet (1562–1621), the irascible, eccentric, and professionally frustrated Hugh Broughton (1549–1612), and not least of all Henry Ainsworth (1569/70–1622).9

Henry Ainsworth, Separatist Scholar

Henry Ainsworth was both an erudite and capable philologist and exegete, delving into rabbinic studies that were beyond the capabilities of most of his colleagues. What little is known of his life story, however, is at least melancholic if not tragic, largely because of the ecclesiastical turmoil that he experienced during his career. Though he may have wished for a quiet, retiring life in which to pursue his studies and writing, his religious convictions made such an existence impossible for him in England under the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I, and created numerous difficulties for Ainsworth even in exile. While

many reform-minded churchmen and theologians, such as William Perkins,[10] made their peace with the Church of England and tried to reform it from within, Henry Ainsworth was one of those purists who felt compelled to separate from an Anglican ecclesiastical establishment that was “but halfly reformed.”[11]

The details of Ainsworth’s early life in England were almost completely unknown until the discoveries of the last century.[12] Ainsworth was likely born in 1570, and baptized on January 15, 1570 (n.s.) in the town of Swanton Morley, Norfolk, in the east of England.[13] In 1586 he enrolled in St. John’s College, Cambridge, as a pensioner (that is, a student who pays his own tuition and board), where he had as his tutor Ralph Furness, whom Moody identifies as “a member of the college’s strong godly faction.” A year later he transferred to Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, where he studied for three and a half years under Dr. Stephen Perse; yet he left without a degree (perhaps on principle) in 1591.[14] Ainsworth soon found himself associated with the ecclesiastical Separatists, known as Brownists, who, in addition to their strict discipline,[15] did not recognize the Anglican establishment as a true church and prohibited participation in its worship. Ainsworth suffered incarceration for his views, and eventually fled England; after some time in Ireland, he settled into exile in the relative safety of Amsterdam, probably in the late 1590’s.[16]

Ainsworth’s retiring and shy nature first evidences itself in an anecdote that relates his destitute and sorry state when he first arrived in the Netherlands. He worked as a porter for a bookseller, eking out a living earning nine pence per week and subsisting on boiled roots, according to the testimony of Roger Williams, founder of Rhode Island.[17] Ainsworth likely became acquainted with Jews and rabbis through this work, something that would not have been possible in England, from which the Jews had been expelled three centuries earlier, not to return until 1655. And in fact, it was only when the bookseller discovered Ainsworth’s facility in the Hebrew language that his dire straits became known to his fellow exiles, who then came to his aid.[18] Ainsworth came to hold the office of teacher or doctor among this group of Separatist exiles known as the “Ancient Separatist Church,” founded on the ideals of John Greenwood and Henry Barrow.[19] Ainsworth may have already held this position when Francis Johnson arrived from England in 1597 to resume serving as the exiled congregation’s pastor.[20] The Amsterdam dissenters were so contentious that pastor John Robinson led his group of Separatists to settle a safe distance away in Leiden; Robinson’s group would later establish the Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts.[21] Certainly Ainsworth would have preferred to stay in the background, studying and teaching, and let Johnson provide leadership to the volatile congregation; but circumstances, and perhaps the very nature of such a

purist and zealous religious group, would make this impossible.

The first controversy was a family dispute that went public and divided the congregation.[22] This quarrel began when Francis Johnson and his younger brother, George, both Cambridge-educated men, were still in England, incarcerated because of their Separatist views, and it resumed in the waning years of the sixteenth century as they sought refuge in the Netherlands. In 1594 Francis Johnson had married a woman named Tomison, a widow with expensive and fashionable tastes—not exactly the ideal picture of a strict Separatist pastor's wife. Francis's brother George was scandalized by Tomison's "extravagant attire," as well as her "flippant behavior" and "scandalous speech"; he was outspoken in condemning her behavior as sinful and disreputable. Francis countered that his brother George was "overzealous, mentally unbalanced, and endlessly argumentative."[23] The dispute escalated and continued intermittently over the ensuing four years, until Francis, frustrated that no one in the congregation was willing to pronounce George excommunicated (as was required in these Separatist groups),[24] proceeded to make the pronouncement himself.[25] When their father, John Johnson, arrived from England to try to reconcile the brothers in 1602, Francis also eventually excommunicated him,[26] and his father left him with a curse for his filial ingratitude. This episode was just one example of the chronic tumult which existed in the Ancient Separatist Church.

Ainsworth, along with several church elders, found himself in the middle of this no-win situation, caught between two forceful, vehement personalities. George accused Ainsworth of dishonesty, double-dealing, and lack of leadership in a book that he published in his own defense. Sometime after George Johnson was excommunicated, Ainsworth himself became the subject of a congregational dispute. The Separatist congregations refused to allow persons who had committed the apostasy of conforming to Anglican worship to hold positions of leadership in the church. To his great embarrassment, and that of the pastor Francis Johnson, it became known that Ainsworth had committed precisely such a lapse, and not only once, but at least twice![27]

After much effort on the part of Johnson, Ainsworth survived this controversy, but it led to the excommunication of John Johnson and another schism. In fact, controversy was a constant feature of a congregation that set unattainable standards of purity. Another storm broke when John Smyth, known as the "se-baptist" because he baptized himself, temporarily associated himself with the congregation, giving rise to a work by Ainsworth defending the Ancient Separatist Church and condemning Smyth's views, which were moving toward Anabaptism.[28] In addition to controversies with other Separatists, Ainsworth

also defended the cause of separation against its critics, such as John Paget, and engaged in a more irenic debate with a Roman Catholic, John Ainsworth (apparently no relation), primarily over the Protestant principle of sola Scriptura.29

But a new storm rent the small congregation again, one that was related at least in principle to the case of George and John Johnson. Francis, probably wanting to consolidate his authority over his fractious flock, argued that the elders had the exclusive right to discipline members and pronounce the sentence of excommunication. Others, including Ainsworth, held that the entire congregation must exercise this duty. Despite an attempt at mediation by John Robinson from Leiden, this controversy could not be resolved, and the result was that Ainsworth, along with an unknown number of supporters, seceded from the congregation. This led to further polemics between the supporters of Johnson and partisans of Ainsworth. Johnson's congregation eventually lost the title to their church building and removed to Emden, around 1613.30 Ainsworth was chosen as the pastor of his group, but in keeping with his purist, practically Donatist ecclesiology, he continued to engage in polemics with his former pastoral colleague, arguing against Johnson that Roman Catholic baptism was invalid.31 Ainsworth was not to enjoy a peaceful pastorate in which he could study quietly, as he likely desired. Moody records that "discord clouded his final days," and he died during another dispute about whether a man from a semi-Separatist group in London was pure enough for membership.32

Ainsworth's Rationale and Method in the Annotations

While the Separatist congregation in Amsterdam was battling foes without and imploding within, Ainsworth nonetheless managed somehow to produce works of biblical scholarship that would outlive and, arguably, outshine his ecclesiastical separatism: his *Annotations* on the Pentateuch. He also produced annotations on the Psalms and the Song of Solomon, and perhaps other exegetical works now lost, but we will restrict our attention to his works on the Books of Moses.33 It is possible that these *Annotations* came directly from his classes in the congregation, especially given that Ainsworth divides each book into sections or "lectures."34

Prefaced to his *Annotations* is Ainsworth's explanation and justification of the method he employs in this work, as well as an introduction to the Pentateuch. He begins by calculating the date of the birth of Moses to "about 2432 yeeres after the creation of the World: and before our Saviour Christs comming into the flesh, 1496 years." Creation, then, Ainsworth would date to 3928 BC. The books of Moses he summarizes as "containing a briefe History of things past; a

covenant between God and his Church then present; and a prophesie of further grace to come, which is now exhibited by Jesus Christ." Ainsworth provides a very brief summation of each of the five books:

> In his first book, he wrote the generations of the heavens and the earth, and of mankind: which we therefore (of the Greeke word) call *Genesis*, that is, *Generation.* In the second, hee set down the *departure* of Israel out of Egypt, with the covenant which God plighted with them, the same yeere that they went out: which book was thereupon named *Exodus.* In the third, he describeth the sacrifices and service of God, under the Levitical Priesthood, called accordingly, *Leviticus.* In the fourth, he reckoned the Numbers of the tribes, and of the journies from Egypt to Canaan, with the order wherein God setled that Common-wealth of Israel, whiles they were travelling towards their Rest: which booke is therefore called Numbers. In the fift, he wrote a repetition of the Law, and covenant which God had given unto Israel, and the confirmation of the same: whereof it is named (according to the Greeke) *Deuteronomie.* In the propounding of all these things, Moses hath a veile drawn over his bright and glorious face: for in the histories are implied Allegories, and in the Lawes are types and shadowes of good things that were to come; the body wereof, is of Christ. In *Genesis* (which history endeth with the going down of Israel into Egypt) we have the image of naturall man, fallen from God, into the bondage of sin. In *Exodus,* is the type of our regeneration, and state renewed by Jesus Christ. In *Leviticus,* the shadow of our mortification, whilest we are made sacrifices unto God. In *Numbers,* the figure of our spiritual warfare; whereunto we are mustered, and armed to fight the good fight of faith. In *Deuteronomie*, the doctrine of our sanctification, and preparation to enter into our heavenly Canaan (after Moses death) by the conduct of Jesus the son of God.[35]

Ainsworth says that Moses did not expound his own opinions but the Law that the Lord delivered by His own hand, afterward confirmed by the prophets and approved by Jesus Christ, who says that a person who fails to believe Moses and the prophets will not believe even if someone rises from the dead (Luke 16:29–31):

> But because his writings were the *Old Testament*, under which the New was veiled; and which many reading, even to this day have a veile laid upon their heart, so that they cannot fasten their eyes upon the end of that which is abolished: therefore God sent the Prophets following, yea his owne Son, and his Apostles, to open and explain the mysteries, which Moses had

> closely and briefly penned: that now by their helpe, and through the Spirit of the Lord, we may all with unveiled faces, behold as in a glasse, the glory of the Lord; and perceive how the Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth come by Jesus Christ.[36]

Reflecting the ideal of the *Hebraica veritas*, Ainsworth privileges the Hebrew text as having the greater authority:

> The literal sense of Moses Hebrew (which is the tongue wherein he wrote the Law) is the ground of all interpretation; & that language hath figures and propieties [i.e., "proprieties," conventions or peculiarities] of speech, different from ours: those therefore in the first place are to be opened; that the naturall meaning of the Scripture being knowne, the mysteries of godliness therein implied, may the better be discerned. This may be attained in a great measure, by the Scriptures themselves; which being compared, doe open one another.

The latter is Ainsworth's most commonly mentioned and employed method for clarifying obscurities in the text, and he provides a number of examples.[37]

Sometimes, Ainsworth notes, words are left out in the laconic Hebrew text that the English translator has to supply by using common sense. And while Ainsworth does not generally engage in polemics in his *Annotations*, here in the preface he does talk about the necessity for translators to clarify the sometimes obscure brevity of the original by adding a clarifying word or two, and he adds,

> This may helpe in weighty Controversies: as, *Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake*, Mat. 26.26. here some imagining a Transubstantiation of the bread blame those that translate, *he brake it*, as adding to the Scripture: whereas such additions are necessarily understood, many a hundred time in the Bible; and the same Apostle elsewhere saith, Christ *blessed and brake*, Mat. 14.19. when another writeth, *he blessed them and brake*, Luke 9.16. which a third evangelist explaineth, *he blessed and brake the loaves* (or *bread*) Mar. 6.41.[38]

Even here, however, Ainsworth does not delve deeply into debate, though he clearly considers the unnamed proponent of transubstantiation and critic of the translators to be in the wrong. In his annotations, he restricts himself to the philological task at hand, yet expressly for the purpose of providing tools for those who would construct their own arguments, sermons, or lessons.

But there is no ambiguity about Ainsworth's position with respect to controversies between Protestants and Roman Catholics. After observing that the ancient writers use forms of rhetoric that are similar to those in the English

language, such as various species of questions, Ainsworth notes that the Scriptures can refer to a single person when in fact the reference may be to more than one. Thus Jesus sometimes "spake to Peter singularly, that which was intended also to the rest, in Mat. 16.17.19 compared with Ioh. 20.22,23. which some not observing, would restrain the keyes of the kingdome unto Peter onely." Those who fail to observe this convention, clearly, would be the Roman Catholics who insist the keys lie with the pope, whom they claim as the singular successor of Peter.[39]

Ainsworth also warns interpreters to discern carefully which phrases are to be understood more inclusively, and which are to be understood more exclusively. Of the former, Ainsworth provides uncontroversial examples (Christ makes his enemies a footstool, that is, *all* his enemies). But sometimes terms need to be restrained in their application, and here Ainsworth provides potential ammunition for doctrinal controversy. The term *all,* he says, is sometimes used for very many, and the term *none,* for very few. Thus when we read in John 1:16 that all have received grace after grace, this means "all we which believe."[40] As one may gather from his other writings, Ainsworth is no Arminian, and he would restrict the term "all" in certain passages to those who believe, that is, to the elect.[41] Again, Ainsworth observes that praying *before* the Lord means praying *to* the Lord, and then laments: "yet many at this day, though they pray and doe worship *before* images and idols; they will not bee a knowne that they pray or doe worship *unto* them."[42] His *Annotations*, then, while largely non-polemical, are by no means confessionally neutral. Ainsworth's theological position is decidedly Protestant, and more particularly, English Reformed, and of the "hotter sort."

Moreover, as Ainsworth proceeds to demonstrate how comparing passages can illuminate otherwise obscure facts such as the amounts of ancient Hebrew measures and the meanings of some obscure terms, he adds that sometimes this comparison will even yield "mysteries," that is, spiritual meanings in the text. Thus the Hebrew phrase in 2 Samuel 7:23, הָלְכוּ־אֱלֹהִים, literally means "gods went," which, Ainsworth observes, would sound "to a paynim [pagan], as if there were many Gods," if it were not for another text that describes the same event, 1 Chronicles 17:21, which uses the plural noun *Elohim* with the singular verb (הָלַךְ הָאֱלֹהִים); and Ainsworth concludes that this text "refuteth the plurality of Gods, though closely teaching the trinity of persons in the Godhead," presumably because the term for the deity is plural in form yet singular in grammatical function. Ainsworth finds mysteries in slight differences that many might overlook or consider inconsequential. He compares David's phrase "for your Word's sake" in 2 Samuel 7:21 with the parallel passage in 1 Chronicles

17:19, which records “for your servant’s sake,” and he asserts that such a comparison shows that David meant “for Christ’s sake,” for “Christ is both *the word,* Ioh 1.1. and *the Servant* of God, Mat.12.18–21.” The fact that David’s sons are called “priests” (כֹּהֲנִים) in 1 Samuel 8:18, but “chiefs at the king’s hand” (הָרִאשֹׁנִים לְיַד הַמֶּלֶךְ) in 1 Chronicles 18:17, also has Christological significance: “We may hereby learn the office of Christ our *Cohen,* both *Prince* and *Priest,* who now sitteth at the right hand of the throne of the Majestie (of God) in the heavens, Heb. 8.1.”[43]

In the preface, Ainsworth’s distinctive understanding of the function of the biblical text, and thus the reason that he chooses the method of annotations, becomes clear. For Ainsworth, meticulous attention to the literal sense of the text, which he intends his annotations to facilitate, actually has the potential to reveal mystical or spiritual meanings that were hidden to Moses under the “veil,” as well as to refute false doctrines. For “by a true and sound literall explication, the spirituall meaning may the better be discerned.” In addition, Christ affirmed that not a jot or tittle of the law shall pass away, and thus every detail of the text, even the Old Testament text, has potential to yield divine wisdom. Thus while the “exquisite scanning of words and phrases,” that is, the meticulous analysis of textual details, may strike some readers as pointless, Ainsworth quips, it may be as profitable to the reader as it was painstaking to the writer. Careful attention to phrases, for example, should prevent readers from interpreting Jacob’s words of blessing in Genesis 48:16, “May they be called by my name and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac,” as justification for prayer to the dead, that is, calling *on* the names of the patriarchs rather than being called *by* the names of these fathers of the faith.[44]

While privileging the Hebrew text, Ainsworth also notes that in his *Annotations* he has compared the Hebrew with the Greek and Chaldee (Aramaic) versions. He observes that the apostles favored the Septuagint, and they often follow not only its words but its theological sense. Ainsworth lists numerous examples of passages in which the Septuagint clarifies or interprets occasional obscurities in the Hebrew version, and how New Testament authors follow the Greek translation.

Ainsworth’s liberal use of rabbinic versions was certainly more controversial in an age where there was still significant ambivalence or outright mistrust of Jewish exegesis. In *The Orthodox Foundation of Religion,* Ainsworth adduced three means to obtaining knowledge of God’s Word: prayer, meditation, and “conversation with the wise and learned.”[45] Clearly Ainsworth counted the rabbinic interpreters among the latter. In the preface to his annotations, he provides two reasons for his use of the Chaldee paraphrase and rabbinic

interpreters, and particularly Maimonides, his favorite. The first is “to give light to the ordinances of Moses touching the externall practice of them in the common wealth of Israel, which the Rabbines did record, and without whose help, many of those legall rites (especially in Exodus and Leviticus) will not easily be understood.” Ainsworth mentions the rite of the Passover and the use of phylacteries in particular as areas in which the rabbis can provide helpful historical context for understanding the gospels. He concedes, however, that with regard to the theological exposition of the Old Testament rites and ceremonies, “the later Rabbins are for the most part blinde.”[46]

The second reason for Ainsworth’s copious use of rabbinic exegesis is to demonstrate how frequently their own interpretations serve to confirm New Testament teachings, albeit sometimes to their own condemnation: “And so the testimony of the adversary, against himself, helpeth our faith.” Ainsworth again provides a number of examples, including the Aramaic paraphrase of Psalm 50:3 (cf. Heb. 49:3), which makes reference to the day of judgment (*yom dina rabba*, יום דינא רבא).[47] The Jews employed this interpretation against the Sadducees, and, Ainsworth argues, this interpretation lies behind Jude 6, which speaks of fallen angels being bound for the great day of judgment (εἰς κρίσιν μεγάλης ἡμέρας). Other examples of how rabbinic interpretation has entered the New Testament include the use of the terms “paradise” for heaven and “gehenna” for hell. Ainsworth mentions the second century Rabbi Jonathan as having applied the term “second death,” used in the book of Revelation, to an apostate Israel in connection with Isaiah 65:6–15. The Aramaic paraphrase even anticipates the concept of Christ as God’s Word, as in its rendering of Psalm 110:1.[48] The New Testament calls the devil “the accuser,” as does “R. Menachem” (Recanati) in his comments on Leviticus 25. Ainsworth also mentions a Rabbi “Bochai,” who is Bahya ben Asher, whose Torah commentary saw frequent printings in Europe.[49] Paul, in calling circumcision a seal, follows the usage of the rabbis, and here Ainsworth cites Maimonides’s treatise on circumcision, chapter 3.[50] Allowing his confessional commitments to show through again, Ainsworth uses rabbinic evidence to demonstrate that the circumcision of infants was also a “baptism with fire,” that is, a spiritual baptism, and not merely a carnal sign, as the opponents of infant baptism claim.[51] He notes that the Egyptian sorcerers Jannes and Jambres, whom Paul mentions in 2 Timothy 3:8, are recorded in the Talmud and other Jewish sources. Thus rabbinic exegesis will not only help to clarify certain passages, but also to “end some controversies.” But Ainsworth informs his readers that he will largely pass over Jewish “fables” that are as unprofitable as they are plentiful, though with some exceptions, leaving them to “further consideration of the prudent.”

Ainsworth informs the reader that because he is providing annotations and not a commentary, he will pass over the comments of the "Christian Fathers and Doctors." Annotations, he observes, require brevity. Moreover, Ainsworth reserves the right to cite "heathen writers" on rare occasions, to help illuminate ancient history, or even when they witness to the truth of God.

The ultimate purpose of his *Annotations* is "the stirring of people in the study and understanding of Gods law." The Hebrew text is characteristically laconic, and this brevity can lead to obscurity. The student of the Scriptures, however, should not be alarmed that the Hebrew text necessarily will require a more expansive, copious exposition. Ainsworth cites Menachem Recanati's adage that the "*Law has seventie faces* (that is, 70 manner of wayes to be opened and applied) *and all of them trueth.*"52 In contrast to other interpreters—John Paget, for example—Ainsworth exhibits a considerably higher level of tolerance for ambiguity, and for leaving questions of interpretation open to the discernment of the reader.53 Characteristically, Ainsworth concludes his preface by urging readers not to accept his notations uncritically, but to test them for themselves.

In Defense of Judaica

In addition to this preface, Ainsworth appended to his *Annotations* on Deuteronomy another section of methodological apology, entitled "An Advertisement to the Reader, touching some Objections made against the sinceritie of the Hebrew Text, and Allegation of the Rabbins, in the former Annotations."54 The purpose of this excursus was to defend the Hebrew text as the Jews had preserved it throughout the centuries, as well as to argue for the value of Jewish exegesis and tradition for Christian interpreters of the Bible. The Christian exegete, of course, must use discernment and take care to discount what Ainsworth (and many other Christian exegetes) referred to as Jewish myths and fables, as well as anti-Christian polemic and interpretations that did not accord with a Christian understanding of the Old Testament. Here Ainsworth touches upon a growing debate about the Masoretic text, in which Christian Hebraists were beginning to take varying positions on the status of the Hebrew vowel points.55

Ainsworth immediately takes a defensive posture in the "Advertisement." He relates that he had been the subject of criticism for his method. All exegetes should expect such criticism, some of which arises from a spirit of envy, and the ever-present "Carpers and Opposers" who always complain against "Gods Labourers." In addition to the criticisms of Hugh Broughton (a subject to which we will return), Ainsworth also found himself targeted in the sights of John Paget, who appends to his work attacking Ainsworth's separatism a lengthy

treatise against the latter's largely positive use of rabbinic works, entitled "An Admonition Touching Talmudique and Rabbinical Allegations."[56] Paget concedes that the Talmud can be used with profit, but only for the limited purpose of aiding with lexical problems, or more chiefly, to demonstrate the error of the Jews, toward whom Paget is unrelentingly hostile. He makes clear his annoyance at Ainsworth's positive use of Jewish sources, with which he became familiar both in his epistolary controversy with Ainsworth over the latter's separatism, and in his reading of Ainsworth's *Annotations* on Genesis and Exodus.[57]

In addition to the fact that Paget was horrified by Ainsworth's willingness to liberally cite the rabbis in a positive fashion,[58] one of his more specific criticisms was that he engaged in "canonizing the divers readings that are in the line [i.e. the *Ketiv* reading] and in the margine [the *Qere*] of the Masorites Bible."[59] The fact that Ainsworth gives any credence to marginal variations betrays his addiction to Jewish forgeries, and causes him, according to his adversary, to make God into a two-faced, self-contradicting "Janus Bifrons."[60] For Paget, the marginal readings are proof of the corruptions of the text by the Jews, and particularly the later Jewish interpreters. Paget displays considerable knowledge of Hebrew and Judaica, especially for his time, but his approach to the *Qere* and *Ketiv* variations seems naïve when compared to Ainsworth's vigorous rejoinder.

There are, Ainsworth observes, over 800 occurrences of marginal variations in the Hebrew text. The wisest course, he contends, is to accept that both the readings of the line and the margin carry divine authority. It is a mistake to consider these variations a corruption in the text. Ainsworth cites examples of how major English translations (Coverdale, Geneva, and the recently published King James) have sometimes followed the line (*Ketiv*) and at other times, the marginal reading (*Qere*). It is a matter of discernment to decide which reading is best, and learned interpreters can sometimes disagree, or, as in the case of Junius, even change their minds.[61]

Ainsworth mounts a remarkable defense, not only of Jewish exegesis, but of the Jewish people themselves. He enumerates eight reasons why it is a mistake to consider variant readings to be sinister Jewish corruptions. First, such a presumption impugns God's providence in preserving His own revelation, and the ignorance behind such charges constitutes a poor Christian witness to the Jews. In addition, Paul himself (Rom. 3:1–2) confirms that one of the main privileges of the Jews was that God entrusted them with His oracles; Christians received the Word of God from the Jews, and it was not a corrupted text that they received. Third, Ainsworth testifies to the general integrity of the Jewish

people, despite their rejection of Christianity. And in fact, the Jews are extremely meticulous about the text of the Bible, as Ainsworth demonstrates by citing Maimonides.62 Indeed, Ainsworth believes that the Jews even provided hints of Christian teachings, such as the doctrine of the Trinity, in their own exegesis, though they fail to realize it.63 This attitude stands in marked contrast to Paget's anti-Jewish prejudice, evident in his remarks about the Masorete's textual markings: "as for the Jew doctours, they plot with these prickes a crowne of thornes for the head of the Lord."64

Demonstrating his independent judgment, Ainsworth disagrees with Kimchi and Arius Montanus that the variant readings are corruptions arising out of the Babylonian captivity.65 Both of these authors sometimes affirm the marginal reading, and are therefore inconsistent. His fifth argument is that Christ criticized the Jewish religious leaders for their misinterpretation of the text, not its corruption. Sixth, Ainsworth observes that the marginal readings do not in any way lend support to "humane superstition." Seventh, the marginal readings are in a number of cases approved by the Holy Spirit himself, and even confirmed in the New Testament, for example, when James 4:6 and 1 Peter 5:5 refer to Proverbs 3:34, they follow the marginal reading וְלַעֲנָוִים (humble or lowly) rather than the *Ketiv* וְלַעֲנִיִּים (poor or afflicted). Finally, Ainsworth observes that Jewish interpreters respect both readings and use their discretion to determine the best translation, just as all contemporary Christian translators have done. Ainsworth cites examples from Spanish, Dutch, German, and Latin versions, as well as those in his own English tongue. Scholars such as Tremellius, Junius, and Vatable, as well as commentators such as Calvin, Vermigli, and Jerome, and ancient sources such as the Old Latin, the Chaldee, and the second century Rabbi Jonathan—all of these sources make a choice about whether to use the reading in the line or the variant in the margin.66

Paget had tried to undermine the *Qere* readings by asserting that some editions of the Hebrew Bible do not include them. Ainsworth responds that just because some omit them does not mean they are not there.67 Nor does translating one or the other necessarily deprive the reader of the opportunity to decide for oneself, since the variants are often preserved in notes.68 To Paget's objection that giving credence to the marginal readings amounts to making God into a self-contradicting Janus, Ainsworth responds that if this were the case, all translations, including the Septuagint as quoted by the New Testament, would be corrupt. A Jew could use the same argument to malign the New Testament,

which sometimes follows the marginal reading. Moreover, Ainsworth, unlike Paget, is comfortable with multiple valid interpretations of a text. He observes that other interpreters, both Hebrew and Christian, have identified multiple referents in a single text.[69]

After handily dispatching a few more of Paget's objections, Ainsworth provides another excursus, "Of the Hebrew Records." Here he provides a historical overview of the Jewish interpreters, beginning with R. Judah Hamnasi and the development of the Talmud, proceeding to Maimonides, whom Ainsworth respects as a more sober and literal exegete, Jonathan, and Onkelos. He also observes that the Jewish apocryphal writings, while not considered canonical, have been commended by protestant authors as edifying. Finally, Ainsworth concludes the "Advertisement" by defending his interpretation of the stones in Aaron's breastplate, and their correlation with the twelve tribes of Israel, and particularly his translation of the obscure and still uncertain term יַהֲלֹם as "sardonix," a transliteration of the Greek σαρδόνυξ, on the basis of Revelation 21:20. Paget argued that the term should be translated as adamant or diamond.[70] Ainsworth responds with a number of counter-arguments, but for him the decisive point is that the stones that decorate the foundation of the New Jerusalem are based on the stones in Aaron's breastplate. Decisive for Ainsworth is the principle of Scripture interpreting Scripture.

A Minimalist Approach

True to his stated method, Ainsworth in his *Annotations* largely avoids delving into the time-honored debates that exegetes had engaged in over the centuries. In this regard his exposition diverges most conspicuously from the method of Andrew Willet, who, in his *Hexapla* commentaries, exhaustively investigates every textual, interpretive, and theological controversy that he encounters in the text, and cites various opposing views among patristic, medieval, and contemporary exegetes. Ainsworth's interest is in the rabbinic sources and the proper understanding of the Hebrew language and customs, and he avoids rehearsing or commenting upon the interpretive wrangling of exegetes throughout the history of biblical exposition. Even compared with another English author of Pentateuchal annotations, Bishop Gervase Babington (1550–1610), Ainsworth's avoidance of controversy and his concision stand out.

When, for example, these three exegetes come across the story of the midwives lying to cover their disobedience of Pharaoh's infanticidal instructions in Exodus 1:19, a passage that gives rise to a theological debate over the so-called *mendacium officiosum*, the dutiful lie, Willet cites opinions on the subject from Augustine, Gregory the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Rupert of Deutz,

Franciscus Junius, Conrad Pellikan, Josias Simmler, and François Vatable.[71] Babington is much less detailed, but he still weighs in on the traditional debate over whether it is ever permissible or justifiable to lie. Babington comments,

> In the Midwives we may see the weakenes of our natures, for they should not have lyed for anie fear: therefore though a good deede be done, yet it is ill defended. We may not lie, saith the scripture, to justify God, much lesse for anie other cause. This weakness then in these good women was like a spot in a faire face [Babington then cites an alleged passage of Augustine in Latin, and translates:] "To preserve alive the children, was a worke of mercie, but to lie for the safetie of their lives, was a work of infirmitie, which yet God pardoned by grace, and none, saving unthankfull and crooked persons, will ever propose it to themselves to be imitated."[72]

Babington is clearly in dialogue with the exegetical tradition, and his comments echo those of John Calvin quite closely, who likewise echoed Augustine in rejecting the permissibility of a dutiful lie. This is particularly the case when Babington adds this "comfortable" assurance: "God rejected not the good that was in these women for the imperfection that was mingled with it, but pardoning what was weake, gratiously rewardeth what was well."[73]

Ainsworth, in his annotations on Exodus 1:19, as is his regular practice throughout his *Annotations*, completely avoids the controversy, and does not even mention the fact that the midwives told an untruth. Instead, he simply offers a paraphrase from the *Jerusalem Talmud*, to the effect that the midwives reported that the Hebrew mothers prayed to their Father in heaven while in labor, and that God answers them, and they deliver their babies before the midwives arrive.[74] Calvin was also aware of this (or a similar) interpretation, which avoids the controversy by presuming the midwives told the truth; but he had rejected it as a rabbinic "fable" and an inane guess.[75] Ainsworth appears to be more amenable to the rabbinic interpretation, since he reproduces it without criticism. At the same time, Ainsworth frequently admonishes his readers to make their own judgments and to exercise their own discernment.

Because Ainsworth is providing annotations and not a commentary, his intention is limited to providing but one more tool for the interpreter's kit. Even in comparison to Babington's annotations, Ainsworth's work is far leaner, and more dependent on and appreciative of the Jewish interpretive tradition. His *Annotations* on the Song of Solomon, however, are an exception to his usual laconic method. Here, Ainsworth allows himself more latitude to expand on the spiritual meanings and mysteries of the text, which he interprets, rather traditionally, as an allegory of Christ's love for the church. Ainsworth has the

advantage, however, of realizing that the Jewish rabbis interpreted this poetic book in similar terms, as the Lord's love song for Israel, and particularly in terms of the Lord's love as embodied in the gift of his Law to Israel. Ainsworth, citing frequently the Aramaic paraphrase and Rashi's commentary, finds much to agree with, while transposing these interpretations into a Christian framework. Thus, for example, he prefers to identify the gospel—rather than the Law—as the Lord's primary gift of love. But Ainsworth cites other Old and New Testament passages more frequently than he cites the rabbis, employing his principle of interpreting Scripture by Scripture. He tends to agree with Jewish Messianic interpretations of the text, referring them to Jesus Christ. And one can perhaps detect hints of Ainsworth's ecclesiastical woes in his frequent depiction of the persecuted church, as distinct from false churches and false pastors, though these themes are also present throughout the Christian exegetical tradition and, as Ainsworth demonstrates, also in Jewish interpretations.[76]

Of Wool and Worms

While Ainsworth's annotations exhibit an avoidance of polemic, Ainsworth himself was embroiled in scholarly and ecclesiastical disputes throughout his life. A heated exchange between Ainsworth and the English Hebraist Hugh Broughton, himself no stranger to controversy, demonstrates how fiercely Ainsworth could engage in debate, and how his philology and theology were intertwined.[77]

Ainsworth's *Annotations* included long citations of rabbinic commentary, often reproduced without comment, which seems to indicate his assent to the Jewish opinions therein (though Ainsworth often leaves controversial matters open for his readers to decide). But his heated debate with Broughton, which scholars frequently overlook, indicates he did not always agree with the rabbis, who of course also disagreed among themselves.[78] The bitter dispute between these two English Christian Hebraists was ostensibly over whether the priestly ephod, described in Exodus 28:6, was made of silk or wool. Broughton criticized the translation "silk" in the Bishops' Bible and the Geneva Bible, and censured Ainsworth for following these translations.[79] For neither of these Christian Hebraists was the composition of the ephod a minor detail. At stake was their respective prestige as learned interpreters of the Hebrew Bible and ancient Hebrew customs, and perhaps more.

Broughton had argued that the ephod was made of wool, because the silkworm was considered an unclean creature, and he cited the *Jerusalem Talmud* in support. Ainsworth replied, citing numerous authorities,[80] that in fact silk was the material in question, or at least a silk-like fabric. Ainsworth defines

silk rather broadly, and this tends to make the debate rather difficult to follow.[81] Even if the silkworm was unclean (and this was debatable, he argued), it did not follow that the product of the worm was unworthy of use, especially after cleaning and processing such material. Silk was no more unworthy of everyday or even ceremonial use than honey from the unclean bee, or the hide of the equally taboo camel; the latter, he noted, composed the hair shirt worn by John the Baptist.

While Broughton had the Talmud on his side, Ainsworth has no difficulty dismissing that interpretation as nothing but the "Rabbines superstition," which is contradicted by Scripture, other biblical interpreters, and even other rabbis.[82] When the rabbinic authorities seem to differ from the teaching of Scripture, their opinions are to be rejected.[83] Ainsworth did not follow the rabbinic authorities slavishly; for example, he rejects the Aramaic paraphrase three times in his exposition of Song of Songs 2:3, on a matter of translation, a matter of interpretation, and a matter of application.[84] In his dispute with Broughton he proceeds to consider a number of different textiles used through the ages, and emphasizes that it is doubtful that "linsey wolsey" (a blend of linen and cotton) could be used in the ephod, since blended fabrics were forbidden according to Hebrew law.[85] He makes reference to a "wool" mentioned by Pliny "even such as groweth on trees," probably a reference to flax or cotton. In any case, the high priest's garments might be made of some such fabric that was of higher quality than European linen and could be called silk or fine linen.[86]

Broughton responds with an insult to Ainsworth's intelligence and scholarship, and then brings up an apparently unrelated matter regarding the numbering of the commandments. On this latter point, he accuses Ainsworth of consulting not Maimonides himself, but cribbing from Münster.[87] In his reply Ainsworth reports that he and Broughton had run into each other at the printer's and had exchanged words over the issue—a noteworthy fact, since Broughton was only known to reside in Middelburg, not Amsterdam, though it is likely that he was only there because Amsterdam was a crucial center of Nonconformist English publishing. Ainsworth notes that while he could have borne Broughton's accusations of false teaching in silence, he cannot stand by and allow such a reproach to fall "upon al this poor church of Christ with me," that is, his refugee congregation. He also denies that he ever retracted his views. Nor were his remarks an attack on Broughton's person (though Ainsworth surely formed some opinions about Broughton's character and motives), but simply an opinion on the philological and translation questions at stake.

Ainsworth argues that meanings of the English terms "linen" and "silk" are broad; the term silk could mean either the product of the silkworm or some

naturally growing fine textile.88 He defends his competency in Hebrew and claims he learns from "a learned Ebrew Tremellius," and concedes that while he consulted Münster on Maimonides's view of the commandments, Broughton should focus on the content of the argument, not the source (though the source, in this case, is not easy to determine).89 Ainsworth's admission that his knowledge of the rabbinic works is (at least in this case) mediated through others is curious, given that in his *Annotations* he includes lengthy and frequent citations of Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah,* and that work did not exist at the time in any translation other than Hebrew; it was translated into Latin in the late seventeenth century and only printed at the turn of the eighteenth.90 Aaron Katchen credits Ainsworth as the first non-Jewish Christian Hebraist to comprehensively understand and use the *Mishneh Torah.*91 Abraham Schper contends that Ainsworth quoted at length from original rabbinic Hebrew sources, and it is difficult to conclude otherwise.92 William Bradford reported that faculty members at Leiden attested that Ainsworth's ability in Hebrew had no better at the university, or for that matter in all of Europe.93

In Broughton's rejoinder, some of the reasons for his hostility toward Ainsworth come to the surface. Broughton again accuses Ainsworth of not really reading the Hebrew treatises themselves. And he provides hints of how these apparently obscure discussions of ancient textiles related immediately to controverted ecclesiastical practices. He mentions "our Copes imitating Aaron's ephod, have the silk of the worme," which likely alludes to criticism of Anglican clerical vestments, one of the hallmarks of English Puritan and Nonconformist polemic.94 Broughton then launches into a full-scale attack on what he considers Ainsworth's sectarianism. "Your Judaisme, that condemne all our *Christian churches* as godless buildings, hath lost al right of disputing." He attacks the refusal of Ainsworth's congregation to recite the Lord's Prayer "according to the expresse commandment," as well as the practice of excommunicating those baptized in the Dutch Reformed Church. These "Athean" (godless) practices demonstrate, according to Broughton's less than subtle charge, that "you are not a church but a synagogue of Satan." Not only is Ainsworth a "wicked excommunicatour and blasphemer of the Christians," so Broughton accuses, but in fact Ainsworth plagiarized his best work from Broughton's writings.95 Ultimately, however, Broughton's animus against Ainsworth is lodged in the latter's refusal to recognize the legitimacy of the English church (despite Broughton's own troubled relationship with that same institution).

At this point Ainsworth exposes his bias against English vestments, for he charges Broughton with fleeing to the cope "as if the Bible had been translated out of the Popes ward-robe." After reiterating his views on ancient textiles,

Ainsworth proceeds to defend his congregation against Broughton's accusations by launching a full-scale attack on the English church, which in Ainsworth's judgment is no church at all:

> We witnesse against the corrupt & false estate of your English Cathedral & parish assemblies, 1. as not being a communion of Saincts, a people caled & separated from the world, & brought into covenant with God; 2. as not worshiping him aright in spirit & truth according to his own law, but after human inventions; 3. as not having the ecclesiastical regiment & ministerie prescribed in Christs testament, but an other received from the Romane Antichrist.96

Ainsworth refers Broughton to the confession of faith that he (and likely Francis Johnson) published on behalf of his congregation in 1596 for further demonstrations of his position that the Church of England is no true church.97

He goes on to justify the use of extemporaneous rather than prescribed prayers. The Lord's Prayer is a pattern for Christian prayer, not a prescription to be followed verbatim; it is the practice of the papists, rather, to have set forms of prayer with their *Ave Maria* and their *Pater Noster.* Ainsworth condemns the "popish leitourgies" used by the English Church and its practice of prescribing "lawes and formes for prayer, other then [sic] his Testament alloweth."98 Elsewhere, Ainsworth wittily refers to the Anglican liturgy as a "read and dead service."99 Finally, Ainsworth defends the practice of excommunication in his congregation, declaring that he did not excommunicate singly or by his own authority, but the whole congregation excommunicated various members and with good effect. And while his congregation takes issue with the practice in the Dutch Reformed churches to baptize the children of unbelievers (and other "corruptions" which Ainsworth does not identify), no one was excommunicated for being baptized in the Dutch churches. Ainsworth then turns the accusation back on Broughton, accusing him of cursing the high churchman Archbishop John Whitgift and vainly boasting of having killed him. He concludes with a severe reproach of Broughton's pride, arrogance, and venomous tongue.100

The dispute becomes increasingly inflamed. Broughton charges that Ainsworth, like all heretics, is self-damned. He is incompetent on the matter of Hebrew vowels. He despises all of Christendom. Broughton claims he was right to "excommunicate" Whitgift, and he likewise excommunicates Ainsworth, his language becoming threatening: "all Christian lawes would put you to death." Ainsworth is not only in error about the silkworm, he is less than a worm himself.101 In the remaining twenty-four pages of mutual recrimination, Ainsworth maintains his position, reproving Broughton for his rashness and

vitriol, while at the same time Ainsworth exhibits a sharp rhetorical wit of his own, though he largely avoids the overt malice evident in Broughton.[102]

The Legacy of Henry Ainsworth

Less than two decades after his death, Henry Ainsworth the defensive schismatic was overshadowed by Henry Ainsworth the biblical scholar, as witnessed by the publication of his *Annotations* on the Pentateuch in London, rather than the exile presses of Amsterdam. Indeed, Samuel White writes of Ainsworth: "setting aside his preposterous zeale in the point and practise of separation, hee lived and died unblameable to the world."[103] Certainly, Ainsworth played a pioneering role in opening the world of Jewish biblical scholarship and exegesis to European Christendom, and particularly to the English-speaking world.

To date, this complex individual and important scholar has not been the subject of a scholarly monograph, and much remains to be discovered. For example, the precise sources that Ainsworth utilized in his *Annotations* remain unidentified, and there are likely more critics and adversaries with whom he wrangled. His significance as a churchman is limited by his association with a movement doomed by its own impossibly high standards. His character is a matter of speculation, particularly from the distance of four centuries. Moody finds fault with Ainsworth on this score and seems to paint him as a victim of the extremists around him, but this is a mistake. Ainsworth was just as much a moral perfectionist and religious purist as his coreligionists, and his troubles were the result of his own convictions.[104] Nonetheless, there is no doubting his significance as a Hebraist and as one who opened the world of rabbinic exegesis to his fellow Protestants. Particularly notable is his uncommon appreciation and respect for the rabbis, which stands in marked contrast to the often contemptuous and dismissive perspective that one often observes among his contemporaries. Both Henry Ainsworth the churchman and Henry Ainsworth the biblical scholar hold promise for much more investigation and discovery.

1. Louis Moréri, *Le Grand Dictionaire historique, ou le mélange curieux de l'histoire sacrée et profane* ([Lyons, 1674], rev. and exp. ed., Basel: J. Brandmuller, 1731), 1:157. This often-repeated error is noted in several places, e.g. W. E. A. Axon, "Ainsworth, Henry," in *Dictionary of National Biography,* ed. Leslie Stephen (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1885–1900), 1:191–194 [hereafter cited as *DNB*]. Another example is found in the massive work by publisher J. H. Zedler, *Grosses vollständiges Universal-Lexicon aller Wissenschafften und Künste* (Leipzig, 1732–1754), 1:884.

2. For the sparse surviving details of Ainsworth's life, see the learned, entertaining, and highly partisan account by the anonymous editor prefixed to *Two Treatises by Henry Ainsworth. The First, Of the Communion of Saints. The Second, entitled, An Arrow Against Idolatry, etc. To this edition is prefixed, Some Account of the Life and Writings of the Author* (Edinburgh: D. Paterson, 1789): iv–lxvii (the editor notes "gross blunders" in chronicling Ainsworth's life, xii), and see also the annotated bibliography, lxv–lxix, cited as "Life of Ainsworth"; Daniel Neal, *The History of the Puritans, or Protestant Nonconformists,* rev.

ed. by John Choules (New York: Harper and Brothers, [1732–1738] 1843), 1:198, 242–243, etc.; Benjamin Brook, *The Lives of the Puritans* (London: James Black, 1813), 1:299–303; W. E. A. Axon, "Ainsworth, Henry," *DNB* 1:191–194; W. E. A. Axon and Ernest Axon, "Henry Ainsworth, the Puritan Commentator," *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society* 6 (1888): 42–57; Henry Martyn Dexter, *The Congregationalism of the Last Three Hundred Years as Seen in its Literature* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1880), esp. chaps. 5–7; F. J. Powicke, *Henry Barrow Separatist (1550?–1622) and The Exiled Church of Amsterdam (1593–1622)* (London: James Clarke, 1900); Henry Martyn Dexter and Morton Dexter, *The England and Holland of the Pilgrims* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1905): 423–67, passim; J. de Hoop Scheffer, *History of the Free Churchmen called the Brownists, Pilgrim Fathers and Baptists in the Dutch Republic, 1581–1701*, ed. William E. Griffis (Ithaca, N.Y.: Andrus & Church [1922]), passim; Michael E. Moody, "'A Man of a Thousand': The Reputation and Character of Henry Ainsworth, 1569/70–1622," *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 45, no. 3 (1982): 200–214; Moody, "The Apostasy of Henry Ainsworth: A Case Study in Early Separatist Historiography," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 131/1 (1987): 15–31, cited as "Apostasy"; Moody, "Ainsworth, Henry," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 1:501–504 [hereafter cited as *ODNB*].

3. On Ainsworth's biblical erudition, see Richard A. Muller, "Henry Ainsworth and the Development of Protestant Exegesis in the Early Seventeenth Century," in *After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition* (New York: Oxford, 2003), 156–174.

4. Scholars have paid more attention to Sebastian Münster's cartographic efforts than his work as a Hebraist. See Viktor Hantzsch, *Sebastian Münster. Leben, Werk, wissenschaftliche Bedeutung* (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1965); Matthew McLean, *The* Cosmographia *of Sebastian Münster: Describing the World in the Reformation* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

5. See the edition of Wakefield's *On the Three Languages [1524]*, ed. and trans. G. Lloyd Jones (Binghampton, N.Y.: Renaissance Society of America, 1989).

6. For an overview of Christian engagement with Hebrew and Hebraica, see Pinchas E. Lapide, *Hebrew in the Church: The Foundations of Jewish-Christian Dialogue*, trans. Erroll F. Rhodes (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984). On the development of the interpretation and of doctrine of Scripture in the early Reformed tradition, see Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, vols. 1–2, second ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), esp. vol. 2, *Holy Scripture: The Cognitive Foundation of Theology* [hereafter cited as *PRRD*].

7. See Peter T. van Rooden, *Theology, Biblical Scholarship, and Rabbinical Studies in the Seventeenth Century: Constantijn L'Empereur (1591–1648), Professor of Hebrew and Theology at Leiden* (Leiden: Brill, 1989). Curiously, van Rooden refers to his subject as "a rightly forgotten scholar" who does not "deserve a biography on the grounds of his originality or new concepts developed by him"—a dubious criterion, not to mention self-defeating (1). The author persists in his project, however, in order to illuminate both rabbinical and Old Testament studies in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

8. On Buxtorf, see Stephen G. Burnett, *From Christian Hebraism to Jewish Studies. Johannes Buxtorf (1564–1629) and Hebrew Learning in the Seventeenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1996).

9. On the rise of Hebraic studies in England, see Abraham Schper, "Christian Hebraists in Sixteenth-Century England" (PhD diss., University of London, 1944); G. Lloyd Jones, *The Discovery of Hebrew in Tudor England: A Third Language* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983); Dean Freiday, *The Bible, Its Criticism, Interpretation and Use in 16th and 17th Century England*, Catholic and Quaker Studies 4 (Pittsburgh: Catholic and Quaker Studies, 1979); David S. Katz, *The Jews in the History of England, 1485–1850* (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1994). A helpful summary can be found in Matt Goldish, *Judaism in the Theology of Sir Isaac Newton* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 1998), 17–25. For the impact of Hebrew learning on English letters, see Jeffrey S. Shoulson, *Milton and the Rabbis: Hebraism, Hellenism, & Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001). On Weemse, see Jaisung Shim, "Biblical Hermeneutics and Hebraism in the Early Seventeenth Century as Reflected in the Work of John Weemse (1579–1636)" (PhD diss., Calvin Theological Seminary, 1998).

10. On Perkins's decidedly different approach to the problem of the Elizabethan church settlement, see R. A. Blacketer, "The Rhetoric of Reform: William Perkins on Preaching and the Purification of the Church," in *Scholasticism Reformed: Essays in Honour of Willem J. van Asselt*, ed. Maarten Wisse, Marcel Sarot, and Willemien Otten (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 215–236.

11. Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1967), 125 [hereafter cited as *EPM*]. This is an indispensible study of "Protestants of the hotter sort" in the Elizabethan period. The charge that the Church of England is an institution "but halfly reformed" comes from William Fuller (died c. 1586), the religious purist and onetime confidant of Queen Elizabeth, cited in *EPM*, 29.

12. See Axon and Axon, "Puritan Commentator," and cf. Moody, "Man of a Thousand"; "Apostasy"; and his entry on Ainsworth in *ODNB*.

13. Moody discovered the previously unknown records of Ainsworth's baptism; see "Apostasy," 16 n. 5.

14. *ODNB*, 501–502; see also Moody, "Apostasy," 16. The editor of *Two Treatises* noted in his "Life of Ainsworth" that the compiler of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "a popular work printed at Edinburgh," had mistakenly attributed the title "Dr." to Ainsworth, and adds that "if he had taken the trouble of examining his writings, or those of his friends, he would have found that they condemned all such distinctions conferred on account of supposed excellency in the knowledge of truth," xii–xiii.

15. On this subject, see Joe L. Coker, "'Cast Out from among the Saints': Church Discipline among Anabaptists and English Separatists in Holland, 1590–1620," *Reformation* 11 (2006): 1–27.

16. While 1593 is sometimes given as the date of Ainsworth's exile (e.g. Axon and Axon, "Puritan Commentator," 45), Moody argues that it was closer to 1597. However, John Paget's treatise written against Ainsworth in 1617 includes the rebuke that Ainsworth had lived more than twenty years in Amsterdam "as a neighbour unto the Reformed Churches" and nevertheless misrepresents the practice of those churches; this may indicate an earlier date. See John Paget, *An Arrow against the Separation of the Brownists. Also an Admonition touching Talmudique & Rabbinical Allegations* (Amsterdam: George Veseler, 1618), 119. An important, if favorably biased, source on Ainsworth and the Ancient Separatist Church is Powicke, *Henry Barrow*, see esp. 232–261. Powicke, 244, errs in refusing to accept that Ainsworth had twice conformed to Anglican worship, relying on Bradford's thirdhand accounts; cf. Moody, "Apostasy," 24–25.

17. Roger Williams, *The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience Discussed, and Mr. Cotton's Letter Examined and Answered*, ed. Edward B. Underhill (London: J. Haddon for the Hanserd Knollys Society, 1848), 425–426. Williams's work originally appeared in 1644.

18. "Life of Ainsworth," xv, note, in which the editor reports a marginal annotation to this effect in an edition of Ainsworth's annotations.

19. See Coker, "Church Discipline," 5–6. Ainsworth distinguished the offices of pastor and teacher; see *The Orthodox Foundation of Religion*, ed. Samuel White (London: "R.C.," 1642), 2.

20. Moody, "Man of a Thousand," 201, *ODNB*, 1:502. On Francis Johnson, see *ODNB*, 30:253–254.

21. Axon and Axon, "Puritan Commentator," 46.

22. The details of this extended acrimonious dispute come primarily from the book George Johnson published in his defense, *A Discourse of Some Troubles and Excommunications in the Banished English Church at Amsterdam* (Amsterdam, 1603), which was the subject of a dissertation by Moody, "A Critical Edition of George Johnson's *A Discourse of Some Troubles and Excommunications in the Banished English Church at Amsterdam*, 1603" (PhD diss., Claremont Graduate University, 1979). George Johnson's accusations against Ainsworth appear on pages 183–185 (Moody ed., 448–453), including the accusation that Ainsworth laughed and scoffed at him, 184. His brother Francis called him a "crackbrain," though Francis himself also seems to have been of volatile temperament. In his dissertation, Moody seeks to vindicate George's character and credibility, but it must be remembered that George Johnson's published defense represents only one side of the argument. One cannot reject out of hand the possibility that George may have in fact been a troublemaker, or that he might have been emotionally or psychologically unsound, as Francis claimed.

23. Moody, "Man of a Thousand," 201. On George, see *ODNB*, 30:257–258.

24. Moody, "Critical Edition," xxv; Coker, "Church Discipline," 13–14.

25. Moody, “Critical Edition,” xlvi.

26. Moody, “Apostasy,” 19–20, notes that the cause of excommunication was John’s opposition to Ainsworth retaining his position after his “apostasy” came to light.

27. Moody, “Apostasy,” demonstrates beyond question that these charges were true. Paget, *Arrow against the Separation*, 91, makes the charge, and Ainsworth does not deny it. Instead, he complains revealingly of Paget’s pleasure in bringing up “mens synns and infirmities, yea though they be repented of,” 331.

28. Henry Ainsworth, *A Defence of the Holy Scriptures, Worship, and Ministerie used in the Christian churches separated from Antichrist* (Amsterdam: Giles Thorp, 1609).

29. Henry Ainsworth and John Ainsworth, *The Trying out of the Truth*, etc. (Amsterdam: Giles Thorp, 1615).

30. Moody, “Ainsworth,” *ODNB*, 1:503. Michael R. Watts claims far too much when he asserts that Ainsworth had been convinced by the arguments of John Smythe and for this reason left the congregation. See his *The Dissenters* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978), 1:43–44.

31. Cf. Francis Johnson, *A Christian Plea*, etc. ([Leiden]: [William Brewster,] 1617), with Ainsworth, *A Reply to a Pretended Christian Plea for the Anti-Christian Church of Rome* ([Amsterdam]: [Giles Thorp,] 1620).

32. *ODNB*, 1:504.

33. *Annotations upon the five books of Moses, the book of the Psalmes and the Song of songs, or Canticles* (London: M. Parsons for John Bellamie, 1639). The annotations were originally published separately in Amsterdam by Giles Thorp or his successors: Psalms in 1612, Genesis in 1616, Exodus in 1617, Leviticus in 1618, Numbers and Deuteronomy in 1619, and the Song of Solomon in 1623.

34. E.g. Ainsworth divides Genesis into twelve sections or lectures. He calculates that there are 1,534 verses, and that the midpoint is at Genesis 27:40 (though Ainsworth does not make anything of this fact, see p. 104). *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses* (1639), front matter unpaginated, but would be sig. A6v°.

35. Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses*, [A4r°].

36. Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses*, [A4r°].

37. Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses*, [A4r°]; cf. Ainsworth, *The Orthodox Foundation of Religion*, 5: “The surest way to expound the Scriptures is by the Scriptures themselves, comparing place with place.”

38. Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses*, [A4v°].

39. Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses*, [A4v°–A5r°].

40. Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses*, [A5r°].

41. Cf. *Orthodox Foundation*, 37–40, for Ainsworth’s brief exposition of election and reprobation.

42. Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses*, [A5r°–v°].

43. Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses*, [A5r°].

44. Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses*, [A5r°–v°].

45. Ainsworth, *Orthodox Foundation*, 2. Ainsworth cites Prov. 13:20.

46. *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses*, [A5v°].

47. See Ainsworth’s *Annotations* on Ps. 50:3, p. 78: “So the Chaldee paraphraseth, *The just shall say, In the day of the great judgement, our God will come, and not silent, to execute the vengeance of his people*.”

48. Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses*, [A5v°]; cf. Ainsworth’s *Annotations* on Ps. 110:1, p. 158.

49. Schper, “Christian Hebraists in Sixteenth-Century England,” 208.

50. Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses*, [A5v°]; cf. Schper, “Christian Hebraists in Sixteenth-Century England,” 207.

51. Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses*, [A6r°]. Here Ainsworth cites Menachem Recanati on Lev. 6.

52. Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses*, [A6r°], citing Recanati on Gen. 29 and Ex.

21.

53. Cf. Paget's highly suspicious approach to Hebrew exegesis, discussed below.

54. In the 1639 edition it occurs after the indices to the Pentateuch annotations and before the *Annotations* on the Psalms, sig. Ppppp 6r˚- Qqqqq 6r˚. It originally appeared in his *Annotations upon the fifth book of Moses called Deuteronomie* (1619), sig. Mm 1r°–Oo 2v°.

55. See Muller, *PRRD,* 2:406–413; Muller, "The Debate over the Vowel Points and the Crisis in Orthodox Hermeneutics," in *After Calvin,* 146–155. Ainsworth does not here debate the inspiration of the vowel points themselves.

56. Paget, *Arrow against the Separation,* 339–476. On Paget, see Keith Sprunger's entry in *ODNB,* 42:362–363.

57. Paget, *Arrow against the Separation,* 339.

58. "It is an offensive thing so abundantly to allege such authors for our guides unto the mysteries of religion." Paget asserts that the Jews defile everything they touch with their "glosse," *Arrow against the Separation,* 340.

59. Paget, *Arrow against the Separation,* 372. Paget's argument that the variant readings are proof of Jewish corruption of the text span pp. 372–404.

60. Paget, *Arrow against the Separation,* 372. Ainsworth responds directly to this charge in his "Advertisement" (1639 ed.), Qqqqq 3r°.

61. Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses,* sig. Ppppp 6r°–v°.

62. Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses,* sig. Ppppp 6v°–Qqqqq 1r°.

63. See Ainsworth's citation of Solomon Jarchi (Rashi) in Ainsworth, *Solomon's Song of Songs in English Metre, with Annotations,* etc. (1639 ed.), 13 (on 1:11); and cf. his citation of the Chaldee (Aramaic) paraphrase on 1:17, which foresees a sanctuary built for the Messianic king, which Ainsworth refers to as Christ, 16.

64. Paget, *Arrow against the Separation,* 400.

65. Cf. Paget, *Arrow against the Separation,* 377.

66. Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses,* sig. Qqqqq 1r°–Qqqqq 2r°.

67. Cf. Paget, *Arrow against the Separation,* 372–373, with Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses,* sig. Qqqqq 3v°.

68. *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses,* sig. Qqqqq 2r°.

69. *Annotations upon the five bookes of Moses,* sig. Qqqqq 3r°.

70. Paget, *Arrow against the Separation,* 464.

71. Andrew Willet, *Hexapla in Exodum, that is, A sixfold commentary upon the second booke of Moses called Exodus* (London, 1633), 13.

72. Gervase Babington, *Comfortable notes vpon the bookes of Exodus and Leuiticus* (London: Printed [by H. Lownes and T. Purfoot] for Thomas Chard, 1604), 12–13. The Latin citation reads, "Vivos conservare natos fuit misericordiae, at pro vita sua mentitas esse, opus fuit infirmitatis, quam Deus gratia condonat. Homines vero non nisi ingrati et proterui possunt ad exemplum imitationis sibi proponere." Curiously, the quotation is not from Augustine's treatises *De mendacio* or *Contra mendacium,* or his letters to Jerome on the subject, nor in fact from any of Augustine's works in the *Patrologia Latina*, or for that matter, those of any other author in the Patrologia Latina Database, published by ProQuest LLC. Numerous database and internet searches returned no matches. While they do reflect Augustine's sentiments (see e.g. *Quaestiones in Heptateuchum* 2.1, PL 34:597, etc.), they do not seem to be Augustine's words, and their origin remains a mystery.

73. For Calvin's exegesis of this and similar passages, see Blacketer, "No Escape by Deception: Calvin's Exegesis of Lies and Liars in the Old Testament," *Reformation and Renaissance Review* 10, no. 3 (2008 [2010]): 267–289.

74. Ainsworth, *Annotations upon the Five Books of Moses,* Exodus, 5.

75. "Quid enim hac divinatione frigidius?" John Calvin, *Ioannis Calvini opera quae supersunt omnia,* ed. Guilielmus Baum, Eduardus Cunitz, and Eduardus Reuss (Brunswick: Schwetschke, 1863–1900), 24:18

[hereafter cited as *CO*]. Willet (13) notes that Junius considers it plausible that the midwives tipped off the expectant mothers, but, like Calvin, he rejects this hypothesis; see Franciscus Junius and Immanuel Tremellius, eds., *Testamenti Veteris Biblia Sacra, sive, Libri canonici…quibus etiam adjunximus Novi Testamenti libros* (London, 1593), 56. On Tremellius see Kenneth Austin, *From Judaism to Calvinism: The Life and Writings of Immanuel Tremellius (c. 1510–1580)* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

76. See, e.g. Ainsworth's discussion of vineyards as false churches, and of human traditions that vitiate the gospel, *Solomon's Song of Songs*, 9–10.

77. "F.B. [Francis Blackwell]," *Certayne Questions Concerning Silk, or wool, in the High Priests Ephod…Handled between Mr. Hugh Broughton…And Mr. Henry Ainsworth* ([Amsterdam] s.n., 1605). On the printer Francis Blackwell, see Keith L. Sprunger, *Dutch Puritanism: A History of English and Scottish Churches of the Netherlands in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 1982), 71.

78. On Ainsworth's opponent, see G. Lloyd Jones's entry on Hugh Broughton, *ODNB*, 7:798–987.

79. Bishops' Bible: "They shall make the ephod of golde, blewe silke, purple, scarlet, and whyte twined silke, with brodered worke." Geneva: "And they shall make the Ephod of gold, blewe silke, and purple, skarlet, and fine twined linen of broydred worke." The KJV (which Broughton, jealous at being passed over as a translator, also criticized) would revise the translation as follows: "And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work."

80. The authorities include Immanuel Tremellius, Fransiscus Junius, Pliny the Elder, the Hebrew lexicographer Marcus Marinus of Brescia, Sebastian Münster, François Vatable, the Spanish Hebraist Arius Montanus, and the German Hebraist Johann Forster. F.B., *Certayne Questions*, 3. He later mentions Pagnini as well, 38.

81. Ainsworth uses the term *silk* to mean a very fine textile, not necessarily the product of the silkworm. He states that "al wool groweth not on the sheeps back, but some is gathered from plants, as cotton wool: so is that some kind of silk that growth, as *the Bysse of Ægypt*, finer then linen, and *silk grasse* in Persia & other countries. And if it wer such that was used about the tabernacle, then was ther not that impuritie in the stuff which is affirmed." F.B., *Certayne Questions*, 2. The reference is to byssus (βύσσος), a term for linen made from flax, or for Egyptian cotton. See also his discussion on p. 17, where he cites Pliny, the geographer Strabo, and Theophrastus. Later, he says that while linen and silk are not the same thing, yet one may translate the Hebrew שֵׁשׁ or the Greek βύσσος by either term, 35.

82. F.B., *Certayne Questions*, 2.

83. See F.B., *Certayne Questions*, 16–17. "Men should therefore take heed how they admit of al their [the rabbis'] sayings for oracles."

84. Ainsworth, *Solomon's Song of Songs*, 18–19.

85. Ainsworth is not entirely clear on this matter; further on in the argument he seems to deny that any blended textile is unclean (16), though he may distinguish between the prohibition of blended fabric and its ceremonial uncleanness. Cf. Ainsworth's annotations on Ex. 28:6 (1639 ed., 111–112), and the passages that prohibit fabric blends: Lev. 19:19, (1639 ed., 114–116), and Deut. 22:11 (1639 ed., 94), and note the allegorical interpretation Ainsworth offers of the prohibition of blended fabric: justification is not achieved by a combination of faith and works. There is no evidence of the controversy in Ainsworth's annotations, which were first published in 1618, well after the date of his engagement with Broughton.

86. F.B., *Certayne Questions*, 3; cf. Pliny, *Naturalis Historia*, 6.20. Later Ainsworth refers to "fine silken cotton," 17.

87. F.B., *Certayne Questions*, 4.

88. F.B., *Certayne Questions*, 5.

89. F.B., *Certayne Questions*, 6. The source does not appear to be Münster's *Hebraica Biblia* (Basel: Isingrin and Petri, 1534–1535). Münster also produced a translation of the thirteenth century rabbi Moses ben Jacob of Coucy's *מצוות התורה / Catalogus omnium praeceptorum legis Mosaicae* (Basel: Petri, 1533), as well as a translation of Abraham ben Meir Ibn Ezra's עשרת הדברים עם פירוש הראייע/ *Decalogus praeceptorum divinorum*, etc. (Basil: Frobisher, 1527). Münster translated a number of Maimonides's works as well, but not the *Mishneh Torah.* See the bibliography in McLean, Cosmographia *of Münster*, 343–346.

90. See David S. Katz, “The Abendana Brothers and the Christian Hebraists of Seventeenth-Century England,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 40, no. 1 (1989): 28–52. The first translation, never printed, was the work of Isaac Abendana; the second was published by William Surenhusius (Willem Surenhuis) in six folio volumes at Amsterdam, 1698–1703. On the latter, see Peter van Rooden, “The Amsterdam Translation of the Mishnah,” in *Hebrew Study from Ezra to Ben-Yehuda*, ed. William Horbury (Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1999), 257–267. The first Latin translation of Rashi was that of Johann Friedrich Breithaupt, *Commentarius Hebraicus in Pentateuchum Mosis Latine versus*, etc. (Gotha: Reyherianis, 1710).

91. Aaron Katchen, *Christian Hebraists and Dutch Rabbis* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984), 35–37. Katchen also notes that Ainsworth makes frequent reference to Menahem Recanati’s mystical commentary on the Torah, perhaps making use of the Latin translation of this work commissioned by Pico della Mirandola. The translation was executed by the Italian polyglot Jew and converted Christian humanist Flavius Mithridates.

92. See Schper, “Christian Hebraists in Sixteenth-Century England,” 203–210.

93. Powicke, *Henry Barrow*, 232.

94. See Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 71–83.

95. F.B., *Certayne Questions*, 7–8. Broughton also disputes the interpretation of Tremellius, and cites Theodore Beza’s work on the Septuagint.

96. F.B., *Certayne Questions*, 10–11; cf. 22, where Ainsworth denies the validity of the Anglican ministry in a way that could be termed Donatist, though Broughton does not seize the opportunity to use this tack to challenge Ainsworth’s ecclesiology.

97. *A True Confession of the Faith, and humble acknowledgement of the alegeance, which wee hir Maiesties subjects, falsely called Brownists, doo hould towards God, and yeild to hir Majestie and all other that are over us in the Lord*, etc. ([Amsterdam?], s.n., 1596).

98. F.B., *Certayne Questions*, 11–12.

99. In John Paget, *Arrow against the Separation*, 3v°. See also Ainsworth, *An Arrow Against Idolatrie: Taken out of the quiver of the Lord of hosts* ([Amsterdam]: s.n., 1611), 124–162.

100. F.B., *Certayne Questions*, 12–13.

101. F.B., *Certayne Questions*, 14–15.

102. Note particularly Ainsworth’s reproof of Broughton’s excommunication of both himself and Archbishop Whitgift, 21–22, and his remark that Broughton “useth learned men for his own advantage; if they bee with him, they are more than mountaines, if against him, they are lesse than molehills,” 36.

103. Ainsworth, *Orthodox Foundation of Religion*, “To the Reader,” [fol. A4r°]. A later edition, *The Old Orthodox Foundation of Religion* (London: E. Cotes, 1653), 4, notes that Mr. White lived for a time with Ainsworth in Amsterdam.

104. Moody, e.g. *ODNB*, 1:504, judges that Ainsworth “lacked the strength of character to deal successfully with those bent on obeying every dictate of conscience no matter what the cost.” But Ainsworth was no victim; he must be counted as a moral and religious perfectionist as well.

CHAPTER 9

The Interpretation of Christ's Descent into Hades in the Early Seventeenth Century

Jay J. Shim

In the British Isles, the early seventeenth century witnessed advancements in biblical scholarship that produced significantly new views on the article of Christ's descent into hades. Some biblical scholars presented detailed sketches of the history of this article, providing helpful resources for further study on the subject.1 Due to a number of issues, Christ's descent into hades is not mentioned in major creeds of the early church. In his exposition of the creeds of the early church, Ruffinus said that it is not found in the Nicene, Constantinopolitan, or the Apostles' Creeds; nor does it appear in the Eastern Church for the first five hundred years after Christ. Perkins provided a very long list of the church fathers who expounded the Apostles' Creed but did not include the article "descended into hades" in their confessions or creeds because of its obscurity.2 Ussher, appealing to Ruffinus, wrote that the first church to adopt the article was that of Aquileia. Whether or not other churches followed the lead of Aquileia and included the article for the first five hundred years of the Christian church remains unknown, since many significant authors in the early church did not mention it in their official creeds.3

The obscurity of the article came with diverse dimensions. Some, like Bellarmine, believed that the article might not be an essential part of the Christian faith. Others thought the meaning of Christ's descent into hades was redundant with His burial. They claimed that the two articles were interchangeably used, as in the Nicene and Constantinopolitan Creeds, which express burial but omit the descent into hades; or in the creed of Athanasius, in which the opposite was the case. Whitaker took issue with his Catholic adversaries on the place and period of Christ's existence in hell, and argued that if their position was true, Christ's promise to be with the thief in paradise "today" would have been impossible to keep, "unless they make a Paradise in hell." He believed that the approach of the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds helped the Protestant cause and dogmatically concluded that the two articles of the creed have exactly the same meaning.4

In spite of diverse problems and obscurities, most church fathers considered

Christ's descent into hades a significant part of the Christian faith, based on texts like Psalm 16:10 and Acts 2:27. They agreed that Christ somehow descended into hades, but the critical issue was the article's exposition. According to Perkins's observation, most of the early church fathers, particularly Augustine, seem to understand the article figuratively. It was a virtual descent, not a local descent, "by his merit and the virtue of his passion." This figurative approach made Bede argue radically, based on Psalm 85:11, that not only in His death but also in His birth Christ descended into hell "out of heaven." The Nicene and Ephesian Councils followed the broadly applied figurative approach.5

Perkins was aware of the issues in regard to the meaning of hell, which is the popular English translation of hades, and recognized the need to distinguish various senses and places pertaining to it, since most church fathers used the term interchangeably without clear demarcation. Some used it figuratively to denote that Christ went down to the place of the damned, but only in effect; others used it to indicate burial; and Catholics used it as limbo. "Abraham's bosom" (Luke 16:22) is still another place to be distinguished from hell.6 Even in Perkins's own text it is not easy to tell what exactly he meant by hell, though it is probable that he meant it in the popular English sense.

Some of the church fathers attempted to resolve the problem theologically, either by creating two distinct existences in hell or by locating an intermediate place. Augustine postulated two different existences in sheol, based on Psalm 86:13 ("you delivered me from the depth of sheol"). The wicked are shut up in the "lower part of hell," while the righteous are saved from the higher part of it. He is hesitant, however, to locate Abraham in any part of sheol, for there is no third place between Christ and the devil. Augustine could not have thought that Scripture teaches about *infernum* in a positive sense. Tertullian, however, located an intermediate place, "Limbo," between heaven and hell. He thought Abraham's bosom was limbo, a different place of existence from hell. He argued dogmatically that Abraham's bosom must be higher than hell, if not heavenly rest itself, "giving rest unto the souls of the righteous" until the final judgment arrives. Bede came with a still different opinion: based on his view of Psalm 85, the earth is hell and the place of eternal punishment is "the lower hell." Probably because of his Greek cultural background, Marcion came closer than any of the church fathers cited by Perkins to the nature and place of hades as discovered by newer scholarship. Marcion posited a double existence, "whither it be of torment or rest."7

Based on his examination of the church fathers, Perkins reflects the then-popular interpretation of the article that Christ descended into hell to free the saints there captive and overcome the power of death. In order to free the

captives in hell, “he descended not only into hell…but also into the inferior parts of the earth, the place of torment, breaking it up and leading away captivity captive.”[8]

The treatises of both Perkins and Whitaker are basically theological arguments in the form of summaries of the early church fathers. They heavily relied on the fathers’ authority for their seventeenth-century interpretations of the article. Their works exhibit signs of struggle in regard to diverse natures and uses of the terms sheol and hades in the biblical texts. Most often Perkins and Whitaker used the term hell as the place of eternal damnation, following the then-popular view of the article. Their theological endeavors to pursue the meaning of the article as well as their arguments against Catholics on the issue might have been greatly enriched by the advanced biblical scholarship that was available to them. In light of these pioneering biblical scholars, Emil Kraeling’s and John Robinson’s observations are not accurate, in that they denied that orthodox exegesis in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries used the philological apparatus for their churchly exegesis.[9] In fact, the early seventeenth century witnessed numerous publications on biblical hermeneutics that were based on qualified linguistic, textual, and cultural scrutiny of biblical texts within the context of theological disputes spawned by the Reformation.[10]

The aim of this essay is twofold: to illumine the pioneering biblical scholarship on Christ’s descent into hades in the seventeenth-century British Isles, as reflected in Hugh Broughton, James Ussher, and John Lightfoot; and to show that their biblical scholarship was theologically contextualized so as to reveal distinct details of the article, despite general agreement based on their shared Protestant confession. The issues related to Christ’s descent into hades are the nature and uses of sheol in the Hebrew Bible, whether sheol is faithfully rendered by the term hades in the Septuagint against the Greek culture, the meanings and uses of hades in the New Testament, and the nature of the subject, nepesh, or soul, that goes to hades. The changed meaning of the term hell must also be considered, since it had been claimed that in old English it properly rendered the meaning of hades. The complexity of the issues is related to linguistic, textual, and cultural backgrounds of the biblical and heathen authors, and additionally the issues had been theologically disputed in Christian circles because they were diversely interpreted to describe such essential aspects of the Christian faith as Christ’s passion and His state after death.

Hugh Broughton (1549–1612) and the Genevans

Hugh Broughton was a pioneer in the Church of England in the sense that, compared to the dogmatic works of his contemporaries, he presented a

significant alternative view of the article based on advanced textual and linguistic scholarship. Though Broughton's view faced strong opposition from Archbishop of Canterbury Whitgift and Bishop Bilson, his view of Christ's descent became widely known and followed by the next generation of scholars, such as James Ussher and John Lightfoot.[11]

Broughton attempted to uphold a Reformed teaching against certain Catholic and Jewish counterparts. In this context he illustrated some of the wrong interpretations of the article, such as Christ's descent into the hell torment, hell torments in this world, Christ's going from paradise to hell, and understanding the article as repetition of the article of burial. All these mistaken views were, said Broughton, caused by ignorance of the Hebrew and Greek languages and customs. Broughton also illustrated some Jewish views of the article, especially that of Isaac Ben Arama. Ben Arama was of the opinion that Jews refused to accept the gospel because it put the Jewish fathers in the hell torment. Referring to Hebrews 11:13, Broughton claimed that Jews used some mistaken Christian exegetes, including Chrysostom, to argue against Christian doctrine. The allegedly mistaken exegesis took the text not to be teaching about the soul after death, but only about the joy the Old Testament fathers had after their death, namely, that they "had not the joys of Heaven at the first." Jews vexed this teaching further, falsely contending that Christians teach that the old faithful went to hell. More than that, if Christ went to hades, the place where the old faithful reside, He Himself does not have the highest joy.[12] In another place, Broughton cited a rabbi who identified gehenna (a place of condemnation in Matt. 5:22, 29, and 10:29) as hades. In that way the rabbi equated gehenna with hell.[13]

Broughton's harshest critique is found in the section "An Oration to the Genevans" in his "Explication" against the followers of Calvin, especially Beza. Broughton summarized the Genevan interpretation as follows: "Christ was made sin, he became a curse, he sweat water and blood, he cried, Eli, Eli, Lamma Sabachthani [in utter despair]…he suffered the wrath of God, and the torments of hell."[14] Broughton had two issues with the Genevans. First, he claimed that they invented the idea of "gehennan perturbation," which was considered to be Christ's virtual or local suffering of hell torment. The torment of hell was highlighted by Christ's utter despair. Second, Broughton blamed them for their teaching that "the soul of our Lord did not pass into hades," which may directly oppose the Protestant confession. Broughton sharply accused Calvin of originating this allegedly mistaken view through his ignorance of the Greek meaning of the article. Following Calvin, the Genevans attributed the "most sinful perturbations to Christ," from which "Jesuits gather (*Turco-Calviniana*) to

great hurt to the Gospel."[15]

The real criticism against the Genevans was inflamed by the context in which Broughton was obliged to counter the Catholic view, which suggested Christ's descent to the place of torment. Within this context Broughton criticized Calvin's idea of the torment of Christ's soul, which was dangerously related to another idea—that Christ's soul was tormented in gehenna-hell.

A close reading of Beza, however, demonstrates that he applied an advanced scholarship of both biblical and Greek literature to compose a very similar view of the article to that of James Ussher, an able Irish exegete who produced a massive treatise on the subject and cited Broughton to support his view. Examination of another theologian at Geneva, Hillarye Fantrart, who was under Beza's tutelage, shows that Broughton's critique is misguided.

Fantrart closely followed Calvin's structure of the articles: that the burial of Christ refers to His bodily suffering, and the descent into hell to His soul's suffering. Calvin's separation of body and soul is not motivated by a chronological understanding of Christ's passion but by his understanding of *toto christo,* the wholistic mediatorship.[16] As the mediator, Christ's suffering must be of the whole person, both body and soul. Thus Calvin said, "if Christ had died only a bodily death, it would have been ineffectual." He added that Christ "paid a greater and more excellent price in suffering in his soul the terrible torments of a condemned and forsaken man."[17]

Fantrart echoed Calvin and interpreted the article in a spiritual sense, reading Christ's descent into hades metaphorically. Fantrart's interpretation of the article reads, "Christ being made a curse for us, suffered in his soul for our sake." He emphasized Christ's unbearable suffering as a whole person, both in body and soul. Christ's suffering in His soul is neither the suffering in hell locally nor the suffering after death and burial, as Catholics proposed; rather the suffering in His soul continued, escalated, and culminated at the crucifixion. Christ's descent does not mean moving from a higher to a lower place. It is a figurative expression, since Christ's divinity is everywhere; His body lay buried in the grave while His soul went to paradise. Christ's descent simply means Christ's intense and severe passion in his soul.[18]

Beza's interpretation of Christ's descent, found in his annotation on Acts 2:27, reflects an advanced linguistic and textual scholarship. He recognized the context of Psalm 16 and Acts 2 as dealing with the resurrection of Christ's body, not the immortality of His soul (thus, Broughton's translation went directly against Beza's view). This resurrection context corresponds with Beza's understanding of the Hebrew sheol and nepesh. He read the verse to mean, "You will not abandon my corpse (*cadaver*) in the grave (*sepulcro*)." Nepesh in

Hebrew, or “personne” in the common tongue, may mean a body that has been killed, buried in the grave, drawn up from death, and drawn from sheol, as in the texts of Leviticus 21:1, 11, Numbers 5:2 and 9:10, and Psalm 33:19. Additionally, Beza reported that the Latin *animam* also was used to refer to a dead man. Christ’s descent into hades “in particular may indeed signify buried in the grave.” Beza denied the local understanding of Christ’s descent into hell and His suffering of reprobate punishment there. Along with this sense, Beza recognized that the ultimately grief-stricken state of mind the Hebrew sheol describes may be related to Christ’s suffering in His soul. The Hebrew sheol may describe a mental state in which people “are so pressed down by slumbers either of the soul or of the body with pain that they are very near to their ultimate end.” Then he cited as examples of such experience Jacob’s words about descending into sheol (Gen. 37:35; 42:38), Hannah’s words, “the Lord brings down to sheol” (1 Sam. 2:6), and David’s words, “cords of sheol” (Ps. 18:6) and “like sheep they are destined for sheol” (Ps. 49:15).19

Noticeably, Beza and some English exegetes, especially Ussher, considered the context of the Hebrew texts and usages of sheol and nepesh in their interpretations of Christ’s descent into hades. The outcomes of these textual studies were sometimes determined by particular viewpoints. Beza seemed to be aware of the tension between interpreting the article from the Hebrew point of view and the Greek point of view, since he mentioned that he received criticism over that issue. Broughton’s work represents an example of reading the article from the Greek point of view, despite his vast knowledge of Hebraism. The foundation of Broughton’s examination of Christ’s descent into hades is his unwavering emphasis on the immortality of the soul, the soul as the subject of descending to hades, and hades as the place of the soul only. The different readings of the article reveal issues related to the nature of hades and the different modes of the existence of the body and soul after death.

Broughton’s Interpretation of Christ’s Descent into Hades

Broughton’s interpretation begins with an examination of the meanings and usage of the Hebrew sheol and moves to the translation of it as hades in the Septuagint against the Greek cultural background. It continues with the meaning and usage of hades in the New Testament. Broughton reported that sheol appears sixty-four times in the Old Testament, and the occurrences are never directly related to gehenna-hell. If some of the cases are related to the place of condemnation, they are made so only by an extended argument. None of the nine cases of hades in the New Testament signifies gehenna-hell. While twelve cases of gehenna in the New Testament Greek signify the place of torment, seventy-

three cases of the word mean simply separation of the soul from this world.[20]

It was a rule of Moses that he never named the place of joy or torment. Leviticus 26, as an example, simply promises earthly blessings and the presence of God to the faithful people and the presence of God's wrath to the unfaithful. Broughton said this rule had been kept "in all the rest of the Law" and attested to by the Midrash and commentaries. Indeed, the Jews of the Old Testament expressed the sense of eternal dwelling with God or eternal damnation in hell not by using direct terms but only by extended meaning. The eternal blessing of God in 2 Samuel 7 or the coming of Christ's kingdom in Daniel has no term for the dwelling of the soul after death. For "the journey of a soul," said Broughton, "no pen could ever tell, nor have conceived when it were told, what he should do there or how he could suffer there."[21]

Broughton denied that the valley of Hinnom and gehenna, as the eternal place of torment, were identical. The term gehenna, according to the most learned Jews, is a Talmudic term that denotes a common Jewish place for the soul. The valley of Hinnom near Jerusalem was the place where children were offered to idols, and rabbis borrowed the name of the place symbolically to express eternal torment. Thus gehenna became the symbolic place of eternal damnation only by an extended argument. The Lord confirmed the symbolic meaning of condemnation, but drawing a doctrine from the symbolic place and saying that the miserable bodies only shall be cast into gehenna mars the Christian faith. In the same way, sheol "never distinguished lots." Though sheol was referred to sometimes as a case of speedy death upon wickedness, said Broughton, there was "no sure warrant for it to be hell."[22]

This common meaning and use of sheol, and of hades by way of its translation, were known to all Hebrews till the time when the Apostles' Creed was composed. The original meaning of the term hades became distorted and thus the article of the creed "descended into hell" became greatly misunderstood. In fact, "descending into hell" actually means, paradoxically, "going up to heaven" in the Christian sense. Because of this misunderstanding, said Broughton, "many Creeds wisely and learnedly left out the article, which contained but absolute death, in a soul immortal and without the phrase."[23]

Broughton provides a thorough examination of the texts that mention "descending into sheol" in the Hebrew Bible. In Genesis 37:35, 42:38, and 44:29, 31 (where the Hebrew sheol is rendered hades in the Septuagint), Jacob says, "I will descend unto my son mourning into sheol." The phrase "descending into sheol," said Broughton, is a "heathen manner of speech," for in fact for the godly people it should mean "all leaving of this world, though a man goes unto the joys of God." Sheol is the common place where all dead souls go and even a

place for the godly people to enjoy the blessings of God.[24] On this text Broughton did not consider the context of Jacob's agony but focused on the theological issue of what happens to the soul after death. In this way he not only related Joseph of Genesis 44 and Christ typologically, but also related the two linguistically to expound the meaning of the creed.

Next Broughton dealt with the texts from Job. The book of Job contains the most curious style and its "grammar has more tricks and difficulty than all the Bible beside, Arabizing much, but fuller of Hebrew depth in language." In his dialogue with the "four prophets of Terahes, diverse families in Arabia," Job mentions sheol seven times in the book. All seven cases of sheol and also two other words are translated as hades in the Septuagint. In regard to those texts Broughton made three points. First, Job wishes that God would lay him in sheol ("As a cloud vanishes and is gone, so he who goes down to sheol does not return. He will never come to his house again," 7:9–10a). Secondly, Job knows sheol is his home after the present life; "the only home I hope for is sheol" (17:13). Thirdly, Job, being hid in sheol, is waiting for his renewal to come (14:13–16). Summarizing Job's destiny relating to sheol, Broughton said Job "wished that God would lay him up on sheol till his change (in the resurrection) should come, and he looked that sheol should be his house." That is the destiny of the godly people in sheol. The wicked face another destiny in the same sheol, "and in speech of the wicked that as heat makes a riddance of snow. So does sheol of sinners." That is Job's "open speech," following the custom of Arabia, which means how people, after living an abundant life, go down to sheol in a moment. However, Job's manner of speech is different "where God moderates and mentions the world to come." The book of Job depicts the voice of God in this way, not using the term sheol: "Have the gates of death been shown to you? Have you seen the gates of the shadow of death?" (38:17). Thus Broughton pointed out, "That which Job would have termed sheol, the Lord terms death." For Job, sheol is the lodging for himself and all men. Such a meaning of sheol is also evident in the words of Hezekiah ("I shall descend into the gates of sheol," Isa. 38:10).[25]

Descent into sheol may signify "destruction from this world" of the wicked soul, as in Numbers 16:30, which reads that the wicked men "will go down alive into sheol." Sheol here does not mean gehenna, argued Broughton, but the wrath of God that is burning "to the realm of sheol below," as in Deuteronomy 32:22. A similar meaning of sheol is found in Psalm 55. It records David's wish to "let them descend to sheol alive."[26]

Another case of descent into sheol is found in the narrative of Hannah (1 Sam. 2:6). Hannah praises God: "The Lord brings death and makes alive; he brings

down to sheol and raises up." Sheol here signifies not the place of eternal torment, but Hannah's grief that is near death, "how she grieved long and greatly was weary of her life at death's door." David also expresses this sorrow near death in Psalm 18:4–5 ("cords of death and cords of sheol") and in 2 Samuel 22. Sheol may signify full death, as in Psalm 89:48, which reads, "What man can live and not see death…the power of sheol?"[27]

With the basic understanding of sheol as death, Broughton commented on Psalm 16:10 ("you will not leave my soul in sheol [hades in the Septuagint and New Testament]"). The text "has but this sense plain and common: the world of souls separated from the body." In this text as well as Jacob's allusion to it, Broughton did not consider the context of David's reference to Christ's resurrection but focused on the theological issue of what happens to the soul after death. Broughton argued that all souls face one of the two different destinies after death. For the wicked, death signifies eternal death and destruction. Thus for them, sheol may mean eternal damnation in an extended sense. That is not the case for the godly and such a case is illustrated in Psalm 16, where neither eternal death nor destruction is mentioned, but rather renewal of life. Broughton interpreted the text to mean "you will not leave my soul, being separated from the body, to the status of death."[28] Broughton did not deny the text's reference to Christ's resurrection, but rendered the text from a theological point of view to the effect that Christ's soul after death moved to the invisible world.

After he examines sheol in the Old Testament, Broughton deals with its Greek translation in the Septuagint. Broughton was fully convinced of the need to examine the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Bible because it faithfully rendered the sacred Hebrew meaning in the heathen Greek and because the New Testament authors followed it. Thus, we have a "threefold thread" to understand the meaning of the Scriptures: the Septuagint, the heathen Greek, and the New Testament.[29]

Broughton appreciated that the translators of the Septuagint chose hades commonly as the equivalent translation of the Hebrew sheol. More than that, the Septuagint sometimes chose hades as the Hebrew term for death. Broughton pointed out that the Septuagint translated both sheol and *moth* (death) into *thanatos* (death) respectively in Isaiah 28:15, 18.[30] That shows that the Septuagint translators correctly recognized the popularly received meaning of sheol in the Old Testament. Broughton argues that the translators of the Septuagint must have traced the meaning of hades against the Greek culture from Homer to Menander when they chose it as the equivalent to the Hebrew sheol. Many Greek-speaking church leaders—some of whom witnessed the birth

of the Apostles' Creed—used hades according to its popular meaning in Greek culture. The composers of the creed must have looked to the Septuagint and adopted the Greek meaning of hades in the creed.[31]

From this argument Broughton formulated a principle of translating Scripture. This is an example of the early seventeenth-century biblical scholarship that is based on linguistic, textual, and cultural studies of biblical text:

> For all the New Testament is either from the Old, or from the Rabbins, or from the profane Greeks. And when it is made up from the Old Testament, either when the Apostles translate themselves as they do fully often, by profane Greek language, or cite the Septuagint, which borrowed their words from the heathen, in both kinds the heathen must be looked unto. So much is void of controversy that so far Greeks must be regarded.[32]

With this, Broughton suggested a number of points for proper interpretation and translation of the term hades. First, a general historical observation of the creed demands that it must have been written against the linguistic and cultural background, that is, "to the capacities both of Jews and Gentiles."[33] Second (and based on the first), the popular meaning of hades in old Greek had been attested to by a great many Greek authors and had been "followed unto the Apostolic age." Third, the translators of the Septuagint were the ancient rabbins who had great learning of both their faith and the Greek language. The rabbins "from Moses' matter and assurance of doctrine invented very profitably these terms," in this case, the terms to express various states that are included in the term sheol. Various states in sheol, such as the world to come, the day of judgment, the valley of Hinnom, the garden of paradise, and the feast in the world to come, are found in the Septuagint and other useful rabbinic literature, such as the Chaldean Paraphrase reflecting the sheol in the Old Testament. Fourth, as it is the case that the New Testament authors relied on the phrases of the Septuagint and that the church relied on the translated form of Scripture for the transmission of the divine will, then, argued Broughton, we need to seriously expound the heathen words, for they "catch a doctrine in babish infancy for divinity." Next in order is to examine the heathen Greeks, "as the heathen lend the Apostles their words to teach them life."[34]

Broughton quickly added words of caution in regard to using the Greeks and Hebrews for Christian interpretation. The Greeks were pagan in their religion; consequently, biblical authors and heathen authors used Greek terms in different ways. Nevertheless, said Broughton, the translators of the Septuagint "have with a great deal of discretion drawn the words of the heathen to divine matters, and the like had been done by the holy Apostles."[35] Following the Protestant

tradition, and against the Catholic view of the Hebrew Scriptures, Broughton contended that the Septuagint is not inspired and must be expounded with the Hebrew text, and the Hebrew must be considered within the Talmud's worldview. In the providence of God, the Hebrew text had been carefully preserved by the Massorites and explained by the Talmudists with their skills in Hebraism. Thus, Protestant biblical scholars had both love and caution toward Hebraism; they wanted the assurance of textual purity while maintaining distinct Christian interpretations.[36]

Broughton examined a good number of ancient Greek authors, especially Homer and Plato, who mentioned hades. A number of observations on hades in Greek are in order. First, hades is "a place of invisible," the place of deceased souls after death separates the soul from the body. In the *Odyssey,* Homer dedicates a whole book on the world of souls, called hades. Ulysses speaks of Tiresias, "His soul went into a chamber within hades." Tiresias is not tormented in hades, but continues with other souls. Oedipus says of his mother that when she dies she is moving to hades. Agamemnon complains that "Clytemnestra would not so much as shut his eyes when he went to hades, to the world of souls."[37] Homer put the very phrase of the creed "descend into hades" in the lips of old Nestor when talking about the slain soldiers: "War shed their blood; but their souls be gone down to hades." In the same tenor, Nestor said, "Since many Greeks with bushy locks are dead in the battle; whose black blood by the trowling stream of goodly Seamander; is shed about by crabbed Mars, and spirits slit to hades."[38]

Hector said to his wife when she desired him not to hazard his life, "All who once come to the world must be sent to hades." In another place Maeonides spoke of Hector's soul when Achilles killed him, "His soul fleeting out of the body went to hades." On these two occasions Broughton commented that Hector's wife, Andromache, was from Cilicia, making her a countrywoman of the apostle Paul. Both Tarsus and Cilicia spoke Greek. In a region where everybody shared the same language, people "would never give an article of plain words for a meaning never heard." Similarly, Homer shared the same language with Smyrna, Rhodos, Colophon, and Athena. They all shared the same sense of hades as "souls' leaving of this life and having a continuance in the other world."[39] If hades is the "receptacle of all souls," it is the dwelling of souls. "Out of the body went the soul to the dwelling of hades." Ulysses said to Polyphemus, "O that I could of life and soul at once but bereave thee; and on a long errand thee send to the dwelling of hades."[40] Broughton reported that all the Greek authors—Euripides, Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes, and Homer—shared the same sense of hades. He also claimed that Maimony and two Talmuds

he had examined reflected the same sense, and that old Nestor speaks as the biblical authors do on the common terms of death.

Secondly, a logical consequence of hades as the receptacle of dead souls is the meaning of death and the grave. Death and the grave are not primary senses of hades, but only by way of accommodation or inference. Sometimes, said Broughton, the term "death" is accompanied in the description of hades: "A wicked death, O Crantor, thee hath brought unto thine end; And made thee to the black abyss of Pluto to descend; Where now thou does enjoy abide."41 It is noteworthy that Broughton emphasized that both sheol and hades are the place of the soul, not of the body. He reported that the Septuagint twice rendered sheol as thanatos (death) and moth (death) as hades, but never rendered sheol as grave or sepulcher.42 For sheol is the place of the souls and souls are never buried in the grave.

Thirdly, hades is the place of deceased souls with two different destinies. Broughton cited a Greek poet: "We the remains of those be deceased, and then shall the gods be; For the souls alive do abide in those be departed…. All that be dead are fellows alike and god is king of spirits; One common roof for all will use house, one region, hades; One place serve for every man, for the king and the beggar; No long time we men do live, this but for a short while; But our deathless ageless soul does live forever."43 Hades is the common dwelling of both the just and unjust. Pindar wrote that "good men enjoy without annoy an easy life. There is no strife, with work of hands, to till the lands, and sail the seas, hunger to ease…. How wicked men in hades' den do lead a life, where there is rife of misery, but remedy none to be had. Pains very bad when three are past the fourth comes at last."44 In his discourse on the immortality of soul, Plato said that "making the descent to hades a blissful thing and opposite to the corruption of the whole man." Paedon is said to speak of Socrates's death, "He died undauntedly and nobly, insomuch as it seems to me that he went not even to hades without a divine providence; yea, and being there arrived, fared well too, if ever any man did." For the righteous souls, hades is a blessed dwelling and a place with God and reward.45

Since hades comes with two different destinies, it was a "common thing" for the Greeks to equate "descended to hades" with "ascended into heaven." Hades, thus, is heaven in the Christian sense with regard to righteous souls. Hades is an invisible place and "the concave of heaven" for the gods and righteous souls.46 Yet hades is not without judgment and condemnation. Philemon the Poet sounds agreeable to Christian religion when he writes, "There's a just eye that all things does behold. If righteous and ungodly fare alike, extort, steal, spoil, lie with thy neighbors' wife, be not deceived, in hades judgment is, which God the Lord of

all shall execute, whose name so terrible, I fear to speak." With judgment, hades is a doleful place.47

Christ allowed for the Greek double judgment of hades. In Luke 16:23 He used the term hades as the common place of Abraham, the beggar, and the rich. Indeed, Abraham and the beggar who is in Abraham's bosom are in "the joyful part of hades." On this Broughton wrote, "If our gospel place Abraham in hades in joy, as the wicked in torment, hades must contain paradise for Abraham, as gehenna for the wicked."48

Broughton appealed to Josephus, Irenaeus, and Justin Martyr for the common meaning of hades in the New Testament. "They took hades the general to paradise and gehenna." The alleged dichotomy between paradise and gehenna among the Jews, Broughton explained, was caused by rabbis' fearing that the thief was in paradise with the patriarchs.49 "We conclude," said Broughton, that hades "is never hell in the New Testament" and "Christian paradise is the hades of the Creed."50

According to Broughton, Paul, writing that "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and *under the earth* (καταχθονίων)" (Phil. 2:10), expounded Psalm 22:29 ("all *who go down to the dust* will kneel before him") and Isaiah 26:19 ("but your dead will live; their bodies will rise. You *who dwell in the dust,* wake up and shout for joy"). In the Philippians text Paul follows the theological pattern of Psalm 22, which is about the Morning Star, the Author of resurrection. Paul proclaims there, following the rabbinic pattern that celebrated infinitely the high family and the low family, that every knee, that is, angels in heaven, men living on earth, and men under the earth, should bow before the Lord. In that manner, καταχθονίων signifies the dead, "the dwellers in the earth." The Isaiah text echoes the meaning of Psalm 22 in that the dead are identified with those "who dwell in the dust" and that they will rise. "Those who are in heaven" are angels; "those who are on earth" are men; and "those who are under the earth" are the dead. And the dead are expressed in heathen phraseology as being in "the common hades." Homer used the term hades as Ζευς καταχθόνιος, which is from κατα χθονός (he who is under the earth), which is also synonymous with those divine beings in the underworld. Citing Homer and other contemporary Greek authorities, Broughton argued that καταχθονίων is equivalent with "the men dead" and those in hades.51

Now Broughton dealt with the text, "committed them to Tartarus, in the pits of darkness" in 2 Peter 2:4, where God judges the fallen angels. Tartarus may now be translated as hell or prison. Plutarch cited Tartarus from Plato, and Plato from Homer. In Homer's *Iliad,* Jupiter threatened the disobedient angels and cast them into "black Tartarus." The text of the *Iliad* reads, "I will the disobedient into

black Tartarus cast; where there is a black dungeon under the earth; where be steel gates and a floor of brass. As far beneath hades as heaven is from the earth." The term *Tartarus* in the Pauline epistle is borrowed from the Greeks, who called it hades, the place of the underworld.52 From this text Broughton argued that it is absurd to say Peter chose the words by chance or that the Holy Spirit does not know Homer's phrase. It is even more absurd to say that the Apostles' Creed did not apply the commonly accepted meaning of the terms in the culture. Then Broughton said, "S. Peter was directed by God's wisdom to temper his style to the heathen capacities even in their fable."53

Applying his broad linguistic and textual studies, Broughton made some concluding remarks on the article. First is his foundation for reading the article: "We confess in this article that souls are immortal, and that from a bodily death they continue unto life, and that all saints from the beginning of the world being sanctified by faith have received inheritance of eternal life by Christ."54 With this as foundation, Broughton read hades in Scripture to mean "death, the grave, or the place of souls departed."55 Christ's descent into hades, then, means that "our Lord being in body crucified, dead and buried, had a soul immortal, as all men, which went hence to God, and being in hades, holy, had not hell, but heaven." The journey of Christ is termed by Talmudists as "going up to Paradise," by way of "transference," when the heathen reads "going down to hades."56

Since hades has only two parts, one for the righteous and one for the wicked, the Catholic views of *limbus patrum* and purgatory were readily denied. Broughton argued theologically that with Christ's crucifixion all sufferings are fulfilled, and therefore there is no need for further suffering after death, as His soul went to paradise. With this argument Broughton harshly rejected the idea that Christ's soul suffered in any way after His death.57

It is interesting to note that Broughton's examination of Christ's descent focused on the state and place of sheol and hades and did not mention nepesh, the subject that goes to sheol, as referred to in Leviticus 21, Numbers 5 and 9, and Psalm 33, while both Beza and Ussher found from the texts that nepesh may signify a dead body, and consequently sheol may signify a grave. Broughton had his argument for such a conclusion. He recognized the textual basis, as mentioned above, that though the Hebrew sheol is sometimes translated as thanatos (death) in the Septuagint and the Hebrew terms *moth* and *maveth* (both signifying death) as hades, sheol never was translated as grave or sepulcher. He continued, "For they [Septuagint translators] knew that hades is the place of souls and I am of the same judgment with them."58 Broughton's conviction is determinedly based on the Greek ideas of the immortal soul and hades, which

prevented him from reading the texts with nepesh in a different way. This standpoint created a unique dissonance between Broughton's views and those of Ussher and Beza.

This point is closely related to Broughton's accusation of the Genevans on the translation of hades. Broughton's critique reads, "Ye dreaming that hades is the grave when it speaks of the soul and body severally, and that hades signify gehenna, if it be spoken of the soul." His criticism is twofold: their reference to hades as the grave of the body and the reference to hades as gehenna of the soul. Broughton sometimes read the Genevans to mean gehenna as the place of eternal damnation. On these grounds he accused the Genevans of being "worse than all heresies."[59] A close reading of Calvin and Beza, however, shows that Broughton's harsh criticism was hastily made. His accusation in regard to gehenna was mistakenly based on his chronological and local understanding of Christ's descent, for neither Calvin nor Beza suggested Christ's descent locally to gehenna after death. Broughton rashly used the Genevan words of Christ's suffering in *toto christo* for his arguments against the Catholics and certain Jews. Broughton also hastily connected the Genevans' understanding of the grave to the mistaken view of the Sadducees, who did not believe in a resurrection of body.

Broughton also seems to be inconsistent in his argument against Beza, since he did recognize that hades may mean "death" and "grave," though in an extended sense, and thus he undermined his own accusation. He wrote, "Let us therefore hear some more instances where hades denotes death, the grave, or the place of souls departed. And where death and the grave are expressed by name, there it is reason to understand some third thing by the term hades."[60] This statement of Broughton does not fully comply with his harsh accusation of the Genevans. What he accused the Genevans of, he accepted as an extended meaning. The reasons for this dissonance may be explained by his unforgiving attitude toward the Genevans and his harsh writing style, as noticed by Lightfoot.[61]

John Lightfoot (1602–1675)

It is interesting to see the reason why, and the period when, the article of Christ's descent into hades was officially added to the recognized Apostles' Creed. Broughton wrote that it was fully known at the time of its composition among the Christian community that "in speech of [heathen] man, to die and to go to hades is all one." Indeed, the common knowledge was based on the Greek ideas of the immortality of soul and hades. It was needless to mention Christ's descent in the creed, and this was exactly why the article was omitted in the Apostles'

Creed, Nicene Creed, and many confessions of the early church. As time passed, however, people lost the true sense of it, and the church needed to insert the article, as Pliny showed.62

John Lightfoot, a widely known Hebraist in England in the middle of the seventeenth century, came up with another reason for the insertion of the article. Councils and Fathers added certain articles of faith to refute heresies. “This article [Christ’s descent into hades] was inserted to outface some error about Christ’s person,” said Lightfoot. It was added to ensure that Christ died with his full body and soul for vicarious atonement. While the articles of death and burial are related to his body, descent into hades relates to his soul.63 This issue of Christ’s suffering as a whole person framed Lightfoot’s interpretation of the biblical texts that related to Christ’s descent into hades.

By the time Lightfoot wrote his treatise on the article in the mid-seventeenth century, he was an established Hebraist himself, and many rabbinic and Greek literatures were available to him. He still felt obligated to refute the then-popular Catholic teachings of the article. The first and second popular views were that Christ’s soul really and locally descended into the place of torment to deliver the patriarchs and/or to triumph over the devils. Lightfoot framed his view based on the mediatorship of *toto christo;* that is, the whole Christ, in both body and soul, obeyed the law, crucified, rose, ascended, and sits in heaven. With this framework he reads Psalm 16:10, that “thou wilt not suffer my *soul* (nepesh) being in the state of separation, my *body* (*chasid* in Hebrew) to see corruption.”64 Christ conquered death by His suffering as *totus christus* and he does not need to go to hell to conquer Satan again.

The third popular erroneous view according to Lightfoot was Christ’s soul’s torment upon His cross, which was considered to mean “the extreme wrath of God,” “torments of hell,” or “the time in the state of the damned.” Lightfoot criticized such a view, which Broughton also readily rejected, by arguing that Christ did not and could not suffer such torment either for any cause of His own or even for the sins of His people. He examined whether the words Jesus spoke on the cross reflect His experience of the divine wrath. Jesus spoke, “Today you will be with me in paradise,” “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit,” and “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Lightfoot’s judgment of the divine wrath included separation from God, horror and hell in the conscience because of guilt, and utter despair. No words of Jesus fall into the category of divine wrath. Jesus’s words of “my God, my God” do not express the divine wrath but a “bitter providence” that he had to go through.65 Lightfoot concluded,

> It is impossible that Christ should suffer the torments of hell, or be in the case of the damned. A priest could not fall under the plague of leprosy, and yet is the high priest under a damned condition? Certainly, if his body could not see corruption, his soul could not feel damnation. If his body were not under that, which the bodies of the best saints fall under, certainly his soul could not be under that which damned souls fall under.66

Up to this point, Lightfoot provided basically theological arguments, which sound parallel to Broughton's argument against the Genevans. Both the Genevans and Lightfoot emphasized the notion of *toto christo* but for opposite purposes. While the Genevans emphasized Christ's suffering in His soul with the phrase, Lightfoot used it to prevent the possibility that Christ suffered the torment of hell. Against the Catholics, Lightfoot followed Broughton's argument that Christ's soul neither went to hell nor suffered its torment. Lightfoot's theological framework, based on his understanding of *toto christo,* distorted the text of Psalm 16:10. He interpreted it, "Thou wilt not suffer my *soul* being in the state of separation, my *body* to see corruption." He is unique in that he read the text with the soul/body relationship and thus rendered sheol as the place of the separation of the two.

In his exposition of the text of Acts 2 and Christ's descent into hades, Lightfoot closely followed Broughton in that he based his exposition on the Greek notions of the immortality of soul and hades as "the place and state of all souls departed," and in that he does not deal with the Hebrew notions of sheol and nepesh. The article of Christ's descent into hades means for him that "Christ's soul went to hades, to the other world, to the place where good souls went, which Scripture has taught us is heaven."67

James Ussher (1581–1656)

Anglican Archbishop of Armagh, a gifted polyglot, and a moderate Calvinist, James Ussher produced a massive treatise on the article with an advanced biblical scholarship comparable to Broughton's. Ussher shared considerable common ground with Broughton. Both thoroughly examined the Hebrew texts containing sheol and their renderings in the Septuagint. They commonly considered that the Greek hades, which carried the common understanding of the Greek culture, properly renders the meanings of the Hebrew sheol, and these senses were carried into the New Testament and the early church when the Apostles' Creed was formulated. Thus, both agreed that the article of Christ's descent into hades must be understood against the linguistic and textual backgrounds of the sacred Hebrew and heathen Greek. They also agreed on the

primary meaning of the article that as consequence of His death, Christ's descent into hades means His movement into the state of death, and eventually His soul went to paradise. Ussher wrote the following thesis at the outset of his exposition of the article:

> So do we find the word hades…to be applied by the ancient Greek interpreters of the Old Testament to the common state and place of the *body* severed from the soul; by the heathen Greeks to the common state and place of the *soul* severed from the body; and by both of them to the common state of the *dead* and the place proportionably correspondent to that state of dissolution. And so the doctors of the church, speaking in the same languages which they learned both from the sacred and the foreign writers, are accordingly found to take the word in these three several significations.[68]

This thesis indicates Ussher's attempt to incorporate both Hebrew and Greek meanings in his scrutiny of Christ's descent into hades. Though Broughton also attempted the same, in the end his examination was more dominated by the Greek sense of hades. Broughton and Ussher parted ways on the details of the primary nature of sheol and hades—specifically, whether or not they indicate the place and state of the body. For Broughton, hades is primarily the receptacle of souls only, and may secondarily mean death and grave. In Greek culture, the soul has no common place with the body. After reading Broughton and other Hebraists, Ussher added more broadly understood senses of Hebrew nepesh and sheol. Then, hades may have three major meanings: the common state and place of dead bodies, the common state and place of dead souls, and death. While Broughton and Ussher share an appreciation for the second and third meanings of Ussher, though the third meaning is Broughton's secondary sense, they are divided on the issue of whether hades is a receptacle of the body.

Ussher was well aware of the Greek connotation of the immortality of soul and hades as the place of soul, but he also recognized that the Septuagint used the Greek word hades to indicate the broader sense of the Hebrew sheol, even as the receptacle of the dead body. Next in order is to see what textual evidences he had for his argument.

Ussher further pointed out, on the one hand, that the uses of hades in both the Septuagint and the New Testament properly correspond to the senses of the Latin *infernus* and Old English word hell, and on the other, that hades in the New Testament matches the Syriac, Chaldean, and Egyptian terms which are drawn from the Hebrew sheol. Within the consistent usages, the Hebrew sheol means "the interior parts of the earth, that lie hidden from our sight, namely whatsoever

tends downward from the surface of the earth unto the center thereof…a deep place, and opposes the depth thereof unto the height of Heaven."[69] With this linguistic evidence Ussher claimed that the heathen hades carried the sense of the Hebrew sheol as the common state and place of dead bodies.

Both Ussher and Broughton commented on Hezekiah's words in Isaiah 38:10–11, which reads, "In the prime of my life, must I go through the gates of sheol…. I will not again see the Lord, the Lord, in the land of the living." For Ussher, sheol is the place under the surface of the earth, opposite not only to heaven but also to the land of the living, and thus it may be translated as "grave." Broughton read sheol in the text not as a physical place, but as the state of death, the place of dead souls. While Broughton thought the primary sense of sheol is the state of dead souls and that death is a secondary sense, Ussher reasoned, "The place of dead body, and not of souls is to be understood."[70]

Both commented also on Jacob's words of descending into sheol (Gen. 37:35, "In mourning will I go down to sheol to my son"). While Ussher rendered sheol as grave, Broughton took it as the state of blessing of soul after death. Broughton commented that Jacob's words of going down to sheol is a "heathen manner of speech" which actually means for the godly that his soul goes to the blessed existence with God.[71] Broughton read the text from a theological point of view, that is, where the soul goes after death, while Beza and Genevans found a grief-stricken state of mind, reading the text within the given context.

Ussher cited Rabbi Abraham Aben-Ezra and Rabbi Salomo Iarchi to confirm the sense of grave in the text. He also cited the Hebrew dictionary that was printed with the Complutensian Polyglot in 1515 and Rabbi Mardochai Nathan's Hebrew Concordance, in which sheol is commonly expounded as "hell, the pit, or the grave." This Hebrew sense of sheol is well rendered by the Septuagint as "descending into hades" in both Genesis 37 and Job 17:16 to signify "going into the grave." Ussher read Psalm 16:10 ("because you will not abandon me [nepesh] to sheol") in the same way, which fits well with the resurrection theme of the text.[72]

Ussher consistently argued that the Septuagint translators read sheol as the place of dead bodies, and this sense is properly rendered by the Greek hades. Broughton was also consistent in his contention that grave cannot be a meaning of hades since hades is the place of soul. Where Ussher read grave, either by sheol or hades, Broughton found death, which, according to him, is an extended meaning of hades.

Ussher's reading of sheol, and of hades, as grave and death must match his understanding of nepesh, the subject that goes there. Ussher appealed to a number of ancient authors like Evatablus, Arias Montanus, and Isidorus Clarius

to demonstrate that nepesh may mean body in Psalm 16:10 and its citation in Acts 2:27. They commonly read those texts in the context of Leviticus 21:1 (“A priest must not make himself ceremonially unclean for any of his nepesh who die”) and also of Numbers 19:13, where they read nepesh as dead body. Using Augustine, Ussher illustrated the relationship of nepesh and body in the Hebrew Bible. By way of synecdoche or metonymy, nepesh may signify body, as in Genesis 46:26, which reads, “all the nepesh that came with Jacob into Egypt.” Souls are contained in bodies; the bodies of the sons of Jacob may be understood by souls; then by the dead souls may be understood the dead bodies that contain souls. Ussher was well aware that Beza translated the texts of Psalm 16 and Acts 2 exactly in this way and pointed out that such translation was in the early church the right reading of the text. Ussher took one more step and contended that since the Greek *psyche* is used for the Hebrew nepesh, and even the Latin *anima*, then *psyche* “may signify the dead body of a man.” Ussher’s translation of Acts 2:27 reads, “you will not leave me” (signifying the whole man) or “my body” (being separable from soul) to the grave.73

This translation was popular among the seventeenth-century exegetes of the British Isles, despite its general disagreement with the Protestant confession that places Christ’s soul in hades. Henry Ainsworth, John Trapp, Edward Leigh, Theodore Haak, the Westminster Annotation, and John Diodati interpreted the passages in the same way.74 In the early seventeenth century Ainsworth illustrated all the related meanings of nepesh and said that it may mean dead body, although “this be figurative and very unproper, for at one’s death, the soul goes out.” This secondary meaning of nepesh may well be joined with grave or pit, which renders sheol in the text.75 Along with the legacy of Beza, Ainsworth’s and Ussher’s broader understanding of hades based on the Hebrew sheol and nepesh might have provided the textual ground for such exegeses.

Ussher further said that the Greek hades may denote the “common state and place of corruption which was signified by the Hebrew sheol.” He cited Homer for such a sense of “grave” meant by hades: “Is it not a thing common unto all men to die? Is it not hades the house for all?” He also cited the Greek Lexicon of Suidas and another dictionary to show that hades means “a tomb or a grave.”76 The grave signified by sheol is to be understood in a larger sense, meaning “the common receptacle of all the dead.” In another place, Ussher qualified it by saying that the grave does not mean a particular pit or tomb that contains all dead carcasses. The grave signified by sheol is a generic term, a receptacle or even a world of all the bodies in the state of death.77

For the interchangeable senses of death and hades, Ussher and Broughton commonly appealed to Plutarch and Pindarus. Pindarus is cited as saying, “The

man that does things befitting him forgets hades," meaning, said Ussher, that "the remembrance of death does no whit trouble him." In Plutarch one answered, "O death of body, come. For hades is the only haven of the earth, having hades my helper I fear not shadows." In a similar meaning, Ussher quoted a poet cited by Plutarch: "O death, the sovereign physician, come, for hades is in every truth the haven of the earth." In another place Plutarch comforted his friend on his lost son that "he was in hades and therefore in good case." Broughton reported that Plutarch, using Pindarus, Plato, and other ancient Greek authors, "may be a whole library" to understand the term hades.[78]

For the common meanings of sheol, hades, and death, Ussher cited Clemens of Alexandria who expounded "being in hades" as equivalent with "not now living" in Greek. Clemens also argued that the two are again equivalent with "not now being" in the Old Testament texts (Gen. 5:24, 42:36; Ps. 39:13; Jer. 31:15). In Proverbs 15:11 ("sheol and destruction are before the Lord"), sheol and *abaddon* (destruction) signify the state of the deceased in general, as often joined together as in Proverbs 27:20. Sheol is taken for death (מות) in Isaiah 28:15 ("we have made a covenant with death, with sheol we made covenant") and it is taken for death (כמת) in Habbukuk 2:5 ("he is as greedy as sheol, and like death is never satisfied"). In Psalm 18:4–5, "cords of death" (מות) is interchangeably used with "cords of שאל." The "cords of sheol" is repeated in 2 Samuel 22:6 to signify the sorrows of death, as Broughton also pointed out. "Gates of שאל" in Isaiah 38:10 is equivalently used with "gates of מות" in Psalms 9:13 and 107:18. The Old Testament usage of sheol and death is reflected in the New Testament. Revelation 1:18 reads "I have the keys of death and hades."[79]

Applying to Christ the biblical correspondence between hades and death, Ussher said the main point of the article is that Christ's descent into hades means His going to the dead. As Christ's resurrection is rising from the dead, so His descent into hades should be nothing but a going to the dead. If resurrection from the dead is equivalent with resurrection from hades, why should not we interpret descent into hades to be going to the dead?[80] Ussher's argument gains support from his exposition that hades is the place of death and the receptacle of both body and soul. That exposition is the major breakthrough of Ussher and his major point of difference with Broughton.

Ussher was aware of the problem in regard to different existences of soul and body after death. He wrote, "Death itself…is nothing else but the separation of the soul from the body, which is done in an instant; but hades is the continuation of the body and soul in this state of separation, which lasts all that space of time which is between the day of death and the day of the resurrection."[81] Ussher

understood human existence as a continuum of three phases: *natus, denatus,* and *renatus.* The first phase begins with generation and ends with death, the second begins with death and ends with resurrection, which is the beginning of the life of regeneration. Human existence continuously involves body and soul, though during the second phase, in hades, with the separated and decayed body that lies in the grave. Though death initiates the state of hades and thus is different from hades itself, it may be the same as hades when taken as the "whole state of death." In that sense, argued Ussher, death and hades are interchangeably used.82

Ussher's long and pointed argument that hades is the state of death was augmented by a theological reason. The state of denatus is a necessary, though unfortunate, phase of all humanity. Thus, if Christ died for the sins of humanity, he must have laid His life to death according to the true manner of human death, which means going through the state of denatus. For that purpose, argued Ussher, Christ's crucifixion by itself is not enough; His death by itself is not enough. However, these must be accompanied with His going to the dead, which is signified by the heathen going down to hades. Only with this full sense of death, Jesus' resurrection, His being freed from death and mocking the power of death, becomes truly meaningful.83

Ussher examined all ten uses of the verb κατελθεῖν (to descend) in the book of Acts and concluded that none of them are used to mean a movement from a higher place to a lower. The Hebrew verb ירד, which is answerable to the Greek κατελθεῖν, in Ruth 3:3 and 3:6 and Judges 11:37 and 15:11 signifies the same; it may mean either going up or going down. The phrase "descent into hades" was an established Greek idiom denoting movement to the receptacle of souls under the earth. Following Aristotle's rule, Ussher said, "We must speak as the vulgar, but think as wise men do." The grammatical construction of ἐγκατελείφθη εἰς ἅδην shows that the noun is put in the genitive case, not the accusative, implying "the defect of another word necessarily to be understood; as if it had been said he went unto the place or house of hades." Sometimes Greek poets wrote the same thing with a full structure "into the chambers of hades." Therefore, Ussher used the broadly defined sense of Greek hades as the common receptacle of souls to interpret the article of Christ's descent in the creed. Christ's descent refers to His "whole manhood," namely such a state that includes death, burial, and body separated from soul. This interpretation points out that "he suffered death truly"—Christ's soul and body truly separated, His body went to the house of dead bodies and his soul to the other world of blessing.84 Ussher's treatise, after long scholarly discussions of all related subjects and numerous biblical texts and Greek literature, was geared to the common rule of faith that Christ

“went to the dead and continued in the state of death until the time of his resurrection.”[85]

Conclusion

The three biblical scholars examined in this paper applied linguistic, textual, and cultural apparatuses when treating the article of Christ’s descent into hades, to the effect that they shed new light on its possible meaning that differs significantly from the dogmatic approaches of the time. Whether or not Broughton introduced the new meaning of the article to the British Isles remains controversial, but his lead in the linguistic and cultural studies of the article and the flowering consequence that is witnessed in Ussher is a sure example of the seventeenth century biblical scholarship that continuously buttressed the Protestant confession. The most significant finding was their view on the nature of hades. They taught that hades, against the then-popular meaning, is not hell or the place of souls’ eternal torment, but the receptacle of all the dead. It describes the state and place of the dead. It is an invisible world, not a world that can be locally or geographically understood. It includes the double destinies of dead souls: “habitation of bliss or of misery,” that is, heaven or hell in the Christian sense. All three agreed that Christ’s soul went to hades, the place of death, which is paradise in the Christian understanding.

Broughton and Ussher were well aware of the problem related to the English term “hell.” They were certain that “hell” in Old English properly rendered the meaning of hades, but since the old connotation had been lost even in the seventeenth century, it became a stumbling block to understanding the true meaning of the article.[86]

The seventeenth century witnessed both vigorous theological disputes spawned by the Reformation and the advancement of critical textual scholarship as a result of the continued humanist efforts. The biblical scholars were also delicately involved with the theological polemics of the period, both against Catholic and Jewish adversaries as well as with intra-Protestant disputes. They commonly rejected the Catholic suggestions that Christ went down to the place of torment either to redeem the early fathers or to triumph over the devil. However, in certain cases, polemical situations caused them to apply their critical apparatuses sometimes to overemphasize certain points, and at other times to criticize certain points without proper grounds.

As a result they developed some distinct views on a detailed level. Different theological situations produced different uses of the same concept. Many Reformed theologians used the concept of *toto christo* to maintain that Christ’s suffering was completed; however, it was also used sometimes for opposite

purposes. Lightfoot, generally following Broughton on the article, used it to thwart the idea that Christ suffered in hades, while Ussher used it to ensure that Christ had suffered fully.

The issues between Ussher and Broughton involve the nature of hades and the relationship between body and soul in the state of death. Broughton, with his well-known breadth and depth of scholarship of both biblical and Greek literature, felt he resolved the problem with a sharp separation of soul and body at the moment of death, maintaining that hades is the place of the soul only, and that it may mean death in an extended sense. He had to strongly argue that hades has nothing to do with the grave, which receives the body. His views of the soul and the nature of hades were fundamentally shaped by the Greek mind.87 His argument led to the conclusion that Christ's soul went directly to paradise while his body was buried. The underlying issue for him was to keep Christ's soul from the torment of hell and thus counter the Catholic opponents. His theology would not allow him to see Christ suffer even after death, which culminated His suffering, as if His suffering in life and death was not enough. Broughton's battle against the idea of the extended suffering of Christ's soul led him to criticize the Genevans erroneously.

Ussher, situated in a similar conflict with the Catholics, reflects a combination of advanced biblical scholarship comparable to Broughton's and an irenic spirit for ecclesiastical unity. He came up with a Hebrew understanding of sheol which matches his broad understanding of nepesh and includes body and soul together, the whole person, and death. While Broughton read the Hebrew nepesh in terms of the Greek term psyche, which is immortal, intellective, and separable from body, Ussher understood it as a wholistic mode of a human being. Ussher's broadly defined nature of hades left the reader with a curious burden to elucidate the relationship of the body and soul after death, since he said, as mentioned above, "Hades is the continuation of the body and soul in this state of separation." Hades not only explains the state of the dead soul and body but also situates them. Ussher's explanation of the "continuation" and "separation" of soul and body in the state of death proceeds like this: Christ remained with His body in the state of death when in His soul he brought the thief to paradise. These two work simultaneously.88 The simultaneity of Christ's movement in soul and body matches Ussher's understanding of Christ's double states. For Ussher as well as for Broughton, descent into hades in the heathen expression signifies, or corresponds with, ascent into paradise in the Christian manner of speaking. In His soul Christ ascended into paradise "as a triumpher," the first act of his exaltation, while His body was laid under the power of death till resurrection, the last act of humiliation.

1. William Perkins, “Descension into Hell,” in *The Works of William Perkins* (Cambridge, 1609), 585–587; William Whitaker, “Of the Perfection of Scripture, against Unwritten Traditions,” in *A Disputation of Holy Scripture*, (Cambridge, 1610), 536–538; Hugh Broughton, “Explication of the Article of Christ’s Descent to Hell,” in *The Works of the Great Albionean Divine . . . Hugh Broughton* (London, 1662), 727–840, 361–367; James Ussher, “Of Limbus Patrum and Christ’s Descent into Hell,” in *The Works of the Most Reverend Father in God, James Ussher* (London, 1631), 276–313; John Lightfoot, “A Discourse upon the Fourth Article of the Apostolic Creed,” in *The Works of the Reverend and Learned John Lightfoot* (London, 1684), 1341–1350.

2. Perkins, “Descension into Hell,” in *Works*, 585.

3. Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works*, 308–312.

4. Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works*, 340; Whitaker, “Perfection of Scripture,” in *Disputation*, 537–538.

5. Perkins, “Descension into Hell,” in *Works*, 585–586.

6. Perkins, “Descension into Hell,” in *Works*, 586.

7. Perkins, “Descension into Hell,” in *Works*, 586.

8. Perkins, “Descension into Hell,” in *Works*, 586.

9. Emil Kraeling, *The Old Testament since the Reformation* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1955), 43. John Robinson concluded that in the seventeenth-century biblical exegetes were blinded by their dogmatic contention and did not recognize the sound textual criticism; see “The Doctrine of Holy Scripture in Seventeenth Century Reformed Theology” (PhD diss., University of Strasbourg, 1971), 105, 120, 122. Basil Hall said that though there was a tendency to subordinate biblical exegesis to dogmatic Aristotelianism in the early seventeenth century, the middle of the century witnessed a flourishing of biblical criticism with the London Polyglot in “Calvin against the Calvinists,” in *John Calvin: A Collection of Distinguished Essays*, ed. Gervais Duffield (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), 25, and “Biblical Scholarship: Editions and Commentaries,” in *The Cambridge History of the Bible* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 3:92–93.

10. Richard Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 2:442–520. For Hebraism in early seventeenth-century Reformed scholarship see Jaisung (Jay) Shim, “Biblical Hermeneutics and Hebraism in the Early Seventeenth Century as Reflected in the Work of John Weemse (1579–1636)” (PhD diss., Calvin Theological Seminary, 1998). David Daiches illustrates the advanced Hebrew scholarship in the early seventeenth century reflected in the translation directly from Hebrew text in *The King James Version of the English Bible: An Account of the Development and Sources of the English Bible of 1611 with Special Reference to the Hebrew Tradition* (Hamden: Archon Books, 1968). Stephen Burnett assessed the continental biblical scholarship by saying that it was within the period of theological disputes that biblical criticism was advanced; see *From Christian Hebraism to Jewish Studies: Johannes Buxtorf (1564–1620) and Hebrew Learning in the Seventeenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 3.

11. “Master Broughton” is cited by Ussher as an authority who is “esteemed to be singularly seen in the Hebrew and Greek tongues.” Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works*, 388. Lightfoot, in his preface to Broughton’s works, praised his vast knowledge of various literatures and languages of the ancient world. He cited the “great Broughton” for his knowledge of “Talmudic Greek,” which is necessary to decipher the meanings of the New Testament in light of the “Jewish and Talmudical phrases.” Lightfoot, “Discourse,” in *Works*, 1005.

12. Broughton, “Christ’s Descent into Hell” in *Works*, 361.

13. Broughton, “Christ’s Descent into Hell,” in *Works*, 364.

14. Broughton, “Explication,” in *Works*, 786.

15. Broughton, “Explication,” in *Works*, 784, 786, 790. For further critiques of Broughton see “Positions of the Word Hades” in “Explication,” in *Works*, 762–763. There Broughton accused the Genevans of their alleged teaching that by denying Christ’s soul’s movement to hades, they denied the immortality of soul.

16. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, II.xiv.3.

17. Calvin, *Institutes,* II.xvi-8–10.

18. Hillarye Fantrart, “Principles concerning the Burial and the Descension of Christ into Hell,” in *Propositions and Principles of Divinity, Propounded and Disputed in the University of Geneva by Certain Students of Divinity, under M. Theodore Beza and M. Anthonie Faius* (Edinburgh, 1591), 112–113, 116, 119–120.

19. Theodore Beza, *Annotationes in the New Testament* (Cambridge, 1642), Acts 2:27.

20. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 731; Ussher cited Broughton to show that both sheol and hades in their original senses did not mean death or gehenna, to the effect that Broughton found many ancient manuscript copies of the Lord’s Prayer that had “Our Father which art in hades.” Ussher also found the extended meaning of sheol in the rabbinic literature; see “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works,* 389. Rabbis Salomo Iarchi on Gen. 37:35 and David Kimchi on Ps. 9:17 said that while the literal sense of sheol is grave, its allegorical sense may be gehenna. Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works,* 317–318.

21. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 736–738.

22. Broughton, “Christ’s Descent into Hell,” in *Works,* 364; Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 762.

23. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 732–733.

24. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 733–734.

25. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 734.

26. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 734.

27. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 734–735.

28. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 735.

29. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 742. Henry Lukin, in his *An Introduction to the Holy Scripture* (London, 1669), 119–120, echoed Broughton in that the New Testament authors largely followed the Septuagint “because that translation had then generally obtained an honorable esteem and reception.” Lukin also provided cautious views of the Protestant scholars that the Septuagint text is much corrupted and that the New Testament authors, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, used their liberty in expressing the meaning of the Old Testament, not being tied strictly to the words themselves. See Whitaker’s arguments against the Septuagint for its corruption in the Old Testament text in *Disputation,* 145–192.

30. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 740. Ussher also pointed out that the Septuagint translated מות into hades (Prov. 14:12, 16:25) and שאל into death (Prov. 23:14). Where the Old Testament text and Septuagint have sheol and hades (“I will deliver them from the hand of sheol,” Hos. 13:14), Vulgar Latin has “from the hand of death.” See “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works,* 400–401.

31. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 735.

32. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 738; see also 800–801, 803. On p. 806 Broughton said that “the Massorites preserve the letter of the Scripture. The Talmudists are exquisitely careful of the story and skilled in the ways of the tongue…. We reject nevertheless their idle traditions, yet it is a very good purpose to preserve them.”

33. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 791, 795.

34. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 738–739.

35. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 803.

36. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 806.

37. Broughton, “Explication of the Article” in *Works,* 742.

38. Broughton, “Explication of the Article” in *Works,* 739, 795.

39. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 739–740.

40. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 796–797.

41. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 814–815.

42. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 824, 735.

43. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 801–802.

44. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works,* 817–818.

45. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 792, 365.
46. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 811.
47. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 804, 816.
48. Broughton, “Christ’s Descent into Hell,” in *Works*, 362.
49. Broughton, “Explication,” in *Works*, 762.
50. Broughton, “Christ’s Descent into Hell,” in *Works*, 365, 362.
51. Broughton, “Christ’s Descent into Hell,” in *Works*, 366 (emphasis added).
52. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 743.
53. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 743–744, 801.
54. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 814.
55. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 755, 814.
56. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 732, 734–735, 755.
57. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 731–732, 736.
58. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 824, 735.
59. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 828.
60. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 814; Broughton also wrote about sheol that “in full privation hence it [sheol] will signify death and in the bodies’ case the grave and corruption by the power of death. In the soul, the state of separation from the body, or the world unseen hence.” “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 735.
61. For Broughton’s own story with Beza see Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 752–754; Lightfoot wrote of Broughton: “His style of writing was curt, and something harsh, and obscure, for he desired to speak much in little, and besides his natural genius inclining to such a style, it is likely that his much conversing with Judaick learning did something to mold and habituate him the more that way.” Preface to Broughton’s *Works*.
62. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 755, 793.
63. Lightfoot, “Discourse on Fourth Article,” in *Works*, 1351.
64. Lightfoot, “Discourse on Fourth Article,” in *Works*, 1341–1345 (emphasis added).
65. Lightfoot, “Discourse on Fourth Article,” in *Works*, 1347–1350.
66. Lightfoot, “Discourse on Fourth Article,” in *Works*, 1350.
67. Lightfoot, “Discourse on Fourth Article,” in *Works*, 1351; See also Lightfoot, *A Commentary upon the Acts of the Apostles* (London, 1645), Acts 2:27.
68. Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works*, 316; emphasis added.
69. Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works*, 316–317.
70. Ussher also cited Ezek. 32:26–27 for the same argument. Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works*, 317, 330; Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 734.
71. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 733–734.
72. Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works*, 328–329, 333.
73. Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in Works, 333–336.
74. Henry Ainsworth, *Annotations upon Psalms* (London, 1617), Ps. 16:10; John Trapp, *A Commentary…the New Testament* (London, 1656), Ps. 16:10, Acts 2:27; Edward Leigh, *Annotations upon All the New Testament* (London, 1650), Acts 2:27; Edward Leigh, *Annotations on Five Poetical Books* (London, 1657), Ps. 16:10; Theodore Haak, *The Dutch Annotations* (London, 1657), Ps. 16:10, Acts 2:27; *Annotations upon all the Books…by the Joynt-Labour* of Certain Learned Divines (London, 1645), Ps. 16:10, Acts 2:27; John Diodati, *Pious and Learned Annotations…Mr. John Diodati* (London, 1664), Ps. 16:10, Acts 2:27.
75. Ainsworth, *Annotations upon Psalms*, 16:10.
76. Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works*, 328–329.
77. Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works*, 318–322, 360.
78. Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 743; Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works*, 396–397.

79. Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works*, 398–399.
80. Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works*, 403–407.
81. Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works*, 407.
82. Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works*, 408–410.
83. Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works*, 410.
84. Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works*, 390–396.
85. Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works*, 417.
86. Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works*, 314–315; Broughton, “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 739.
87. Broughton’s understanding of the Greek mind is well presented in the section “Positions of the Word Hades,” in “Explication of the Article,” in *Works*, 761–763. See p. 761: “The Greeks universally since their tongue have been in record, holding truly in speech, that man’s soul is immortal, place the souls of the dead in hades.”
88. Ussher, “Limbus Patrum,” in *Works*, 347.

CHAPTER 10

Critical and Catholic Exegesis in the Seventeenth-Century Low Countries

John S. Bergsma

Some of the contributions to this essay collection in honor of my esteemed teacher, James A. De Jong, have focused on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Reformed exegesis in the Netherlands. As a complement to these contributions, my purpose in the following essay is to analyze developments in biblical exegesis in the Low Countries outside of the Reformed tradition during this time period. On the one hand, we will examine the beginnings of secular critical exegesis with René Descartes, Lodewijk Meyer, and Baruch Spinoza; and on the other, the flowering of "Counter-Reformation" Catholic biblical scholarship as represented by Cornelius à Lapide. It will become apparent that the exegetical practices of these two traditions, the critical and the Catholic, are at polar extremes concerning the role of the church in the interpretation of Scripture, or what may be called an *ecclesial hermeneutic*.

Critical Exegesis: René Descartes, Lodewijk Meyer, Baruch Spinoza

The modern discipline of biblical studies is an essentially secular academic specialization that treats the Bible as an artifact of human culture to be analyzed by historical and philological methodologies. Biblical studies are taught this way in most Protestant, Catholic, and public universities in the developed and (increasingly) the developing world, with the exception of a few institutions that maintain a strong confessional identity. When the modern biblical scholar surveys the history of biblical scholarship, he or she tends to look for those figures who are historical antecedents of the dominant contemporary paradigm, not those figures who were embraced or most widely influential during the time period under consideration. The two most significant figures in the development of modern biblical scholarship in the seventeenth century were arguably René Descartes and Baruch (later Benedict) Spinoza, neither of whom were professional exegetes and both of whom were widely denounced and criticized by a majority of those engaged professionally in exegesis in their own day. Nonetheless, their ideas, rightly perceived by contemporaries as radical and destructive of Christian culture, would eventually reshape the mode in which

biblical interpretation would be pursued in Western society.

René Descartes (1596–1650) was born and educated in France but spent the most important years of his career (1629–49) in Holland, in and around Amsterdam, which he found to be a tolerant haven for his provocative philosophizing.[1] Baptized a Roman Catholic within a week of his birth and educated by Jesuits in Anjou and Poitiers, Descartes maintained public loyalty to the Catholic Church throughout his life, although the sincerity of his religious commitments as well as the compatibility of his thought with Catholic doctrine are matters of debate.[2]

In 1637 Descartes published his famous *Discourse on Method* in Leiden, followed in 1641 with his *Meditations on First Philosophy.* His works were disseminated quickly and widely among Dutch intellectuals, and within a few years were causing a storm of controversy within university faculties across the Low Countries.[3] Descartes's philosophy became a source of contention between what might be described as the non-Scholastic wing of the Reformed Church, whose figurehead was the federalist theologian Johannes Cocceius of Leiden (1603–69)[4]—an important figure in the history of biblical theology in his own right—and the defenders of Reformed Scholasticism led by Gijsbertus Voetius of Utrecht (1589–1676), with the non-Scholastics affording Descartes guarded and partial approbation, and the Scholastics complete condemnation.[5]

A thorough analysis of the *Discourse* and *Meditations* is, of course, beyond the scope of this essay. It must suffice to point out a few of the basic principles of Cartesianism that, in addition to revolutionizing philosophy, became the foundation of modern biblical interpretation. These may be enumerated as follows: (1) the *methodology of doubt,* (2) the *radical break from tradition,* and (3) the *mechanistic-deterministic view of nature.*

Descartes was twenty-one when the Thirty Years' War began, and the cultural chaos wrought by this conflict, pitting Christian against Christian, each making rival and mutually exclusive truth claims, had an important shaping influence on his thought. In fact, his intellectual project may be seen as an attempt to seek a source of epistemological certainty apart from faith, for with the collapse of Christian unity in Europe, faith no longer provided certainty.

As is well known, Descartes proposed that the proper method for philosophizing was to doubt any proposition which could not be demonstrated with absolute certainty, until one's knowledge base was reduced at last to a bare minimum of indubitable truths, from which one could rebuild a fuller epistemology through pure reason.[6] So, he begins by doubting all his knowledge until he is reduced to one certain fact: *I think, therefore I am*—i.e., because I am thinking I must exist. From this one indubitable fact he attempts to work back

out to the existence of God and the reality of other objects outside himself.7

In fact, Descartes's methodology of doubt is in large part a ruse used to destroy alternative accounts of reality (e.g., those of Aristotle and other figures of the Western philosophical tradition) in order to clear the field for the construction of his own project. For example, there is much to be doubted about the veracity of Descartes's positive contributions: his version of the ontological argument for God's existence, his mathematically reductionistic view of nature, his contempt of the epistemological role of sense perception. But Descartes does not apply his skepticism to his own philosophical edifice; instead he wields it like a scythe against his predecessors' views.8

Therefore, Descartes's methodology of doubt has as a corollary his *break from all tradition*, particularly the Aristotelian tradition that had dominated European Christian thought for centuries. For Descartes, philosophy is the project of an individual mind (namely his own), not a conversation of minds through history. Of course, Descartes is almost naïve in his failure to realize his own indebtedness to the Western tradition, since the language and concepts in which he communicates are themselves the patrimony of a long intellectual history. Nonetheless, Descartes is dismissive and contemptuous of the accomplishments of those who have come before him, and he does not regard them in any sense as a source of truth or illumination.

Enamored by certain advances by himself and others in the mathematical modeling of nature, Descartes discarded the Aristotelian account of physics in favor of *a mechanistic, deterministic account of physical reality* that was essentially reducible to mathematics. In this highly idealized account of nature, all events followed mathematical laws and were entirely predicted by them. There was no room for the intervention of true agents (i.e., God) in the fabric of the physical chain of events.

Descartes attempted, with some success, to avoid outright conflict with the Church and her authorities by denying at the outset of his philosophical project that he intended to deal with the truths of faith. Near the beginning of the *Discourse* and the *Meditations* he drives a wedge between theology and philosophy, between faith and reason, arguing with a superficial piety that the truths of faith cannot be subject to reason, and that therefore his intellectual project pertains only to natural philosophy.9 While such disclaimers may have assuaged the fears of some ecclesiastical authorities, in time the conflict between Descartes's thought and traditional Christian theology was unavoidable.10 Since Descartes claimed for philosophy all knowledge subject to reason, he left theology as the realm of undemonstrated and arbitrary assertions and superstition. Furthermore, there was no avoiding the eventual conflict between

the view of reality presented in Scripture, in which God can and does intervene in the natural order (i.e., miracles), and his mathematical mechanistic-deterministic model of nature.11

Although Descartes never attempted in any systematic way to apply his methods to theology, much less biblical exegesis,12 it is easy to see how the methodology of modern biblical studies, the historical-critical method, reflects aspects of his thought. Fundamental to the historical-critical method is a consistent skepticism toward the truth claims made by the biblical text, coupled with a rejection of "precritical" (that is, traditional Christian and Jewish) exegesis, and the assumption of a deterministic universe which rules out the reality of the miraculous. All three aspects of this method are already explicit, for example, in the introduction to David Friedrich Strauss's *Life of Jesus Critically Examined* (1835).13

Since Descartes never pushed his ideas into direct conflict with theology, that role was left to his successors in the radical philosophical circles operating in the Low Countries. It did not take long; in 1666, sixteen years after Descartes's death, Lodewijk Meyer published an anonymous work, *Philosophia S. Scripturae Interpres,* which scandalized Europe by arguing that philosophy—by which was meant, Cartesianism—was the only infallible interpreter of Scripture.14 Meyer blithely proceeded to bring the principles of methodological doubt, the rejection of tradition, and mechanical-deterministic naturalism to theology and particularly biblical exegesis, with the result that the Bible was stripped of divine authority and inspiration, the only things salvageable within it being some inchoate first steps and foreshadowings of Cartesianism.15

Meyer's deconstruction of Scripture was pursued further by his younger friend and colleague Benedict Spinoza (1632–1677), widely regarded as a father—and by some, *the* father—of modern biblical criticism.16 While Spinoza's own philosophy was different from Descartes's in important ways—most obviously, in Spinoza's rejection of Descartes's mind-body dualism in favor of a materialist monism—there was also enough in common between their respective systems of thought that their contemporaries already recognized a genetic relationship.17 The connection between the two is well enough demonstrated by the fact that Spinoza's first published work was *Principles of Cartesian Philosophy* (1663).

Although the essential contours of his thought had been worked out much earlier, Spinoza did not publish his seminal work *Tractatus theologico-politicus* until 1670, and then only anonymously. It provoked widespread revulsion among the populace and swift condemnation and censorship by most public authorities, but nonetheless was being widely disseminated and read throughout Europe within five years, due in no small part to the well-connected and well-organized

circles of radical thinkers with whom Spinoza was in contact.[18]

Spinoza made a logical modification to Descartes's philosophical system by collapsing Descartes's mind-body/theology-philosophy/faith-reason dualism into a monism. The mental and the physical, the mind and the body, God and nature, all simply became different names for one thing, the one universal substance of which everything is a part, which may be called God or Nature.[19] Like Descartes, Spinoza was convinced that this God-Nature was virtually reducible to mathematical laws, and thus was entirely mechanistic and deterministic—no room for miracles, true agents, or free will.[20]

All the truth to be known about God (that is, Nature) could be learned from the study of Nature (that is, God). Therefore, revelation was neither necessary nor possible. In fact, the supposed books of revelation, Scripture, were ignorant of the higher mathematics that were necessary to comprehend the true essence of God-Nature, and therefore useless as a source of truth, although they retain a useful political role in motivating the ignorant masses to behave in a moral way.[21]

Since Scripture presented a worldview completely at odds with his own, and it held a revered place within society, the success of Spinoza's philosophical project depended on demolishing the credibility of Scripture, to which he devoted large parts of the *Tractatus*.[22] Since miracles were not possible in Spinoza's deterministic mechanical universe, the reports of miracles in Scripture had to be either explained away as misunderstandings on the part of the human authors, or else fabrications inserted into the text. Since the concept of revelation made no sense in Spinoza's monistic universe, the prophets did not have revealed knowledge, but merely wrote what arose from their own imaginations. Moreover, they did not agree with one another, but made competing and contradictory claims. Accordingly, Spinoza made every effort to emphasize and even exaggerate apparent contradictions, discrepancies, or inconsistencies in the biblical text.[23] Since Scripture is not a source of divine truth (which is to be identified more or less with mathematics and natural science), the interpretation of Scripture is no longer a search for truth, but merely an analysis of what the historical author meant, which involves a reconstruction of the historical circumstances of the author and his sources, etc.—a very long and complicated process whose formidable difficulties Spinoza tried to impress upon his readership.[24] Thus biblical interpretation becomes the historical-philological, rather than theological, endeavor that it remains to this day.

As noted, the works of Spinoza and Meyer were widely condemned and censored in their own day, but in 1776, a little over a century after their publication, a dual bound copy of Meyer's *Philosphia* and Spinoza's *Tractatus*

was edited, annotated, and published by the enormously influential German biblical critic and New Testament scholar Johannes Salomo Semler, the "father of German rationalism" and teacher of J. J. Griesbach, J. G. Eichhorn, G. Lessing—indeed, a generation of German exegetes.25

Catholic Exegesis: Cornelius à Lapide: His Place in the History of Biblical Scholarship

We turn now from the once-radical-now-mainstream thought of Descartes and Spinoza to the quieter waters of Cornelius à Lapide, who, from the Roman Catholic persepective, is a model of Roman Catholic piety and erudition, to assess the meaning of his work, if any, in the history of biblical scholarship.

Cornelius à Lapide was born in 1567 in Bocholt, now in Belgium, but at that time part of the Spanish (Hapsburg) Low Countries.26 His childhood and youth were marked by the turmoil of the so-called "Eighty Years' War," the Protestant-Catholic struggle for control over the Low Countries that ended with Calvinist dominance over the northern provinces, the modern Netherlands, and the Catholic sway over the southern, now Belgium. Many years later, during his professorship at Louvain, Lapide would return during holidays to preach and administer the sacraments to pilgrims at the shrine at Scherpenheuvel in Belgian Brabant, a location the local Catholic populace associated with answered prayers for protection from Calvinist mob violence during the "Beeldenstorm" uprising in 1566.27

Lapide studied at Jesuit colleges in Maastricht, Cologne, Douai, and, ultimately, for four years in Louvain. He entered the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) in 1592 and was ordained in 1595. From 1596 to 1615 he served as professor of Scripture and Hebrew at the Catholic University of Louvain. In 1616 he was called to Rome to serve in the same capacity at the Jesuit-run Gregorian University until his death in 1637.28

Lapide was a prodigious biblical commentator, producing prolix volumes on every biblical book with exception of Job and Psalms. His first published commentaries were on Paul's epistles (1614) and the Pentateuch (1616), both published in Antwerp before his transfer to Rome.

Many partial editions of his commentaries were published in his own lifetime, and dozens of editions of his complete works, as well as compilations of extracts, were published in the eighteenth and ninteenth centuries, mostly in France and Italy. Unfortunately, almost all of these editions were in Latin and thus inaccessible to the layperson. Thomas W. Mossman (1826–1885), a philocatholic Anglican clergyman who reconciled with Rome on his deathbed, translated most of Lapide's commentary on the New Testament, first published

in 1876.[29] This is the form in which Lapide is best known in the English-speaking world.[30]

Lapide's death neatly coincides with the publication of Descartes's *Discourse on Method*, such that Lapide serves almost poetically to illustrate the best of Catholic exegesis prior to the onslaught of the modernist paradigm in biblical studies. Since a complete analysis of Lapide's prodigious *oeuvre* is far beyond the scope of this essay, in what follows we will focus on Lapide's most influential volumes, his four Gospel commentaries, as an example of his hermeneutical method.[31]

It is not known exactly when Lapide composed his Gospel commentaries, except that it was certainly during his professorship in Rome (1616–1637), since the introduction presupposes that his work on the Old Testament was largely complete by that time.[32] Lapide conceived of his gospel commentaries as a discrete literary unit within his larger collection of commentaries, and so the commentary on Matthew is preceded by several introductory essays, which apply to all four Gospels.

Lapide begins with a preface consisting of three chapters. The first chapter is by far the longest, and is hortatory or even sermonic in form. He praises the inestimable value of the Gospels as God's highest self-revelation, far superior to the Old Testament, by enumerating twelve contrasts in which the gospel (roughly, the New Testament) is superior to the law (i.e., the Old Testament), and sprinkling his discourse liberally with quotations and anecdotes from the lives of the fathers and the saints designed to impress upon the reader this truth: "All of a Christian's wisdom, virtue, perfection and happiness depends on this: that he draws upon the teaching and life of Christ as described in the gospel, meditates on it, and expresses it in his conduct."[33]

In the second chapter of the preface, he discusses the number, order, discrepancies and agreement of the four Gospels one with another.[34] Lapide embraces the Church's long-standing tradition—about which he quotes Augustine—that the Gospels were composed in the same order in which they are found in the canon, with Matthew writing his Gospel first in Hebrew, which was immediately translated into Greek, and Mark summarizing and abbreviating Matthew. He also treats of their similarities and differences, but since he deals with these issues at greater length in the Canons of Interpretation, we will analyze his approach below.

The third chapter of the preface discusses the primary and secondary sources he used in composing his commentaries, which is fascinating for the light it sheds on the linguistic and text-critical resources that were available for Catholic scholars in the seventeenth century.[35] Lapide works primarily from the Latin of

Jerome's Vulgate and "the Greek," but he does not specify the Greek manuscripts from which he works. He probably had access to good copies of the Majority text from the Vatican libraries and the Jesuit's Roman College, but he also may have had access to Vaticanus (B) itself. In addition to the Greek and Latin, Lapide asserts that he has consulted the Syriac (Peshitta), Arabic, Coptic, Ethiopic, and Persian (Farsi) versions. "Of all these versions I propose to make use, though in moderation, and with a grain of salt. For they have not the authority of the Greek and Latin Gospels; but they confirm, and to some extent shed light on them."[36] Lapide notes that his Arabic version is that printed by the Medici press in 1591. His Persian (Farsi) manuscript dates to AD 1381 and was brought from Arga to Rome as a gift to the Jesuit Roman College by the Jesuit Jerome Xavier—a cousin of St. Francis Xavier. For assistance with the Oriental languages, Lapide has employed the aid of the young priests from the Middle Eastern nations who went to Rome for education, and also his colleague Fr. Athanasius Kircher, a great seventeenth-century Orientalist.[37]

While both in Louvain and Rome, Lapide studied a wide range of commentaries, both ancient and recent. Among the patristic commentaries he has consulted, he makes special mention of Origen, Jerome, Augustine, Ambrose, Cyril, Chrysostom, Bede, Theophylactus, and Euthymius.[38]

His comments on the spate of recent commentaries sound humorous to the twenty-first century scholar who may have thought the explosion of secondary literature on Scripture a recent phenomenon:

> Of recent commentators the number is almost infinite. Their superabundance makes it difficult for the reader to know which to choose…. Among commentaries which are so divergent in their interpretations, you do not know which one to prefer and follow. Many, moreover, are so wordy that not only students but even learned scholars who devote themselves entirely to sacred scripture do not have the time and leisure to read them (not to mention the intellectual strength and endurance).[39]

Among those he has consulted, Lapide mentions Alphonsus Tostatus, Cornelius Jansen, Franz Lucas, Alphonsus Salmeron, Joannes Maldonatus, Franciscus Toletus, and Sebastianus Barradius. He also notes that the "heretics" Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Beza, and Pelican have commented on the Gospels; his knowledge of their work seems largely mediated by the *Symmystes*, a catena or anthology of their commentaries composed by Augustinus Marloratus (remembered in Calvin studies as one of the first to compile biblical and topical indices of the *Institutes*).[40]

The three-chapter preface is followed by a "Monotessaron," or Chronology of the Life and Work of Christ, in which Lapide collates all the events mentioned in the four Gospels into the framework of a four-year public ministry of the Lord (AD 31–34).41

The last item of front matter relevant to all the Gospels is Lapide's "Canons of Interpretation," a set of thirty-nine principles or guidelines for proper exegesis of the Gospels, to which is appended thirteen lists of various genre of statements to be found in the Gospels: counsels, precepts, threats, prophecies, miracles, etc.42

Each individual Gospel is also prefaced by an introduction in which Lapide deals with issues peculiar to that Gospel, such as authorship, intended audience and purpose in writing, and linguistic/rhetorical peculiarities.

Lapide does not lavish equal attention on all the Gospels. Matthew, as the first treated, receives disproportionate attention: two volumes or 1,370 pages in the Loreto edition. By contrast, Mark and Luke share a volume, with Mark being treated in a remarkably brief 111 pages, Luke in 620. John merits his own volume, 820 pages in length. Obviously, the pericopes and basic issues common to all four Gospels Lapide deals with in Matthew. The other commentaries focus primarily on the material unique to that book. While all four Gospels receive a particular preface, John also has two other pieces of front matter: a set of seventeen Canons of Interpretation peculiar to John, and a discussion of Johannine commentators and commentaries.

The comments on each of the four Gospels proceed verse by verse, with Lapide translating, commenting on the literal sense, and, where appropriate, remarking also on various spiritual senses, such as the "mystical," the "symbolic," the "tropological," the "allegorical," and the "anagogical." Lapide does not feel obliged always to offer a spiritual sense for each verse or pericope, much less all the spiritual senses for each. The categories "tropological," "allegorical," and "anagogical" should still be familiar to the modern Catholic reader, since they are enshrined in the recent *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (§115–119). The "tropological" is the moral sense, the "allegorical" describes a type of Christ present in the text, the "anagogical" is a figurative sense in which the text points toward the Last Things. However, the "mystical" and "symbolic" senses are distinctions no longer in common use in the Catholic tradition, and it is difficult to identify what exactly these categories mean for Lapide, and how he distinguishes them. This could be the topic of a study in itself. Here it must suffice to say that the "mystical" and "symbolic" senses seem to be speculative non-literal interpretations based on an analogy between something in the scriptural text and one or more truths of the faith or the Christian life.

The most common spiritual sense Lapide offers is the tropological or moral

sense—that is, what may be taken from the text for the purpose of the edification of the reader in Christian virtue. This is doubtless because of the importance of the tropological sense for preaching. Lapide typically offers the spiritual senses to the reader, rather than insists upon them in the way he does with his treatment of the literal sense. The literal sense must be accepted; the spiritual senses are for consideration, or better, meditation.

Lapide's "Canons of Interpretation" of the Gospels provide the best summary or picture of his exegetical method. For the sake of discussion, I present here my own synopsis and paraphrase of his Thirty-Nine Canons.[43]

The Thirty-Nine Canons of Lapide on Interpreting the Gospels

Canon 1: The Evangelists are selective in narration; the principle of selection: to show Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God.

Canon 2: The Evangelists do not preserve chronological order; they join teachings and events together that occurred on different occasions.

Canon 3: The Evangelists disagree in their words, but agree in meaning.

Canon 4: Christ taught in Semitic aphorisms like the wisdom literature; therefore there is not always a common theme in His collected teachings.

Canon 5: Christ applies the same saying, repeatedly, to different subjects.

Canon 6: In conversation, Christ often responds to what His interlocutors are thinking rather than to what they are actually saying.

Canon 7: One God was proclaimed by Moses; a duality of persons by the Prophets; the Trinity by Christ.

Canon 8: In Christ, we must distinguish the divine and human nature; in the Godhead, the three persons: Father, Son, and Spirit.

Canon 9: When the Gospels call God the Father the "one and only God"—this is meant to distinguish God from idols, not the Father from the Son and Spirit.

Canon 10: The Vulgate translates the Greek "an" as "forte," but it actually means "certainly."

Canon 11: When Christ attributes a healing to the faith of the individual, "faith" should be understood as the faith which is clothed in charity and works through acts of hope, penitence, love, etc…. Christ and Paul understand faith to include all gifts and virtues as their principle. He contrasts faith not with charity and grace but with the old law and natural powers. Thus St. Augustine and Trent.

Canon 12: Verbs in Hebrew can have an inchoative, progressive, or perfective

sense, and this expresses itself in the New Testament [because the evangelists thought in or were influenced by Hebrew] in several important passages.

Canon 13: Affirmative propositions often must be understood not absolutely but in a restricted sense. For example, salvation is attributed, in various passages, to faith (John 3:15, Rom. 1:17), prayer (Acts 2:21), love (Luke 7:47, 1 Cor. 13:2), baptism (1 Pet. 3:21), the Eucharist (John 6:54), or trust (Isa. 40:31). To absolutize any of these passages would result in a distorted soteriology. On the other hand, negative propositions are to be understood absolutely.

Canon 14: St. Matthew dwells most on the teaching and sayings of Christ; Luke on His deeds and actions; Mark abbreviates and often interprets Matthew; John constructs his Gospel so that Christ's divinity is most prominent.

Canon 15: Christ, the apostles, and the prophets explain spiritual and divine things in corporeal and human terms, because otherwise men could not grasp them. Thus many anthropomorphisms and striking metaphors are used to describe God, Christ, eternal life, etc.

Canon 16: Although God's attributes are identical with His nature (divine simplicity), Scripture describes His attributes with plural forms, speaking of God's "works," "mercies," "wills," etc. (Pss. 144:9; 110:2).

Canon 17: If Scripture seems to enjoin a misdeed, shameful act, impossibility, sin, or something contrary to the faith, that saying must be interpreted figuratively and mystically, not literally. On the other hand, when Scripture enjoins something that is not a misdeed, shameful, etc., it should be understood literally.

Canon 18: Hebrew (Jewish) narrative style sometimes omits causes and relates effects, or vice-versa, relates causes but omits effects. This is especially the case in the Gospel of John. E.g., in John 1:20, John the Baptist replies "I am not the Christ," which implies that he had been asked, "Are you the Christ?" even though that exact question was not recorded in what precedes. In New Testament Greek style, "to reply" sometimes just means "to begin to speak"; similar examples may be found also in Homeric Greek.

Canon 19: Another Hebraism, common in Mark, is that a verb is given without its subject, which is understood by context.

Canon 20: In the gospel and Scripture in general, quantities are often expressed in round or symbolic numbers.

Canon 21: Christ frequently employs a Hebraism whereby the comparison of two things is expressed by the affirmation of the greater and the negation of the lesser. This should not be taken as a literal negation of the lesser.

Canon 22: Beware of extreme interpretations: Quoting St. Jerome, “I always admonish the prudent reader not to be satisfied with superstitious interpretations, nor with the things said by those who imaginatively expound passages piecemeal, but to consider, rather, the beginning, the middle, and the end of things, and to connect everything that is written” (*in cap. 25 Matth.*). “Sacred Scripture, therefore, the parts of which are so composed as to be interrelated, is its own best interpreter” (lxxxiii).

Canon 23: The Evangelists employ word play in which the same word is employed in a different sense. E.g., Matt. 8:22: “Follow me and let the (spiritually) dead bury their own (physically) dead.”

Canon 24: Jesus follows the Middle Eastern practice of communicating through parables, proverbs, and paradoxes.

Canon 25: With hostile audiences (e.g., the Pharisees), Jesus uses deliberately obscure parables, then later explains them to his disciples.

Canon 26: “The literal sense of a parable is not that which the words ostensibly record, but rather the sense which is expressed through the things signified by the words” (lxxxiv). In other words, the *literal* sense of the parable of the good Samaritan is along the lines that “all men are potential neighbors,” *not* that a certain man went to Jericho, etc.

Canon 27: A parable has three parts: an introduction, the parable itself, and a conclusion or application.

Canon 28: “Often in parables the comparison is not between persons nor between the parts of the parable and the parts of the thing signified, but rather between the entire parable and the entire subject or theme” (lxxxv).

Canon 29: “In parables, just as in comparisons, the resemblance does “not extend to all the particulars, nor can they all be applied to the thing signified” (lxxxvi). Therefore we ought not to over-allegorize every parable.

Canon 30: Some parables have a secondary tropological or allegorical sense., e.g., the good Samaritan may be an allegory of Christ coming to sick humanity.

Canon 31: “There are two sorts of parables, some based on similarity, others upon dissimilarity. In the former, the force of the argument is derived from something equal or similar; in the latter, the argument is from the lesser to the greater” (lxxxvii).

Canon 32: Some things mentioned in the Scriptures express common opinion at the time of the events being related, but not the strict truth. E.g., Joseph is

called the “father” of Jesus (Luke 2:48).

Canon 33: “Sacred Scripture, even though things have changed, nevertheless retains the names that they had formerly” (lxxxvii). E.g., Dinah is still called a virgin after being violated (Gen. 34:2).

Canon 34: “The Evangelists and Apostles, when citing the Sacred Scriptures of the Old Testament, often do not quote it word-for-word, but according to the sense” (lxxxvii).

Canon 35: “The Scriptures of the New Testament often allude to the Old Testament, because the matter of the New had been foreshadowed in the Old.” “Marvelous, therefore, and wondrously consonant is the harmony of the New Testament with the Old, the maker and author of which is the Holy Ghost” (lxxxviii).

Canon 36: “The Latin translator [of the Vulgate] renders the same Greek word in different ways, especially when one Latin word does not express adequately the force of the Greek word” (lxxxviii).

Canon 37: The Evangelists often condense narratives or simple stories for the sake of brevity, which produces at times the appearance of contradictions between them. The interpreter must at times piece together the fuller narrative from the shortened accounts of the various Evangelists.

Canon 38: The “faith” that Christ requires of those He is about to cure is not justifying faith formed by charity—as in Paul—but a more particular and specific faith that Jesus has the power to accomplish the anticipated miracle.

[Canon 39:][44] “Last of all, we should carefully weigh and discern whether what Christ says is a counsel, precept, promise, or only a permission…or a parable, an adage, a motto, etc.” (lxxxix).[45]

One should first note that Lapide’s canons are not an exhaustive statement of his hermeneutic. In fact, they assume many theological principles not stated explicitly. Most glaringly, there is no statement about the inspiration or infallible truth of the Gospels. However, a few pages later, in his introduction to the Gospel of Matthew, Lapide will state, “S. Matthew wrote…at the *dictation of the Holy Ghost*” (cxxix). It is interesting to note that Lapide did not see a contradiction between a view of inspiration robust enough to be described as “dictation by the Holy Ghost” and the presence in Matthew of verbal disagreements with other Evangelists (Canon 3), dischronologized or condensed narratives (Canons 2, 37), relation of widely held but erroneous opinions (Canon 32), paraphrased Old Testament quotes (Canon 34), and even statements of the Lord whose literal sense had to be rejected (Canon 17). In other words, Lapide’s

doctrine of inspiration—and in this he simply represents Catholic tradition—is high but not rigid, robust yet subtle and flexible enough to recognize a wide range of literary devices, genres, and modes of speech. Lapide in no sense is tied to a rigid literalism. Later rationalist exegetes, like Spinoza, Semler, and Strauss, would make a strong impression on the general public and young divinity students by highlighting the apparent discrepancies, impossibilities, and irrationalisms that result from a consistently literal interpretation of the Scriptures, and the Gospels in particular, as an argument against the inspiration of Scripture generally, as if a high view of inspiration necessitated the *literalistic* truth of each statement of Scripture. What in fact the rationalists were attacking was a straw-man, a caricature of Catholic teaching on the inspiration and infallibility of Scripture, which—as we can see from Lapide—had long recognized the presence of a wide variety of non-literal genres in Scripture and the impossibility, especially with respect to the Gospels, of a literalistic hermeneutic.

Another glaring omission from Lapide's Canons is any direct statement about the hermeneutical need for the guidance of the Church. Again, it is not because Lapide does not recognize such a need. For example, in his discussion of John 6:54, he gives this response to Lutheran and Calvinist interpretations of the passage: "But the practice and defined teaching of the Church is otherwise, *and this is the best interpreter of Holy Scripture.*"[46]

Although he may only express it explicitly in this passage, the principle that "the practice and defined teaching of the Church is the best interpreter of Holy Scripture" is in fact implicit everywhere in Lapide's hermeneutic. Like most faithful Catholic exegetes, Lapide practiced from first to last a thoroughly *ecclesial hermeneutic*. In what follows we seek to demonstrate that most of his canons for the interpretation of the Gospels are particular expressions of this ecclesial hermeneutic.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, following the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation promulgated by Vatican II (i.e., *Dei Verbum*), summarizes the Church's scriptural hermeneutic as developed by the fathers and continuously practiced since then, according to three principles:

> The Second Vatican Council indicates three criteria for interpreting Scripture in accordance with the Spirit who inspired it.
>
> 1. Be especially attentive "to the content and unity of the whole Scripture." Different as the books which compose it may be, Scripture is a unity by reason of the unity of God's plan, of which Christ Jesus is the center and heart, open since his Passover….

2. Read the Scripture within "the living Tradition of the whole Church." According to a saying of the Fathers, Sacred Scripture is written principally in the Church's heart rather than in documents and records, for the Church carries in her Tradition the living memorial of God's Word, and it is the Holy Spirit who gives her the spiritual interpretation of the Scripture.

3. Be attentive to the analogy of faith. By "analogy of faith" we mean the coherence of the truths of faith among themselves and within the whole plan of Revelation.[47]

Although it may have been only with the Second Vatican Council that the Church's hermeneutic was stated so succinctly, nonetheless the principles expressed can be found already in the Fathers. This threefold statement of interpretive principles—the content and unity of Scripture, the living Tradition, and the analogy of faith—is a useful summary of the features of the Church's perennial ecclesial hermeneutic.

First, we must demonstrate why it is that the threefold criteria are specifically an *ecclesial* method of interpretation. When the interpreter is urged to be attentive first of all to the "content and unity" of Scripture, he is being called to view the Scriptures as the Church proposes them. The "content" refers to the truths contained within the entire canon of Scripture. Yet the limits of the Canon are decided by the Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the Church —with the guidance of the Spirit—that decided which books were to be received as inspired and which were not.[48] Therefore the "contents" of the "content" were the product of the Church as instrumental cause.

Second, it is not the books of Scripture themselves that identify themselves as a unity, but the unity of the Scriptures is an element of the Church's faith which she proclaims to the world. It is the Church that presents these books and no others (the content) as one unified Word of God (the unity); therefore, the instruction to "be attentive to the content and unity of Scripture" is none other than, in a sense, an injunction to understand the Scriptures to be what the Church proclaims them to be.

The ecclesial dimension of the second criteria, "read the Scripture within 'the Living Tradition of the whole Church,'" is even more obvious than that of the first. The implicit belief here is that the correct meaning of the Scriptures has been given to the Church. She has properly understood them; their true meaning has not had to await the dawn of the sixteenth, the eighteenth, the twentieth century in order to be revealed. In the Church's living tradition—that is, in her worship, life, and teachings—she preserves the meaning of the Word of God and transmits that same meaning: "According to a saying of the Fathers, Sacred

Scripture is written principally in the Church's heart rather than in documents and records."[49] Therefore the Word of God as practiced by the Church will guide the interpreter in correctly interpreting the Word of God inscripturated.

The ecclesial dimension of the third criteria, "be attentive to the analogy of faith," is also apparent. The "analogy of faith" refers to the harmony of the truths of the Christian faith one with the other. This faith is expressed not only in the Scriptures themselves, but also in the solemn statements of the Church's teaching authority, or magisterium, which sometimes include elements not strictly derivable from Scripture alone. In many ways, attention to the living tradition and to the analogy of faith are closely interrelated.

Turning now to look again at Lapide's Canons for the Gospels, we would argue that almost all of them are particularizations—that is, specific applications—of the perennial ecclesial hermeneutic summarized by three criteria of Vatican II. Indeed, even those Canons that seem to be only *literary* rather than *theological*—that deal with the proper interpretation of literary devices, figures of speech, and idioms the ancient languages—even these canons are related to the ecclesial hermeneutic in the following way: Lapide is concerned that, if the literary features of the text are not understood properly, *an interpretation will result which is in conflict with the ecclesial hermeneutic.*

First, let us look at the Canons that reflect a concern to be attentive to the content and unity of Scripture. Under this category we could consider Canons 1, 2, 3, 14, 18, 19, and 37, all of which deal with the freedom the different evangelists exercise in rearranging the facts, events, and teachings of Christ—an issue that would later be identified as the "Synoptic Problem." Typical of these canons is Canon 37: "For brevity's sake, the evangelists often imply and condense events, which is why they sometimes seem to say contradictory things; hence the interpreter must expound the event at greater length and explain it in more detail, so that the agreement appears" (lxxxviii). This canon or principle of interpretation only arises because Lapide is attempting to respect the content and unity of Scripture, in this case the Gospels. When Lapide reads, for example, the sequence of events in the life of Christ in Matthew, he cannot help but be aware that Luke and John record some of the same events in a different order (content); moreover, since these other Gospels are also the Word of God (unity), the different order can neither be attributed to error nor to intentional deception (lying) on the part of the other Gospel authors—either conclusion would be contrary to the conviction that the whole of Scripture is one unified communication from God, and is therefore true and internally consistent. Therefore, the differences in order between the Gospels are neither error nor intentional deception, but rather part of the literary license the evangelists freely

employed for their various good purposes (Canon 14). Here, as in so many other cases, *attention to the content and unity of Scripture precludes a literalistic hermeneutic.*

Another excellent example of the preclusion of rigid literalism by attention to the content and unity is Canon 13: “Affirmative propositions, especially those that contain promises, blessings, beatitudes, rewards, etc., often must be understood not absolutely and universally, but appropriately and in a restricted sense” (lxxviii).

What is at issue here? What is motivating Lapide to articulate this principle? The examples he gives clarify what is at stake: In numerous passages of Scripture, salvation is attributed to different virtues or behaviors—faith, love, baptism, reception of the Eucharist, prayer, etc. Should any reader latch onto one of those verses and absolutize it, forgetting that other passages of Scripture attribute salvation to other things (content) and that all of Scripture is one Word of God and thus speaks together (unity), he would arrive at an erroneous and distorted soteriology, that is, not the soteriology of the Catholic Church.

In fact, from Lapide’s perspective, this is what many Protestants have done: taken passages like John 3:16, and understood them in an absolute and universal sense, and not restricted. Thus salvation is immediately consequent on the act of faith in Christ—the role of the sacraments, the life of self-denial, and the theological virtues that are stressed in other passages of Scripture are ignored.

Moving on to the second criteria, the analogy of faith, it can be seen that several canons are applications of this principle: Canons 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 21, 32, and 33. A good example is Canon 17: “If Christ, the prophets, and the Apostles seem by their words to command…a misdeed, that saying is not to be interpreted literally, but figuratively and mystically” (lxxx). The example he provides is Matthew 18:8–9: “If thy hand, or thy foot, scandalize thee, cut it off and cast it from thee.” This dominical injunction would seem to require self-mutilation. Yet, as Lapide insists, “Self-mutilation is not lawful,” and he criticizes Origen for performing it (lxxx). How does Lapide know that self-mutilation is not lawful? He does not state the obvious: It is prohibited by the Church. One should note: Although there is a scriptural argument to be made against self-mutilation (Lev. 19:28; 1 Cor. 6:19), it is by no means conclusive, because, other Scriptures notwithstanding, Matthew 18:8–9 could always be advanced as proof that, under certain circumstances, it is permissible. So the real issue at stake is not simply keeping in mind the content and unity of Scripture—that is, the other scriptural testimonies on the subject at hand. Rather, the real issue is that self-mutilation contradicts the *moral teaching of the Church,* which, to be sure, Lapide and any believing Catholic would hold to be in harmony with

Scripture, and yet not simply identical with the scriptural witness. So, when faced with the exegetical question of whether Matthew 18:8–9 should be understood literally or in some figurative sense, Lapide urges the reader to be guided, essentially, by the analogy of faith, and to interpret the passage in harmony with truths that can be known from other branches of Catholic theology —in this case, moral theology. In doing so, he is following the fathers, particularly Augustine.[50]

Another clear example of the application of the analogy of faith is Canon 16, which essentially denies the literal sense of those passages of Scripture which speak of God's attributes in the plural—His mercies, His works, His wills—because of the doctrine of divine simplicity, namely that the attributes of God are identical with His essence.

Obviously, the doctrine of divine simplicity was not a primary concern to most of the human authors of Scripture, especially those of the Old Testament. Divine simplicity only becomes a concern when the faith of the Church was translated into the categories of the Greek philosophical tradition. Nonetheless, how to express the faith within these categories was not left to the discretion of the individual Catholic believer or theologian—to the contrary, the Church became convinced that the only proper philosophical analysis of the divine essence led inevitably to the doctrine of simplicity. Therefore, those passages of sacred Scripture whose literal sense would seem to deny this doctrine, *must be taken figuratively*.

It is not always possible to distinguish the criteria of the Church's living tradition from the analogy of faith or the content and unity of Scripture, since to read Scripture in light of its content and unity and the analogy of faith is in fact part of the Church's living tradition. However, if there is a canon which quintessentially reflects a cognizance of the Church's tradition, it is the last, the "unnumbered" Canon 39: "Last of all, we should carefully weigh and discern, whether what Christ says is a counsel, a precept, a promise,…a permission,…or a parable, an adage, a motto, etc" (lxxxix). What follows is a comprehensive listing of the dominical sayings according to genre.

On one level, the stress on distinguishing the genre of Christ's statements is simply a matter of proper literary interpretation. When interpreting any human literature, one should note which statements are imperative and which indicative, and to whom the statements are addressed. However, literary criteria alone are not sufficient to produce the lists Lapide provides, because frequently there are no formal indications by which one can distinguish between, for example, a "counsel" and a "precept," that is, between a supererogatory injunction and an absolute norm of Christian conduct. Indeed, whether or not there is such a

distinction was and is a matter of controversy between Roman Catholics and Protestants. Therefore, in listing the dominical sayings by genre as a guide for interpretation, Lapide is, at several points, simply transmitting the Roman Catholic Church's living tradition concerning the scope and intent of her Lord's commands.

Implicit in Lapide's method is a certain construal of how the Word of God is transmitted through history, and the manner of its subsistence through time. The meaning of the Word of God as manifested in Scripture cannot be fully determined without reference to the Church. The relationship between Scripture and the Church is reciprocal. The meaning of Scripture resides in the thought and practice of the Church. Therefore one could even speak, in a sense, of the Scripture and the Church as co-bearers of the Word of God. The saying of the Fathers is apropos: "The Word of God is written principally in the Church's heart."[51]

A good example of this in practice is Lapide's treatment of Matthew 16:19: "And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." After some discussion Lapide summarizes his interpretation: "The sense, therefore, is: 'I, Christ, will give to thee, Peter, as pontiff, and consequently to all the other popes who come after thee, the keys of the kingdom of heaven, by which I mean supreme authority to rule the universal Church dispersed throughout the whole world, that by the keys, *i.e.*, by thy power in opening or shutting the Church to men, thou mayest likewise open or shut heaven to them."[52]

When we compare the actual text of Scripture with Lapide's statement of its "sense," it is clear that his "sense" is far more elaborate than the Scripural text. What then does he mean by saying that this is its "sense"? Surely he does not mean that all the information in his statement of the text's sense is inscribed formally in the words of Scripture; i.e. he is *not* saying "All this information is in the Greek of Matthew 16:19 if one knows the language well enough." Rather, he is allowing the Church to define some key terms of the text—"keys" and "the kingdom of heaven"—and rereading the text in light of those definitions. So we see the reciprocal relationship between Scripture and the mind of the Church. What Lapide means by the "sense" of Scripture, then, is none other than "*its meaning to and for the Church.*"

And lest one too quickly criticize Lapide for ecclesial eisegesis, for importing information (i.e., the meaning of the "keys") from outside the text into the text, it is salutary to recognize that a certain degree of importation of meaning to the text is unavoidable, because the text does not itself supply a full definition of its terms. In the present case, for example, the gospel of Matthew never defines what the "keys of the kingdom of heaven" actually are, nor does the rest of

Scripture. Although it is a valid principle to interpret Scripture according to Scripture, one Lapide himself endorses, such a method does not resolve the meaning of many texts. Therefore, it is impossible to avoid recourse to sources outside the canon. What is the best source? To Lapide, and the Catholic theological tradition in general, the best source is the community that wrote the texts, collected the texts, canonized the texts, and offers them to herself and to the world as the Word of God.

Concluding Reflections

Since Cornelius a Lapide died in 1637, the same year that Descartes published his *Discourse on Method,* his life and work conveniently mark the end of an era. He represents the culmination and high point of Catholic exegesis of the Counter-Reformation, before the threat posed by rationalist exegesis in the trajectory of Descartes–Meyer–Spinoza had made itself felt within the theological faculties.

Lapide's erudition is considerably greater than that stereotypically attributed to Roman Catholic exegetes in this time period. He displays a comfortable mastery of Greek, Hebrew, Latin, and at least competence in several other Near Eastern languages, and he frequently brings subtle points of grammatical nuance to bear upon his exegesis—to the point that his exegesis of particular verses is sometimes dependent not merely on the Greek behind the Latin Vulgate, but on the presumed Hebrew/Aramaic formulation in the mind or the mouth of the inspired author that lies behind the Greek. He works from the Latin Vulgate, treating it as a normative but not infallible interpretation of the underlying Greek, of which he is keenly aware. He is also well aware of the concepts and techniques of classical (Greco-Roman) and Semitic rhetoric, and interprets accordingly. His knowledge of the fathers is everywhere evident. He never contradicts a patristic consensus, but will frequently dismiss the opinion of an individual father if he finds it forced.

Strongly in continuity with the fathers, particularly Augustine in *De Doctrina Christiana,* Lapide practices an "ecclesial" hermeneutic that presumes that the faith and practice of the Church is the hermeneutical key to unlocking the meaning of the Scriptures. This methodology implies a theology of the Word of God in which the Word subsists and is transmitted not only in the written Scriptures, but also within the life and thought of the Church. Of course, this theology of the Word is not unique to Lapide, but is the common view of the Roman Catholic theological tradition.

In contrast to the "ecclesial" hermeneutic of Lapide and other Catholics, the nascent rationalist exegesis of Meyer, Spinoza, and their intellectual heirs

represents a radically non-ecclesial hermeneutic, in which the exegete operates as a radically independent individual (like Descartes's thinking individual reconstructing his thought-world from the principle of *cogito ergo sum*) and the Church's tradition is irrelevant at best, and a positive distortion at worst, for ascertaining the meaning of the text.

In a mediating position, one may locate the various Protestant exegetes, who, on the one hand, never wished completely to dispense with the Christian exegetical tradition and regarded it as normative to varying degrees according to the individual exegete, yet, on the other hand, wished to maintain, according to the principle of sola Scriptura, the possibility that the individual exegete, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, might *alone* arrive at the true meaning of Scripture, apart from and even contrary to the testimony of councils, hierarchy, Fathers, or tradition. Such a position might be described as a partially ecclesial hermeneutic.

1. For more on the biography of Descartes, see Genevieve Rodis-Lewis, *Descartes: His Life and Thought,* trans. J. M. Todd (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995). On Descartes's satisfaction with the tolerant Dutch culture, see his *Discourse on Method,* III.31. Our translation is René Descartes, *Discourse on Method* and *Meditations on First Philosophy,* trans. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1980).

2. For example, the Senate of the University of Groningen, writing to Count Louis Henry of Nassau in 1651, could say of Descartes that he was "as we have been informed, fairly free from Catholic superstitions even in the hour of his death." Quoted in Theo Verbeek, *Descartes and the Dutch: Early Reactions to Cartesian Philosophy 1637–1650* (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1992), 83; see also 80. It is also well known that he fought as a mercenary for the Protestant nobleman Maurice of Nassau, Prince of Orange.

3. See Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650–1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 24–25.

4. Verbeek, *Descartes and the Dutch,* 87; Israel, *Radical Enlightenment,* 25.

5. On Voetius see esp. Verbeek, *Descartes and the Dutch,* 4–12; Israel, *Radical Enlightenment,* 24.

6. Descartes, *Discourse on Method,* IV.31–32.

7. Descartes, *Discourse on Method,* IV.32.

8. On the vulnerability of much of Descartes's edifice to doubt, see Richard H. Popkin, *The History of Scepticism: From Savonarola to Bayle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 158–73. Significantly, Spinoza followed Descartes in the selective application of skepticism. See Popkin, *History of Scepticism,* 239–240.

9. Descartes, *Discourse on Method,* III.28.

10. Verbeek, *Descartes and the Dutch* (see note 2 above), provides a thorough account of the theological and ecclesiastical firestorm over Cartesian thought that ensued in the Netherlands in the decades following the publication of the *Discourse* and *Meditations.*

11. This was realized by his contemporaries, for example Cambridge Platonist Henry More: see Rosalie L. Colie, *Light and Enlightenment: A Study of the Cambridge Platonists and the Dutch Arminians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), 49–59.

12. For an analysis of the few remarks Descartes did make on the subject of theology and Scripture, see H. J. M. Nellen, "Rene Descartes/Cartesius," in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation,* ed. M. Saebø (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008), 2:823–826. Nellen's reading of

Descartes as being in continuity with the Catholic interpretive tradition is, in our view, superficial and possibly naïve.

13. See David Friedrich Strauss, *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined*, ed. Peter C. Hodgson, trans. George Eliot (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972), 39–92 (=§1–16), esp. 87–92 (=§16).

14. On the significance of Meyer, see Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*, 197–217.

15. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*, 201–202.

16. E.g., Popkin, introduction to *The Books of Nature and Scripture: Recent Essays on Natural Philosophy, Theology, and Biblical Criticism in the Netherlands of Spinoza's Time and the British Isles of Newton's Time*, ed. J. E. Force and R. H. Popkin, International Archives of the History of Ideas 139 (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994), vii–viii; Roy Harrisville and Walter Sundberg, *The Bible in Modern Culture: Baruch Spinoza to Brevard Childs*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 30–45.

17. See Colie, *Light and Enlightenment*, 66–74.

18. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*, 275–294, esp. 285.

19. See Spinoza's *Ethics*, bk. 1, props. 7, 11, 14, 18. Our edition is Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics; Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect; and Selected Letters*, ed. S. Feldman, trans. S. Shirley (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1992).

20. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*, 243–244.

21. See *Tractatus* ch. 2.3.8, 2.5.1, 2.10.3 in Benedict Spinoza, *Theological-Political Treatise*, ed. Jonathan Israel, trans. Michael Silverthorne and Jonathan Israel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 28–30, 35; Steven Nadler, "The Biblical Hermeneutics of Baruch de Spinoza," in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament*, 2.827–836.

22. For example, virtually all of chaps. 1–12.

23. See *Tractatus* ch. 7, "On the Interpretation of Scripture."

24. Nadler, "Bible Hermeneutics," 833–836.

25. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*, 200.

26. There is very little secondary literature on the life and work of Lapide. The primary sources for biographical information are M. Paquot, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire littéraire des dix-sept provinces des Pays-Baz*, vol. 7 (Louvain, 1766) and C. Sommervogel, S.J., *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, vol. 4 (Brussels/Paris, 1893), cols. 1511–26. Pierre Gibert's "Cornelius à Lapide" in *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament* 2.764–767 is one of the few modern assessments. We cannot agree, however, with Gibert's interpretation of Lapide as an anticipation of Richard Simon ("Lapide," 767). This reflects a failure to see Lapide's continuity with the Catholic intellectual tradition, especially with Augustine and Aquinas. Lapide's emphasis on the literal sense is rooted in patristic thought and is not a movement toward the critical exegesis of Simon.

27. See Charles A. Coulombe's foreword to *The Great Commentary of Cornelius A Lapide: The Holy Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, trans. T. W. Mossman, rev. M. J. Miller (Fitzwilliam, N.H.: Loreto Publications, 2008) 1:viii–ix [hereafter *Matthew I*].

28. Coulombe, foreword, 1:ix–x.

29. *The Great Commentary of Cornelius à Lapide*, ed. and trans. T. W. Mossman (London: J. Hodges, 1876–1886).

30. Coulombe, "Foreword," xii–xiv.

31. Lapide's commentaries on the Gospels have now been reprinted in an elegant and handsome form by Loreto Publications (see note 27 above). This edition will serve as the basis for our discussion below, especially vol. 1 [hereafter cited as *Matthew I*], vol. 2 (hereafter cited as *Matthew II*) and vol. 4 (hereafter cited as *John*).

32. Lapide, *Matthew I*, xix.

33. Lapide, *Matthew I*, xxxiii.

34. Lapide, *Matthew I*, xli–xlvii.

35. Lapide, *Matthew I*, xlix–lii.

36. Lapide, *Matthew I*, xlix.

37. Lapide, *Matthew I,* xlxix–1.
38. Lapide, *Matthew I,* 1.
39. Lapide, *Matthew I,* 1.
40. Lapide, *Matthew I,* 1–li.
41. Lapide, *Matthew I,* lv–lxxi.
42. Lapide, *Matthew I,* lxxiii–cxxvii.
43. Unless otherwise noted, I have summarized Lapide's canons in my own words. Hereafter, passages marked in quotes are direct quotations from the Loreto Publications edition, followed by the page numbers of that edition (i.e., from *Matthew I*).
44. Lapide does not number his last canon, but it would be Canon 39.
45. For the reader's convenience, Lapide then appends lists he has compiled of the following genre of dominical statements: (1) *Counsels* (exhortations by Christ to heroic virtue or supererogatory behavior that is not demanded of all Christians at all times); (2) *Precepts* (obligatory rules for all Christians not found in the Old Testament); (3) *Commandments* (a mixed genre, partly counsel and partly precept); (4) *Precepts and counsels to the apostles in particular;* (5) *Promises;* (6) *Threats;* (7) *Miracles of Christ* (not properly a genre of dominical saying as the other lists, but included here for convenience); (8) *Oracles and prophecies;* (9) *References to the Seven Sacraments* (again, not a genre of dominical saying, but included for convenience); (10) *Paradoxes* (apparently oxymoronic, self-contradictory or impossible statements); (11) *Parables;* (12) *Maxims* (general principles of the Christian life, stated in the indicative rather than the imperative); (13) *Enigmas* (deliberately obscure sayings of Christ).
46. Lapide, *John,* 248.
47. Catechism of the Catholic Church, §§111–14. The edition used here is *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed. (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1997).
48. Catechism of the Catholic Church, §120: "It was by the apostolic Tradition that the Church discerned which writings are to be included in the list of the sacred books." The conciliar and pontifical documents on the canon of Scripture can be found in Henry Denziger, *The Sources of Catholic Dogma* (Fitzwilliam, N.H.: Loreto Publications, 2002), §§84, 92, 96, 162, 173, 783–84, repr. of *The Sources of Catholic Dogma* (trans. R. J. Deferrari; Washington, D.C.: Herder, 1955); trans. of Heinrich Denziger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum* (rev. Karl Rahner; 30th ed.; Freiburg: Herder, 1954). See also D. J. Murphy, ed., *The Church and the Bible: Official Documents of the Catholic Church*, 2nd rev. and enl. (Staten Island: St. Paul's/Alba House, 2007), 3–27 (=§§1–55).
49. Cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, §113.
50. Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana,* 3:10–12. For English translation, see Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, trans. D. W. Robertson, Jr. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1958), 87–92.
51. Catechism of the Catholic Church, §113, a paraphrase of Origen, in Lev. 5,5; cf. Jer. 31:31.
52. Lapide, *Matthew II,* 119.

CHAPTER 11

Biblical Interpretation and Doctrinal Formulation in John Flavel's Works

Won Taek Lim

John Flavel or Flavell (c. 1630–1691), one of the most influential Puritan ministers in his time, left behind voluminous works which include practical devotional writings, many sermons, and some theological treatises.1 The repeated editions of Flavel's works from his lifetime up to the present, whether separate tracts or collected works, bear witness to his effect and popularity.2 In spite of Flavel's lasting impact on Christian circles, scholars—even those who study Protestant orthodoxy—have not directed due attention to his works.

English Puritans have been largely neglected in studies of Protestant orthodoxy, although their teaching falls generally within the bounds of mainline Reformed theology.3 In general, Continental Reformed thinkers have been the center of interest in Reformed studies, and only some Puritan thinkers, such as William Perkins, William Ames, John Owen, and Thomas Goodwin—who enjoyed international repute in their lifetimes—have drawn the attention of those who studied Reformed theology. The interrelationship of the English Reformed with the Continental Reformed, however, was far deeper and more complex than can be inferred from examining the works of a few famous writers. What can be documented easily is a consistent flow of ideas between England and the Continent. Without due consideration of the English contribution to Protestant Scholasticism, or, indeed, of the Continental impact on the English, a full picture of Reformed orthodoxy cannot be presented.4

Flavel's Life and Work

John Flavel was born at Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, where he was baptized on September 26, 1630. He was the elder son of Richard Flavel, a faithful minister. In 1665, being charged with conventicling, Richard Flavel was caught together with his hearers and later sent to Newgate, where a pestilence seized him. He was bailed out, but died of the contagion.5

In 1646, after being educated at home and in local grammar schools, John Flavel was sent as a servitor to University College, Oxford, where he remained for about two years. On April 27, 1650, soon after receiving his baccalaureate

degree from Oxford, Flavel was appointed assistant in the parish of Diptford, near Totnes in Devon. Shortly after ordination by the presbytery at Salisbury on October 17, 1650, he became minister of Diptford. His first wife, Joan Randall, died in childbirth in November of 1655. A year later he married Elizabeth Stapell, who gave birth to a son, John, in December of 1657. When Anthony Hartford, minister at Dartmouth, died in 1656, Flavel was elected as his replacement, sharing parish duties with Allen Geare. On Sundays Flavel ministered in St. Clement's, Townstal, the ancient parish church overlooking Dartmouth, and on alternate Wednesdays he lectured in St. Saviour's, a daughter church in the town. He was a most effective preacher whose ministry was crowned with many conversions. After being ejected under the Act of Uniformity of 1662, Flavel and Geare both continued to preach in Dartmouth. After Geare's death in December, 1662, Flavel taught in a small dissenting academy in the town.6

The Five Mile Act of 1665 forced Flavel to leave Dartmouth. He moved to Slapton, five miles away, but he continued to visit Dartmouth secretly and a remarkable resourcefulness enabled him to sustain his ministry. Between 1667 and 1671 Flavel's ministry extended beyond the South Hams. He leased property from the Earl of Bedford at Landkey, near Barnstaple, and held midnight services in Hudscott Mansion, near Chittlehampton. Following Charles II's Declaration of Indulgence in 1672, Flavel returned to Dartmouth, licensed as a Congregationalist minister. Around this time his second wife died and he married Agnes Downe, with whom he had a son, Thomas. About 1682 Flavel retired to London, being in great danger at Dartmouth through the malice of his enemies. In late 1684, perhaps after his third wife died, Flavel returned to Dartmouth, where he was soon placed under house arrest. In 1685 his antagonists burned his effigy in the streets, but despite extreme provocation, Flavel continued to preach in his own house and resisted invitations to return to London. About this time he married Dorothy, the widowed daughter of George Jefferies, who served as minister of Kingsbridge until his death in 1665. With James II's Declaration of Indulgence on November 6, 1687, Flavel resumed his public preaching.7

Flavel delivered his last sermon in Ashburton on June 21, 1691, after which he traveled to Topsham to preside as moderator in an assembly of the Nonconformist ministers of Devon. On this occasion he strenuously advocated the heads of agreement under which John Howe had achieved the union of Presbyterians and Congregationalists in London on April 6, 1691. Flavel obtained unanimous agreement to institute a similar union in Devon with the result that all future meetings of the Topsham assembly were combined. At

supper in Totnes on June 26, 1691, Flavel suffered a stroke and became paralyzed on one side of his body. He died later that night.[8]

Flavel was a prolific author of various kinds of writings. His writing began with the goal of touching the daily lives of his parishoners. He wrote *A New Compass for Seamen* (1664)[9] for "all masters, mariners, and seamen, especially such as belong to the Borough of Clifton, Dartmouth, and Hardness, in the county of Devon."[10] Flavel wanted to give the people of Dartmouth, many of whom were seamen, practical instructions on the Christian life, which is a spiritual voyage to heaven. He begins the book by observing the navigation of daily life, then finds profitable applications, and finally suggests serious reflections useful to spiritual life. Though he takes an inductive method to sort out spiritual instructions from daily life, especially from the anaology of navigation, Flavel cites and uses Scripture not only in his "reflections" and "applications" but also in his "observations." John Durant's *Christian's Compass, or The Mariner's Companion* (1658)[11] is very likely the forerunner of Flavel's work. Thus Flavel made the title of his booklet *A New Compass for Seamen.* In 1677, Flavel added an appendix[12] to the original booklet and put a new title on it: *Navigation Spiritualized.*

Flavel's little treatise *Antipharmacum Saluberrimum* (1664)[13] revealed his consciousness of a coming religious crisis. In it he warns against the approaching time of temptation. Similarly, in *Tidings from Rome, or, England's Alarm* (1667),[14] Flavel suggests several grounds for suspecting the prevalence of the popish interest at that time. This work begins with his lament over the ruins of London that resulted from the great fire in September of 1666.

On October 7, 1667, at Slapton, Flavel wrote the epistle dedicatory for *A Saint Indeed* (1668).[15] It was dedicated to his people in Dartmouth during the time of hardships. It was reprinted ten times even before his death.[16] The treatise is based on Proverbs 4:23, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life" and in it Flavel explains how to keep the heart from a variety of sins and fears. *A Saint Indeed* has often been printed under the alternate title, *A Treatise on Keeping the Heart.*[17]

For *Husbandry Spiritualized* (1669),[18] Flavel employed again the inductive method of *A New Compass for Seamen,* but this time the theme was changed from navigation to husbandry. As its subtitle, *The Heavenly Use of Earthly Things,* shows, in *Husbandry Spiritualized* Flavel likewise uses the observation-application-reflection method and cites Scripture in many places. In both *A New Compass for Seamen* and *Husbandry Spiritualized,* Flavel concludes each chapter with "a divine and suitable poem." Between those two treatises, however, a small difference is found: Where *Husbandry Spiritualized* declares

its intention to be “directing husbandmen to the most excellent improvements of their common employments,”19 *A New Compass for Seamen* rather concentrates on the spiritual voyage to heaven. *Husbandry Spiritualized,* by contrast, deals much more with the enjoyment of God’s earthly creation and suggests more guidance for improving the vocations of the commonality.

The Fountain of Life (1673)20 consists of forty-two sermons treating the essence and works of Christ. It is noteworthy that this sermon collection was published one year after Charles II’s Declaration of Indulgence, though Flavel wrote the epistle dedicatory of the book on March 14, 1671.21 According to James William Kelly, in 1674 Flavel sought to circumvent the renewed persecution of Nonconformists by continuing his ministry in print.22 In that year, *A Token for Mourners*23 was published.

The Seaman’s Companion (1676)24 consists of six practical sermons for all masters, mariners, and seamen, especially those belonging to the port of Dartmouth and nearby communities. As *A New Compass for Seamen* adopts its title from that of Durant’s booklet (*Christian’s Compass*), *The Seaman’s Companion* similarly adopts its title from the subtitle of the same booklet (*The Mariner’s Companion*). Yet the similarity of *A New Compass for Seamen* and *The Seaman’s Companion* ends there. In the latter Flavel does not take an inductive method, and he deals with subjects in more theological terms. In *A New Compass for Seamen* he draws attention to observing God’s creation, yet in *The Seaman’s Companion* he highlights understanding His providence. In writing *Divine Conduct: The Mystery of Providence* (1678),25 as the title shows, Flavel’s interest in God’s providence intensified. While *The Seaman’s Companion* contains sermons on divine providence, *Divine Conduct* is a theological treatise on the same subject.

Sacramental Mediations (1679)26 is a devotional treatise written for believers who want to prepare their hearts for the Lord’s Supper. In *The Touchstone of Sincerity* (1679)27 Flavel explains the real signs of grace and how to discern hypocrisy. It is a treatise on Revelation 3:17–18. John E. Smith puts these two treatises, with *Husbandry Spiritualized,* among Flavel’s best-known works, which circulated widely at the time of Jonathan Edwards.28

The Method of Grace (1681)29 is a theological treatise consisting of thiry-five sermons. In this book Flavel mainly explains how the work of Christ is effectually applied to us, but the whole gamut of Christian faith is treated in Flavel’s discussion. In *Preparations for Sufferings* (1681)30 Flavel devotes himself to readying God’s people for great trials in the time of persecution.

In *A Practical Treatise of Fear* (1681)31 Flavel deals with the nature of fear and its remedies, based on Isaiah 8:12–14. In 1682 he bound the treatise together

with *The Righteous Man's Refuge*,[32] thus publishing two volumes in one, entitled *Two Treatises. The Righteous Man's Refuge* is based on Isaiah 26:20. In his epistle to the reader, Flavel writes, "I have endeavoured once more the assistance of poor Christians in these two small treatises, one of *fear*, the other of *preparation for the worst of times*."[33]

In *Pneumatologia: A Treatise of the Soul of Man* (1685),[34] Flavel scrupulously considers important issues about the human soul. After explaining its origin, nature, capacities, and union with the body, he argues for the soul's immortality. Further, Flavel compares the souls of believers and those of unbelievers when in the state of separation from the body.

In 1687, when King James II issued his own Declaration of Indulgence, Flavel was already in his late fifties, yet he was vigorously preaching and writing. In *The Balm of the Covenant* (1688)[35] Flavel shows how the covenant of grace can be a great comfort to believers.

After the Glorious Revolution of 1688, Flavel preached a series of thanksgiving sermons based on Revelation 3:20, "Behold I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me." Many people found those sermons convicting, and Flavel was encouraged to print them under the title of *England's Duty* (1689),[36] in hopes that the book might be helpful to others outside as well as in his own congregation.[37] *Mount Pisgah* (1689)[38] was a single sermon preached for the same reason, based on Deuteuronomy 3:24–25. Later *Mount Pisgah* was added to *England's Duty*.

Though he had a gift for debating, Flavel did not delight in controversies. When Philip Cary, the principal Anabaptist in Dartmouth, presented *A Solemn Call*[39] to the public, however, Flavel was obliged to write against him.[40] In his treatise Cary refuted infant baptism as having no basis in the Word of God. Flavel answered him in *Vindiciae Legis & Foederis* (1690).[41] Flavel argued for infant baptism by proving God's covenant with Abraham (Gen. 17) and the Sinai covenant (Exod. 20) to be the covenant of grace, and by showing the conditionality of the new covenant. Cary answered in *A Just Reply*.[42] Flavel finished his second reply to Cary, but died before its publication.

His posthumous work, *Planelogia* (1691),[43] was published along with two appendices and a letter of recommendation subscribed by his colleagues, including John Howe and Increase Mather. While the first appendix, entitled *Vindiciarum Vindex*, was a refutation of Cary's rejoinder, *The Second Appendix* was against Antinomianism in general.[44] As the recommenders indicated, the publication of *Planelogia* was not only aimed at Cary's rejoinder but also against Antinomianism itself.[45] Indeed, the reprinting of Tobias Crisp's sermons *Christ*

Alone Exalted (1690),46 which originally appeared in 1643, set in motion a long chain of books that carried on their title pages such words as “Reply” or “Rejoinder to the Reply.”47 Flavel had already died by the time the second period of the Antinomian controversy in England found its stride at the end of the seventeenth century. Until the present time, however, Flavel has been widely read by those concerned about the controversies over Antinomianism and infant baptism.48

In *The Reasonableness of Personal Reformation* (1691)49 Flavel argues that the true method of making all men happy in this world, and in the world to come, is nothing but their conversion to God. The treatise consists of two parts. While the first part explains the necessity of conversion, the second part mainly deals with the nature of conversion.

An Exposition of the Assembly’s Catechism (1692)50 was published posthumously. Flavel carried on catechetical exercise for his people of Dartmouth every Lord’s day in 1688, but he died before finishing it. He had prepared his questions and answers up to the second petition of the Lord’s Prayer. The other five remaining questions and answers were done by another.51

As Flavel left behind him a variety of writings, one should not seek to draw out his theology apart from the larger corpus of his writings, which includes didactic, polemical, homiletical, catechetical, and doctrinal works.

Flavel’s Methods of Biblical Interpretation

The Protestant orthodox, especially English Puritans, esteemed Scripture as the only rule of faith and life. In his *Exposition of the Assembly’s Catechism* Flavel also confesses that the Word of God contained in Scripture has been given as “the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.”52 The Roman Catholics’ “uncertain” traditions were not to be compared with their “sure, known, standing-rule” of God’s written Word. Citing Ephesians 2:20 and Isaiah 8:20, Flavel clearly says that “the scriptures are not built on the authority of the church, but the church on them,” and that the Scriptures are not to be tried by councils and fathers, but they by the Scriptures. And he shows his confidence against the Roman Catholics when he teaches that “we owe no obedience to the injunctions of men farther than they are sufficiently warranted by the written word” (Matt. 15:9).53 Holding the superiority of Scripture over the authority of the church, Flavel firmly stands in the Reformation tradition of sola Scriptura.

According to Richard A. Muller, the medieval theologians had a wide range of tools at their disposal in their work of interpreting Scripture: the church’s tradition of doctrinal interpretation, philosophy in a somewhat uneasy alliance with theology, the teaching office of the church, and the *quadriga* or fourfold

pattern of exegesis (loosely called the “allegorical method).” The most important among them was the *quadriga,* as it was a means of bridging the gap between the text and the doctrinal language of the present.[54]

Sola Scriptura was an effective weapon in the Reformation polemic against Roman Catholic ecclesiastical abuses and doctrinal excesses. Developments in hermeneutics during the Renaissance and Reformation, together with the rise of polemic between Protestants and Catholics over the nature of biblical interpretation and its relationship to the doctrines of the church, however, put the Protestant orthodox in a different situation. They were left with the task of reconstructing a Protestant dogmatics in the context of a hermeneutical revolution, which deprived them of the *quadriga*. The doctrinal meaning of Scripture would now have to be found solely in the literal sense of the text. The authority of the text for faith and life was now focused on the literal meaning of Scripture as discerned by the grammatical study of the text and accomplished by individual exegetes.[55]

In *Vindiciae Legis & Foederis*, arguing for infant baptism, Flavel points out Philip Cary’s distortions in interpretation. Flavel says that he treats Cary’s reply to “the arguments of those eminent divines that are gone to glory…and are not capable of defending their solid and regular interpretations of scriptures, against the notions [Cary] force[s] upon them, contrary both to the grammar and scope of several of them.”[56] According to Flavel, four conditions can establish all interpretations of Scripture: “First, If the letter and grammar of the text fairly bear it. Secondly, If the scope and argument of the place will close directly with it. Thirdly, If the interpretation set up against it, cannot stand before both, or either of the former. Fourthly, If the judgment of learned, wise, and impartial men be found generally agreeable to it.”[57]As the third condition depends on the former two, Flavel actually has three basic rules of interpretation: (1) the literal or grammatical sense, (2) the scope, and (3) the judgment of judicious scholars.

The first condition shows that Flavel sided with the other precritical exegetes of the Reformation and Post-Reformation eras who understood the “literal sense” as “the meaning given by the grammatical understanding of the narrative.” In other words, the output of the literal sense remained nearly identical to the *historia* of the *quadriga* and was not at all understood as a meaning to be critically reconstructed by the exegete.[58] Flavel understood the *historia,* or the story that the text is properly understood to recount, to be indwelling in the text and not under or behind it. Thus, for Flavel, the “story” was the same with the literal or grammatical sense of the text.[59]

Flavel’s literal-grammatical exegesis was a basic tool for his interpretation. For example, he used the literal-grammatical exegesis in his controversy against

Cary. First Flavel considers William Allen's argument, which Cary attacked. From Matthew 28:19–20, Allen concludes that infants are not there excluded from baptism, and that a person may be baptized before being taught. To clarify the literal meaning of the text, Allen considers the Greek text. First, μαθητευσατε παντα τα εθνη means "disciple all nations." Second, βαπτιξοντες και διδασχοντες, which literally to translate, is "baptizing and teaching." As μαθητευσατε is a general word, which contains in it the two others that follow, i.e., βαπτιξοντες and διδασχοντες, and is in the imperative mood (whereas the other two are participles), Allen thinks it manifest that the whole commission is given in that imperative, and the mode of execution in these. And if the mode of executing that general commission is expressed in these, where baptizing is first, and teaching comes after, the order of Antipaedobaptists turns out to be wrong.60

Against Allen, Cary insists that if baptizing is first and teaching comes afterward, then the apostles did not understand their commission aright, for they first preached, and then baptized them that by their preaching believed. And Cary enumerates many places of Scripture, including Acts 2, 8, and 10, which serve his purpose. Infants must be excluded by that commission, says Cary, because they are incapable of being taught. Despite the imperative mood and participles, Cary insists that teaching must go before baptizing.61

Against Cary, Flavel confirms that word order places teaching after baptizing. Then Flavel explains that "they discipled adult persons by *teaching,* and taught others baptized in infancy, after their baptizing them; in both they followed their order and commission, in discipling the parents by preaching, and teaching their children baptized, by virtue of the promise to them, after their baptism."62 For Peter declares in Acts 2:39, "the promise is to them, and to their children," which gives a right to both unto baptism. Thus, says Flavel, "*teaching,* according to the order of this *commission,* may be an antecedent duty to the parent, and a subsequent duty to him and his baptized children."63 Flavel fully employed the literal-grammatical exegesis in refuting Cary's argument, and in interpreting Matthew 28:19–20, it is certain that others of the Puritan orthodox were on Flavel's side.64

Flavel's second rule of interpretation was to consider the scope of the text. In *Divine Conduct* he mainly considers Psalm 57:2, "I will cry unto God most high, unto God that performeth all things for me." Regarding the word "performeth," after consulting various translations of the Septuagint, Johannes Piscator, and others, Flavel says, "Our English, making out the sense by an universal particle, is most fully agreeable to the scope of the text: for it cannot but be a great encouragement to his faith, that God had transacted *all things,* or performed *all*

things for him."[65] In this remarks, "the scope of the text" means the purpose of the text. Matthew Poole translates the text in the same way, and understands the psalmist's implication here as follows: "God is not like men, who make large promises, but either through inability, or carelessness, or unfaithfulness, do not perform them, but will certainly be as good as his word."[66]

In his *Pneumatologia,* Flavel considers 1 Peter 3:19, "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison." Flavel admits that there are difficulties in the text, for Guilielmus Estius regards it as a very difficult Scripture in the judgment of almost all interpreters. But Flavel says that those difficulties are not found in the text, rather brought to it. In his judgment, Roman Catholic expositors had racked and tortured the text "to make it speak Christ's local descent into hell, and to confess their doctrine of *purgatory;* things which it knew not."[67]

Here Flavel sees the "scope of the context" as "a persuasive to patience, upon a prospect of manifold tribulations coming upon the Christian churches, strongly enforced by Christ's example, who both in his own person, ver. 18, and by his spirit in his servants, ver. 19, exercised wonderful patience and long-suffering as a pattern to his people." Thus, verse 19 accounts for Christ's longsuffering toward that disobedient and rude generation of sinners, on whom He waited 120 years in the ministry of Noah (v. 20). In other words, the verse "only relates the sin and misery of those contumacious persons, on whom the Spirit of God waited so long in the ministry of Noah."[68] Here again "scope" means purpose.

What Flavel says here about the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory in his *Exposition of the Assembly's Catechism* is noteworthy. Flavel clearly teaches that "purgatory is a groundless fable, and invention of men; and the scriptures alleged to countenance it, grossly abused; 1 Pet. iii. 19."[69] It is interesting that he cites 1 Peter 3:19 as a proof against the doctrine of purgatory. Matthew Henry agrees with Flavel's interpretation of this verse as follows: The preacher is Jesus Christ, but he went, "not by a local motion, but by special operation," as God is frequently said to move, as in Genesis 11:5, Hosea 5:15, and Micah 1:3. Christ went and preached, "by his Spirit striving with them, and inspiring and enabling Enoch and Noah to plead with them, and preach righteousness to them," as 2 Peter 2:5. Regarding the state of the hearers, Henry says, "because they were dead and disembodied when the apostle speaks of them, therefore he properly calls them spirits now *in prison;* not that they were *in prison when Christ preached to them,* as the vulgar Latin translation and the popish expositors pretend."[70]

When dealing with Stephen Charnock's *Discourses Upon the Existence and Attributes of God* (1682), Muller pays special attention to his reference to

"scope."[71] Charnock, like the Reformers and early orthodox exegetes, assumed that "the fundamental issue to be addressed in identifying the meaning of a biblical passage was the focus, center, or 'scope' of the passage, as defined both by its larger context in a chapter or periscope and by its own grammar and syntax."[72] Here it is important that the focus or scope of the text can be defined by its larger context, as it can be by its grammar and syntax. According to Richard A. Muller and John L. Thompson, modern historical-critical exegetes try to understand the meaning of a particular text as a hypothetically isolable unit of text having a *Sitz im Leben* distinguishable from surrounding texts or from the biblical book in which it is lodged. On the contrary, the precritical exegetes, which include Charnock and Flavel, assumed that "the meaning of a text is governed by the scope and goal of the biblical book in the context of the scope and goal of the canonical revelation of God."[73] In other words, the precritical exegetes assumed that a divine purpose and divine authorship unite the text of the entire canon. Their applying the historical and theological unity of the whole Scripture as an integral part to interpreting a particular text was sought with sincerity by their "constant use of Scripture to explain Scripture."[74]

To answer probable and practical questions on baptism, in his *Exposition of the Assembly's Catechism*, Flavel not only uses the literal-grammatical method, but also considers the scope of the text. Against those who insist on plunging the whole body underwater in baptizing a person, Flavel first explains that the word "baptize" signifies "to wash" as well as "to plunge," thus a person may be truly baptized without plunging. He argues, citing Acts 16:33, "we cannot think by the circumstance of time and place, that the jailor, in the night, was carried to a river out of the city."[75] Then he faces those who insist on plunging, citing John 3:23, as John the Baptist also was baptizing at Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there, and they came and were baptized. Yet he briefly answers that the word in the text "signifies many waters, that is, springs of waters there; which are known by travelers to be small, not capable of plunging into."[76] Going a step further, Flavel deals with those who raise an objection to infant baptism. They insist that infants should not be admitted to covenant privileges since they are not able to covenant with God or perform covenant duties. Flavel refutes this objection by recalling circumcision in the Old Testament. "A child now of eight days old, is as capable of being admitted into covenant with God, as children of the same age were in Abraham's days: and then it is manifest they were admitted."[77] And he dismisses the question on the abolition of circumcision by saying that "though circumcision cease, yet baptism is come in its place," citing Colossians 2:10–12.[78] Thus, in defending infant baptism, the text of the Old Testament is illuminated by its fulfillment in the New Testament.

Flavel's last rule of interpretation was to use the help of judicious scholars. In his collected works, Flavel's citation of authors ranges widely from the early church fathers to his own contemporaries. Flavel, like other British theologians of the era, heavily read the works of Continental theologians, whether Reformed, Lutheran, or Roman Catholic, and studied a series of patristic and medieval theologians and philosophers as well.[79] And he agrees with his Protestant orthodox contemporaries who show a healthy respect for the patristic tradition. He cites Augustine more often than any other writer. He also draws on Jerome, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Ambrose, Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Chrysostom, Cyprian, Athanasius, Cyril of Alexandria, and the Cappadocians. He also consults medieval divines. Bernard of Clairvaux is the source that Flavel cites most frequently after Augustine and Martin Luther. Flavel also cites many of his own contemporaries. Flavel's ample consultation with the patristic and medieval sources evidences that seventeenth-century Protestantism remained in dialogue with the long tradition of patristic and medieval biblical interpretation.[80] Moreover, it is a result of pursuing his "concern for continuity with the best of the tradition."[81]

Flavel, like other Reformed and Puritan writers of his time, consults with other exegetes, specifically through the reading of commentaries. To interpret Scripture, Flavel draws on Augustine, Bernard, Luther, John Calvin, Wolfgang Musculus, Jerome Zanchi, Theodore Beza, Johannes Piscator, David, Pareus, Henry Ainsworth, John Davenant, Jean Diodati, Hugo Grotius, William Strong, Edward Reynolds, John Owen, Thomas Manton, James Durham, the Dutch Annotations, the Westminster Annotations, and others. Flavel uses all such works "inasmuch as they have no ultimate authority in themselves, but rest on the authority of Scripture and the exercise of reason."[82] Therefore, the specifically Protestant exegetical tradition, which includes the case of John Flavel, "insofar as it rests on Scripture and the right use of reason, will have equal weight with the 'authorities' of the past."[83] The exegetical method of the Protestant orthodox, including that of Flavel, allows recourse to the theological tradition, but refuses to grant it the same authoritative status as it held in the older Scholasticism.[84]

Flavel's Methods of Doctrinal Formulation

Protestant orthodoxy is "the codification and institutionalization of the Reformation."[85] The Protestant orthodox made a great effort to produce a churchly orthodoxy in continuity with the insights of the Reformers.[86]

For the Protestant orthodox, biblical interpretation and doctrinal formulation were profoundly and organically interrelated. The Protestant orthodox, like the

Reformers, assumed that biblical interpretation, or exegesis, did not function as a disciplinary end in itself but as the ground for a path leading to theological formulation on all matters of doctrine and practice. Moreover, theological or doctrinal formulation could take various forms, i.e., preaching, catechesis, didactic writing, Scholastic theology, and polemical writing.87

The interpretation problem the Protestant orthodox faced was not merely moving from the text to contemporary preaching, but also moving from the text to doctrinal formulation, and even to theological system, without the battery of tools readily available to the medieval theologians. In doctrinal formulation, the task of the Protestant orthodox was lightened to a certain degree as their major opponents—whether Roman Catholic or Lutherans—were quite willing to agree that the traditional language of the Trinity, Christology, and the divine essence and attributes, was eminently biblical. Only the Socinians refused to acknowledge the point.88 Moreover, the literal-grammatical exegesis of the Protestant orthodox was hardly the modern historical-critical method. Like the Reformers, the Protestant orthodox all assumed that "the living Word addressed the church directly in and from the text." Like patristic and medieval exegetes, and the Reformers, they advocated a spiritual and churchly exegesis.89

It has been demonstrated that the rise of the Protestant theological system was intimately bound up with the *locus* method of exegesis and with the extraction of these doctrinal *loci* from the commentary.90 The exegetical task, which the Protestant orthodox executed for their sermons, usually went through four stages. They were to read the text, offer an exposition, collect a few profitable points of doctrine, and apply these doctrines to the life and practice of believers.91 Flavel's sermons usually follow a similar process. For example, his sermons in *The Fountain of Life* basically fall into four parts: text, exegesis, doctrine, and inference.92 Among these, an emphasis is usually laid on "inference." Here inference means "use," or application, of information or doctrine drawn from the text.

The orthodox writers' emphasis on inference was in close connection with their constant concern for a churchly dogmatics. Thus, their application was divided more specifically. For instance, the exegetical and doctrinal task of Andrew Willet consisted of six parts: analysis, grammatical construction, exegesis, doctrine, confutation, and exhortation.93

Flavel was one of those Protestant orthodox who made constant efforts to offer expositions "of the text in and for the church as the fundamental rule of faith and practice."94 How much Flavel headed toward churchly exegesis can be found in his constant emphasis on the use of doctrines drawn out from the text. An example of how Flavel draws out doctrines from the text and applies those

doctrines to Christian life may be found in two sermons of his treatise, *The Method of Grace*.[95]

Flavel puts forth Galatians 5:24 ("And they that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts") as the *locus* for the doctrine of the mortification of sin. He judges the scope of the apostle in this context to be "to heal the unchristian breaches among the Galatians, prevailing, by the instigation of Satan, to the breach of brotherly love."[96]

The passage itself is a proposition that has a subject and a predicate. The subject, i.e., "they that are Christ's," is "'True Christians, real members of Christ; such as truly belong to Christ, such as have given themselves up to be governed by him,' and are indeed acted by his Spirit."[97] In the predicate, "They have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts," Flavel understands "flesh" as "carnal concupiscence, the workings and motions of corrupt nature," and "the affections" as "the inordinate affections." Then the verse means, says Flavel, "they, and they only, are his, who *feel* as well as *profess* the power and efficacy of the sufferings of Christ, in the mortification and subduing of their lusts and sinful affections."[98] The doctrine that Flavel drew out is: "That a saving interest in Christ may be regularly and strongly inferred and concluded from the mortification of the flesh, with its affections and lusts."[99] In the remaining part of Sermon 27, he explains the nature and necessity of mortification, and how regularly a saving interest in Christ may be concluded from it.

In Sermon 28, Flavel proceeds to application. Here he imports five uses: "information," "exhortation," "direction," "examination" and "consolation." For information, he draws many inferences. For example, he infers, "If they that be Christ's have crucified the flesh, *then whatsoever religion, opinion, or doctrine doth in its own nature countenance and encourage sin, is not of Christ*."[100] In information, thus, "the point of doctrine under review was applied, and its implications drawn out, to mould men's judgments and outlook according to the mind of God."[101] For exhortation, he enumerates several motives. One of the motives is, for example, "the comfort and sweetness resulting from mortification should effectually persuade every believer to more diligence about it."[102] The use of exhortation is summoning people to action. For direction, Flavel proposes numerous rules. For example, "If you will successfully mortify the corruptions of your nature, never engage against them in your own single strength, Eph. vi. 10."[103] Direction is the most practical among the uses. The use of examination, or trial, is "a call to measure and assess one's own spiritual condition in the light of the doctrine set forth."[104] Flavel lays down two sorts of evidences of mortification, one for weak Christians, and the other for more mature and

confirmed believers. One of the questions of evidences for weak believers is, for example, “Do you make conscience of guarding against the occasions of sin?”[105] For consolation, he enumerates several comforts, for example, “If sin be dying in you, it is certain that Christ died for you, and you cannot desire a better evidence of it, Rom. vi. 5, 6.”[106] In the consolation, Flavel writes, “the doctrine was shown to be the answer to doubts and uncertainties.”[107]

According to Muller, such an “approach to the text is little more than a development of the *locus* method of exegesis.” Muller continues:

> What the Reformed preachers added was a concluding hortatory section, describing the “use” or “uses” of the biblical doctrines. In many cases, particularly during the seventeenth century, Puritan preachers obliged the scholastic method of their theology still further by adding to their (already incredibly long!) doctrinal sermons sections, either following the doctrinal exposition or interspersed among the uses, in which objections to homiletical points were raised and answered, echoing the scholastic *quaestio.* This latter, extended scholastic style is evidenced, by way of example, in the sermons of John Owen, Stephen Charnock, John Flavel, and Thomas Manton—in their published form, literary and theological efforts hardly distinguishable from dogmatic theology.[108]

Flavel’s copious sermons, filled with various uses, are a clear evidence of the development in doctrinal formulation by the Protestant orthodox in the seventeenth century.

For Flavel, the contents and order of the uses were flexible, but not without a rule. In Sermon 13 of the same treatise, he imports five sorts of uses. The kinds are the same, but they are in a different order: information, examination, consolation, and then exhortation and direction.[109] In Sermon 26, direction is replaced by “conviction,” which directly follows information.[110] In other places, some uses are omitted. In *The Balm of the Covenant,* direction or conviction is omitted, thus there are only four uses: information, exhortation, examination, and consolation.[111] In Sermon 30 of *The Method of Grace* and Sermon 4 of *England’s Duty*, direction and examination are omitted, thus there are only three uses: information, exhortation, and consolation.[112] Among those three uses, in the third meditation of *Sacramental Mediations,* exhortation is replaced by direction.[113]

Though Flavel’s uses are flexible, one can find some rules in them. First, both information and consolation remain all the time, regardless of the number of uses. Second, information comes first all the time, and consolation comes last most of the time. Third, exhortation remains most of the time. Fourth, if one

should name three essentials in Flavel's uses, they are information, exhortation, and consolation. Interestingly enough, consolation seems to serve as the goal of Flavel's uses of doctrines.

Flavel's great concern for consolation or comfort can be found in his *Exposition of the Assembly's Catechism*, where he teaches about the right manner of hearing God's Word:

> *Q. 17. What is the first end in applying the word?*
> A. It is first to be applied to our conviction both of sin and misery; Acts ii. 37….
>
> *Q. 18. What is the second end, or use of applying it?*
> A. It must be applied for our guidance and direction to Christ; John vi. 45….
>
> *Q. 19. What is the third use to which it must be applied?*
> A. We must apply it for our direction through the whole course of Christian duties: 2 Pet. i. 19….
>
> *Q. 20. What other use must we apply it to?*
> A. It must be applied for our comfort in all inward and outward troubles: Rom. xv. 4.[114]

For the Protestant orthodox, especially for the Reformed, there are three basic uses of the law, or more specifically, of the moral law—"*usus politicus*, to restrain sin; *usus pedagogus*, to lead to Christ, and *usus normativus*, to determine the believer's conduct."[115] Here Flavel's explanation on the application of the teachings of Scripture exactly corresponds to three uses of the moral law. His answer to question 17 is identical with *usus politicus*; his answer to question 18, with *usus pedagogus;* and his answer to question 19, with *usus normativus.* For Flavel, the application of the teachings of Scripture does not end here. Flavel's final application of the teachings of Scripture is for our comfort, or consolation. In this way, Flavel understood the text of Scripture as pointing beyond its original context into the practical life of believers.

Moreover, Flavel's catechetical work itself evidences that he made a great effort to interpret Scripture for the edification of the living community of faith. Granting the distinctions made by Protestant orthodox writers in contrasting types or genres of theology, differences of genre within the field of dogmatic theology account for much of the variety. The Protestant orthodox, particularly the British writers of the time of the Westminster Assembly, produced a lot of catechetical and homiletical works with a systematic form. Flavel produced an expansive catechetical theology grounded on the Westminster Standards, thus he

offered “positive catechetical systems,” i.e., not a polemical or disputative expansion of the Westminster Confession.116 Flavel’s catechetical work was an evident and conspicuous example of his churchly dogmatics.

Flavel, like other Protestant orthodox in the seventeenth century, incorporated the theme of covenant into his dogmatic formulations. Regarding covenant theology, he had a great respect for the works of his predecessors as it is easily seen in his *Vindiciae Legis & Foederis.* For example, Francis Roberts’s immense book, *The Mysterie and Marrow of the Bible: viz. God’s Covenants with Man* (1657),117 reflected the development and refinement of English covenant thought after the Westminster Assembly,118 and Flavel had a clear knowledge of Roberts’s arguments.119 Moreover, Flavel himself played his part in making covenant theology flourish in the seventeenth century. Flavel dealt with the important issues of covenant chiefly in *The Balm of the Covenant*, *Vindiciae Legis & Foederis*, and *Planelogia* with its two appendices, i.e., *Vindiciarum Vindex* and *The Second Appendix.*120 Also in his other works, he used covenant as the main frame of his theology.121 Surely the incorporation of large-scale discussions of the covenant into theological systems was an evidence of the dogmatic development in the seventeenth century.122

Flavel was one of the Protestant orthodox who maintained and even developed a churchly dogmatics throughout the seventeenth century. The continuity of the doctrine of Scripture and the continuity of the churchly exegetical tradition points plainly toward the underlying theological continuities between the Reformers’ theology and that of the Protestant orthodox. Therefore, the great divide, either in biblical interpretation or in doctrinal formulation, cannot be placed between the Reformation and the era of Protestant orthodoxy.123

Conclusion

For John Flavel exegesis served as the foundation for doctrinal formulation on all matters of faith and life. Using the literal-grammatical exegesis as the first rule of biblical interpretation, he then sought to define the scope of the text and consulted interpretations from patristic, medieval, as well as the Reformers and his orthodox comtemporaries. Though Flavel pursued continuity with the best of the tradition, he did not allow tradition to hold the same authority that it did in the older Scholasticism.

Like patristic and medieval exegetes, and the Reformers and his orthodox contemporaries, Flavel advocated an interpretation of Scripture that was useful for the church. He was one of those Protestant orthodox who constantly strove for interpreting Scripture as the rule of faith and life for the church. Thus Flavel

devoted the larger part of his sermons to offering practical uses for his hearers. For Flavel, the contents and order of the uses were flexible, but not without a rule. If one were to name three essentials in Flavel's uses, they would be information, exhortation, and consolation. Among them, consolation served as the goal of Flavel's uses of doctrines. In this way, Flavel regarded the text of Scripture as pointing beyond its original context into the practical life of believers. Moreover, Flavel's catechetical work itself evidenced that he had made a great effort to interpret Scripture for the edification of the living community of faith.

Flavel, like his orthodox contemporaries in the seventeenth century, incorporated the theme of covenant into his dogmatic formulations. The incorporation of large-scale discussions of the covenant into theological systems was evidence of the dogmatic development in the seventeenth century. Then, Flavel was one of the Protestant orthodox who maintained and even developed a churchly dogmatics in the seventeenth century.

Orthodox Protestants followed and developed the doctrine of Scripture and the churchly exegetical tradition of the Reformers. Flavel's works demonstrated a clear continuity between the Reformers and the Protestant orthodox both in biblical interpretation and in doctrinal formulation.

1. John Flavel, *The Works of John Flavel* (London: W. Baynes and Son, 1820; repr., London: Banner of Truth, 1968; repr., Cambridge: University Press, 1997).

2. See, for example, how often Jonathan Edwards consults and quotes from Flavel's works; cf. Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1957–2008), passim.

3. Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 1:66–67 [hereafter cited as *PRRD*]; Carl R. Trueman, *The Claims of Truth: John Owen's Trinitarian Theology* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1998), 6, 8, 13–24; P. G. Ryken, "Scottish Reformed Scholasticism," in *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment,* ed. Trueman and R. Scott Clark (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1999), 198–200; *Encyclopedia of the Reformed Faith,* ed. Donald K. McKim (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), s.v. "Westminster Confession of Faith," by John H. Leith.

4. Won Taek Lim, "The Covenant Theology of Francis Roberts" (PhD diss., Calvin Theological Seminary, 2000), 1–2.

5. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), s.v. "Flavell, John," by James William Kelly [hereafter cited as *ODNB*]; *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge,* ed. Samuel Macauley Jackson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1951–1954), s.v. "Flavel, John" [hereafter cited as *NSHE*]; "The Life of the Late Rev. Mr. John Flavel, Minister of Dartmouth," in *Works,* 1:iii–iv.

6. *ODNB*, s.v. "Flavell, John"; *NSHE*, s.v. "Flavel, John"; "Life of John Flavel," in *Works*, 1:iv–vii.

7. *ODNB*, s.v. "Flavell, John"; *NSHE*, s.v. "Flavel, John"; "Life of John Flavel," in *Works*, 1:vii–x.

8. *ODNB*, s.v. "Flavell, John"; *NSHE*, s.v. "Flavel, John"; "Life of John Flavel," in *Works*, 1:xv.

9. John Flavel, *Navigation Spiritualized, or, A New Compass for Seamen, Consisting of XXXII Points; of Pleasant Observations, Profitable Applications, and Serious Reflections. All concluded with so many Spiritual Poems,* in *Works,* 5:206–293.

10. Flavel, *Navigation Spiritualized*, in *Works*, 5:206.

11. See "To every Seaman sailing Heavenward," by T. M., that is, the recommendatory letter prefixed to *Navigation Spiritualized*, in *Works*, 5:210; cf. John Durant, *Christian's Compass, or, The Mariner's Companion: being a brief compendium of the principles of religion…*(London: Printed by T. L. for J. Garfield, 1658).

12. Flavel, *A Pathetical and Serious Dissuasive from the horrid and detestable Sins…*, in *Works*, 5:293–342.

13. Flavel, *Antipharmacum Saluberrimum, or, A serious and seasonable Caveat to all the Saints in this Hour of Temptation*, in *Works*, 4:515–557.

14. Flavel, *Tidings from Rome, or, England's Alarm*, in *Works*, 4:557–586.

15. Flavel, *A Saint Indeed, or, The Great Work of a Christian, Opened and Pressed. From Prov. iv. 23*, in *Works*, 5:417–509.

16. Cf. *Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and British America and of English Books Printed in Other Countries, 1641–1700*, comp. Donald Wing, 2nd ed., rev. and enl. (New York: Index Committee of the Modern Language Association of America, 1972–1988), s.v. "Flavell, John."

17. Cf. "Life of John Flavel," in *Works*, 1:xiii–xiv.

18. Flavel, *Husbandry Spiritualized, or, The Heavenly Use of Earthly Things. Considering of many pleasant observations, pertinent applications, and serious reflections; and each chapter concluded with a divine and suitable poem.*…in *Works*, 5:3–205.

19. Flavel, *Husbandry Spiritualized*, in *Works*, 5:3.

20. Flavel, *The Fountain of Life Opened Up, or, A Display of Christ in His Essential and Mediatory Glory. Containing Forty-two Sermons on Various Texts*, in *Works*, 1:xvii–xx, 21–561.

21. Flavel, *Fountain of Life*, in *Works*, 1:xx.

22. *ODNB*, s.v. "Flavell, John."

23. Flavel, *A Token for Mourners, or The Advice of Christ to a Distressed Mother, Bewailing the death of Her dear and only Son.*…in *Works*, 5:604–666.

24. Flavel, *The Seaman's Companion, Wherein the Mysteries of Providence, relating to Seamen, are opened…*, in *Works*, 5:342–416.

25. Flavel, *Divine Conduct, or, The Mystery of Providence, Opened in a Treatise upon Psal. lvii. 2*, in *Works*, 4:336–497.

26. Flavel, *Sacramental Mediations upon Divers Select Places of Scripture, Wherein Believers are assisted in preparing their Hearts, and exciting their Affections and Graces, when they draw nigh to God in that most awful and solemn Ordinance of the Lord's Supper*, in *Works*, 6:378–460.

27. Flavel, *The Touchstone of Sincerity, or, The Signs of Grace, and Symptoms of Hypocrisy. Opened in a practical Treatise upon Revelation iii. 17, 18*, in *Works*, 5:509–604.

28. Editor's introduction to *Religious Affections*, by Jonathan Edwards, in *Works*, 2:61–62.

29. Flavel, *The Method of Grace in the Gospel-Redemption*, in *Works*, 2:3–474.

30. Flavel, *Preparations for Sufferings, or The Best Work in the Worst Times*, in *Works*, 6:3–83.

31. Flavel, *A Practical Treatise of Fear*, in *Works*, 3:239–320; cf. *Short-Title Catalogue*, s.v. "Flavell, John."

32. Flavel, *The Righteous Man's Refuge*, in *Works*, 3:321–413.

33. Flavel, *Righteous Man's Refuge*, in *Works*, 3:322; italics in the original.

34. Flavel, *Pneumatologia: A Treatise of the Soul of Man*, in *Works*, 2:475–609, 3:3–238.

35. Flavel, *The Balm of the Covenant Applied to the Bleeding Wounds of Afflicted Saints*, in *Works*, 6:83–137.

36. Cf. Flavel, *England's Duty, under the Present Gospel-Liberty. From Rev. iii. 20. To which is added, Mount Pisgah, or A Thanksgiving Sermon for England's Delivery from Popery, Feb. 1688–9*, in *Works*, 4:3–306.

37. "Life of John Flavel," in *Works*, 1:ix–x.

38. Flavel, *Mount Pisgah, A Sermon, Preached at the Public Thanksgiving, Feb. 14th, 1688–9, for England's Deliverance from Popery &c.*, in *Works*, 4:307–335.

39. Cf. Philip Cary, *A Solemn Call unto all that would be owned as Christ's faithful witnesses, speedily and seriously, to attend unto the primitive purity of the Gospel doctrine and worship, or, A discourse concerning baptism.*..(London: Printed for John Harris, 1690).

40. "Life of John Flavel," in *Works*, 1:xiv.

41. Flavel, *Vindiciae Legis & Foederis, or, A Reply to Mr. Philip Cary's Solemn Call; Wherein he pretends to answer all the Arguments of Mr. Allen, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Sydenham, Mr. Sedgwick, Mr. Roberts, and Dr. Burthogge; For the Right of Believers Infants to Baptism*, in *Works*, 6:318–378.

42. Cf. Philip Cary, *A Just Reply to Mr. John Flavell's Arguments by way of answer to a discourse lately published, entitled, A Solemn Call.*..(London: Printed for John Harris, 1690).

43. Flavel, *Planelogia: A succinct and seasonable Discourse of the Occasions, Causes, Nature, Rise, Growth, and Remedies of Mental Errors*, in *Works*, 3:413–492.

44. Flavel, *An Appendex, Containing a full and modest Reply to Mr. Philip Cary's Rejoinder to my Vindiciae Legis & Foederis [Vindiciarum Vindex]*, and *The Second Appendix: Giving a brief Account of the Rise and Growth of Antinomianism; the Deduction of the principal Errors of that Sect, With modest and seasonable reflections upon them*, in *Works*, 3:493–550, and 551–591, respectively.

45. Letter of recommendation, by John Howe, et al., to Flavel, *Planelogia*, in *Works*, 3:413–414.

46. Cf. Tobias Crisp, *Christ Alone Exalted* (London: William Marshal, 1690).

47. Ernest F. Kevan, *The Grace of Law* (London: Carey Kingsgate, 1964; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1965; repr., Morgan, Pa.: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 1993), 36.

48. Cf. "Life of John Flavel," in *Works*, 1:vi.

49. Flavel, *The Reasonableness of Personal Reformation, and the Necessity of Conversion: The true Methods of making all men happy in this world, and in the world to come*, in *Works*, 6:470–545.

50. John Flavel, *An Exposition of the Assembly's Catechism. With Practical Inferences from each Question: As it was carried on in the Lord's Days Exercises in Dartmouth, in the first Year of Liberty, 1688*, in *Works*, 6:138–317.

51. Preface to *Exposition of the Assembly's Catechism*, by Flavel, in *Works*, 6:139.

52. Flavel, *Exposition of the Assembly's Catechism*, in *Works*, 6:143; cf. *The Westminster Shorter Catechism* (1647), Answer to Q. 2, in Philip Schaff, ed., *The Creeds of Christendom: With a History and Critical Notes*, 6th ed., (Harper & Row, 1931; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993), 3:676.

53. Flavel, *Exposition of the Assembly's Catechism*, in *Works*, 6:144.

54. Muller, *PRRD*, 2:442; cf. Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964); Muller, "Biblical Interpretation in the Era of the Reformation: The View from the Middle Ages," in *Biblical Interpretation in the Era of the Reformation*, ed. Muller and John L. Thompson, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 3–22.

55. Muller, *PRRD*, 2:443.

56. Flavel, *Vindiciae Legis & Foederis*, in *Works*, 6:356.

57. Flavel, *Vindiciae Legis & Foederis*, in *Works*, 6:356.

58. Muller, *PRRD*, 2:443.

59. Muller and Thompson, "The Significance of Precritical Exegesis: Retrospect and Prospect," in *Biblical Interpretation in the Era of the Reformation*, 339.

60. Flavel, *Vindiciae Legis & Foederis*, in *Works*, 6:357. In Flavel's explanation of Allen's argument, a Greek word is written erroneously, thus μαθητευσατι instead of μαθητευσατε.

61. Flavel, *Vindiciae Legis & Foederis*, in *Works*, 6:357.

62. Flavel, *Vindiciae Legis & Foederis*, in *Works*, 6:358; italics in the original.

63. Flavel, *Vindiciae Legis & Foederis*, in *Works*, 6:358; italics in the original.

64. *Annotations upon All the Books of the Old and New Testament* (London: John Legatt and John Raworth, 1645), Matt. 28:19–20 in loc.; Matthew Poole, *A Commentary on the Holy Bible* (London: Banner of Truth, 1962–1963), Matt. 28:19–20 in loc.; Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible* (New York:

Fleming H. Revell Company, n.d.), Matt. 28:19–20 in loc.

65. Flavel, *Divine Conduct*, in *Works*, 4:345–346; italics in the original.

66. Poole, *Commentary*, Ps. 57:2 in loc.; cf. *Annotations*, Ps. 57:2 in loc.

67. Flavel, *Pneumatologia*, in *Works*, 3:129; italics in the original.

68. Flavel, *Pneumatologia*, in *Works*, 3:129.

69. Flavel, *Exposition of the Assembly's Catechism*, in *Works*, 6:209.

70. Henry, *Commentary*, 1 Pet. 3:19 in loc.; cf. *Annotations*, 1 Pet. 3:19 in loc.

71. Muller, *PRRD*, 2:517, citing Stephen Charnock, *Discourses Upon the Existence and Attributes of God* (1682; reissued, New York: Carter, 1853), 2:210–212; cf. Stephen Charnock, *Discourses upon the Existence and Attributes of God* (Robert Carter & Brothers, 1853; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 2:210–212.

72. Muller, *PRRD*, 2:517.

73. Muller and Thompson, "Significance of Precritical Exegesis," 340.

74. Muller and Thompson, "Significance of Precritical Exegesis," 340.

75. Flavel, *Exposition of the Assembly's Catechism*, in *Works*, 6:282.

76. Flavel, *Exposition of the Assembly's Catechism*, in *Works*, 6:282. Interpreting John 3:23, Poole says, "it is from this apparent that both Christ and John baptized by dipping the body in the water, else they need not have sought places where had been a great plenty of water; yet it is probable that they did not constantly dip, from what we read of the apostles baptizing in houses, Acts ix. 17, 18; x. 47, 48" (Poole, *Commentary*, in loc.).

77. Flavel, *Exposition of the Assembly's Catechism*, in *Works*, 6:284.

78. Flavel, *Exposition of the Assembly's Catechism*, in *Works*, 6:284.

79. Muller, *After Calvin*, 193.

80. Muller, *PRRD*, 2:523.

81. Muller, *After Calvin*, 74.

82. Muller, *PRRD*, 2:502.

83. Muller, *PRRD*, 2:502.

84. Muller, *PRRD*, 2:502.

85. Muller, *After Calvin*, 47.

86. Muller, *PRRD*, 2:441.

87. Muller, *PRRD*, 2:502.

88. Muller, *PRRD*, 2:460. For example, see Flavel's criticism against the Socinians regarding their error about the death of Christ (*Fountain of Life*, in *Works*, 1:481).

89. Muller, *PRRD*, 2:460.

90. Muller, *PRRD*, 2:515.

91. Muller, *PRRD*, 2:506–507.

92. Flavel, *Fountain of Life*, in *Works*, 1:xvii–xx, 21–561.

93. Muller, *PRRD*, 2:515–516.

94. Muller, *PRRD*, 2:522.

95. Flavel, *Method of Grace*, in *Works*, 2:368–380 (Sermon 27) and 380–396 (Sermon 28).

96. Flavel, *Method of Grace*, in *Works*, 2:368.

97. Flavel, *Method of Grace*, in *Works*, 2:369. Here Flavel cites Johannes Polyander, *Synopsis purioris theologiae*.

98. Flavel, *Method of Grace*, in *Works*, 2:369; italics in the original.

99. Flavel, *Method of Grace*, in *Works*, 2:369.

100. Flavel, *Method of Grace*, in *Works*, 2:384.

101. J. I. Packer, "The Puritans as Interpreters of Scripture," in D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, ed., *Puritan Papers*, vol. 1, *1956–1959* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: P&R, [2001]), 200.

102. Flavel, *Method of Grace*, in *Works*, 2:385.

103. Flavel, *Method of Grace*, in *Works*, 2:390.

104. Packer, "Puritans as Interpreters of Scripture," 200.

105. Flavel, *Method of Grace,* in *Works,* 2:395.
106. Flavel, *Method of Grace,* in *Works,* 2:396.
107. Packer, “Puritans as Interpreters of Scripture,” 200.
108. Muller, *PRRD,* 2:507.
109. Flavel, *Method of Grace,* in *Works,* 2:229.
110. Flavel, *Method of Grace,* in *Works,* 2:359.
111. Flavel, *Balm of the Covenant,* in *Works,* 6:110.
112. Flavel, *Method of Grace,* in *Works,* 2:415; and Flavel, *England’s Duty,* in *Works,* 4:71, respectively.
113. Flavel, *Sacramental Mediations,* in *Works,* 6:398.
114. Flavel, *Exposition of the Assembly’s Catechism,* in *Works,* 6:274.
115. Kevan, *Grace of Law,* 38.
116. Muller, *PRRD,* 3:115–116.
117. Francis Roberts, *The Mysterie and Marrow of the Bible: viz. God’s Covenants with Man* (London: R. W. for George Calvert, 1657).
118. Lim, “Covenant Theology of Francis Roberts,” 1–333.
119. See the places where Roberts’s *God’s Covenants* is cited by Flavel (*Works,* 1:78; 3:501; 5:434; 6:375, 406).
120. In those books that chiefly deal with covenant, for example, see the places where Flavel discusses the covenant of faith (*Balm of the Covenant,* in *Works,* 6:88–89), *protevangelium* (*Vindiciae Legis & Foederis,* in *Works,* 6:338–339), and the conditionality of the covenant of grace (*Vindiciarum Vindex,* in *Works,* 3:524–547; *Vindiciae Legis & Foederis,* in *Works,* 6:345, 348–350).
121. In those works that do not chiefly deal with covenant, but significantly use it, for example, see the places where Flavel discusses the breach of the first covenant (*Method of Grace,* in *Works,* 2:163), unbelievers rejecting the grace offered in the second covenant (*Method of Grace,* in *Works,* 2:432), the covenant of redemption (*England’s Duty,* in *Works,* 4:114), and two-covenant scheme (*Preparations for Sufferings,* in *Works,* 6:69, 80; *Exposition of the Assembly’s Catechism,* in *Works,* 6:166–168, 176–177, 206, 223, 227).
122. Muller, *PRRD,* 2:524.
123. Muller, *PRRD,* 2:524.

CHAPTER 12

The Hobbes-Bramhall Debate on the Nature of Freedom and Necessity

J. Mark Beach

In 1645 the Marquess of Newcastle invited two of his acquaintances, Thomas Hobbes and John Bramhall, to engage one another in a philosophical discussion at his house in Paris.[1] Due to the civil war in England, these three Englishmen were forced to live abroad during this time. Bramhall was a bishop in the Anglican Church and a zealous advocate of the royal position on matters of church governance; Hobbes was a well-known political theorist whose work supported the English monarchy.[2]

The topic for debate was human freedom. The Marquess was well aware that his guests had quite opposite positions on this subject, as the subsequent dispute would bear out. After the debate, Newcastle asked each of the participants to set forth his views in written form. Bramhall was the first to comply in expressing his views on liberty and necessity. Apparently he sent a copy of this work not only to Newcastle but to Hobbes as well, for Hobbes wrote up his position in a direct, point-by-point rebuttal of Bramhall, entitled *Of Liberty and Necessity.* Bramhall responded with a work entitled *A Vindication of True Liberty from Antecedent and Extrinsical Necessity*.[3]

The matter would have ended there except for a later event that no one could have anticipated. The written documents were not intended for publication. However, a French friend of Hobbes requested a copy of his manuscript for personal use. This fellow could not read English it seems, so he had it translated into French (apparently with Hobbes's permission). In any case, the translator, one John Davies of Kidwelly, made a copy of the English manuscript for himself (without Hobbes's consent) and several years later, in 1654, published it, praising Hobbes and denouncing Priests, Jesuits, and Ministers in the preface he composed for Hobbes's book. Bramhall (an Anglican priest) felt betrayed. He was certain that Hobbes approved the publication of his book, with its inflammatory preface. He immediately responded by publishing his earlier *Vindication* with a slightly revised title, *A Defence of True Liberty from Antecedent and Extrinsical Necessity* (1655). Hobbes shot back with *The Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance* (1656), and Bramhall then

wrote his *Castigations of Mr Hobbes* (with *The Catching of Leviathan* included as an appendix) (1658). Hobbes let the matter rest for several years; after Bramhall died (1663), Hobbes wrote *An Answer to… 'The Catching of Leviathan'* (1682).[4]

The Hobbes-Bramhall debate on liberty and necessity has in recent years elicited the intermittent attention of scholars, most of it devoted rather exclusively to the far more renowned Hobbes. F. C. Hood explores what he alleges to be a change in Hobbes's definition of liberty. Whereas in *De Cive* Hobbes defined liberty as absence of impediments, in *Leviathan* liberty is the absence of "external" impediments. On the whole, Hood's discussion examines only a few matters relevant to Hobbes's debate with Bramhall.[5] Far more helpful in shedding light on the debate itself is the 1979 article of Leopold Damrosch, Jr., "Hobbes as Reformation Theologian." This is perhaps the most interesting and important contribution to the literature dealing with Hobbes's controversy with Bishop Bramhall. Damrosch admirably sets forth various features of the debate, particularly arguing that Hobbes viewed his position as consistent with Reformation formulations, though Damrosch admits that what is new in Hobbes's approach is a determinism resting on "irrefutable and impersonal proofs," unlike the theology founded on faith as seen in Luther and Calvin. Damrosch also demonstrates how Hobbes's mechanistic psychology sets him apart form his Reformation forebears.[6] About a decade after Damrosch's article, three others appeared. Graeme Hunter's "The Fate of Thomas Hobbes" is probably the most important in relation to the dispute with Bramhall. Hunter's article deals with both Hobbes's and Bramhall's positions on liberty and necessity. Specifically, he treats Hobbes's notion of contingency and Bramhall's view of self-motion, demonstrating how self-motion as a feature of Bramhall's thinking rests squarely upon the Aristotelian principles which Hobbes rejects. As for the debate itself, Hunter sees the central issue as having to do with the component notions of "the irresistible" and "the inevitable," for these constitute what he calls "Hobbesian fatalistic necessity."[7] M. M. Goldsmith's "Hobbes on Liberty" explicates Hobbes's views of liberty as found in *Leviathan,* especially in relation to recent philosophical analysis of the subject. Though not irrelevant to the controversy Hobbes had with Bramhall, it is not directly pertinent to the discussion.[8] Quentin Skinner's 1990 article likewise confines his discussion of Hobbes's conception of human liberty to *Leviathan.* Interestingly, although he wishes to exposit Hobbes's teaching on the subject of liberty, he gives no attention whatsoever to Hobbes's exchange with Bramhall.[9]

Cees Leijenhorst's 1996 article "Hobbes's Theory of Causality and Its Aristotelian Background" is probably the most important article to explore

“causality” as a key component in Hobbes’s notion of liberty and necessity. Leijenhorst examines Hobbes’s definition of causality, his notion of necessity and necessary cause, along with his rejection of Scholastic final and formal causes. Then he considers Hobbes’s causal theory of perception. Hobbes generally sought to simplify Scholastic views. Leijenhorst also contends that Hobbes did not so much make use of the sources of high Scholasticism (say, Aquinas, Ockham, and Scotus); rather, he made use of the Scholastic textbooks and manuals of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, such as the Jesuit Commentaries (Suarez, Toletus, Pereira, and Conimbricenses), and Protestant, mainly Calvinist, manuals (Alstedt, Goclenius, and Keckermann).10

Finally we mention Vere Chappell’s introduction to the Hobbes-Bramhall debate in the Cambridge texts in the history of philosophy series. Chappell offers a short history on how the debate first emerged and subsequently unfolded, as well as an analysis of the prominent features in the controversy.11

Of the numerous debates in the seventeenth century on liberty and necessity, usually confined to spats between theologians, the controversy between Hobbes and Bramhall emerges as one of the most prominent, if for no other reason than the prominence of Hobbes as a major philosopher of the era. Its prominence is also manifest in that the antagonists represent such vividly opposite positions. This essay, in seeking to examine the first exchange of ideas in this contest, maintains that the Hobbes-Bramhall debate effectively portrays the philosophical shift taking place in the seventeenth century away from a Scholastic methodology and manner of thinking (via Hobbes), and yet how Bramhall employed this very same methodology to rebut Hobbes and defend a version of freedom consistent with a semi-Pelagian or an Arminian theological perspective on these issues. Hobbes himself portrays his teaching as consistent with standard Reformation teaching, ala Luther and Calvin.

In the first major section of this essay, I will first set forth Bramhall’s position on liberty and necessity, followed by an exposition of Hobbes’s treatise in response to Bramhall. I limit myself to the first and most definitive phase of the debate. After setting forth their respective positions in detail, in the second part of the essay I will analyze their respective positions. It will be shown that Bramhall utilizes the vocabulary and thought-categories of high-medieval theology, and that he seems to have been influenced rather strongly by Molina and Suarez. I will also focus upon Hobbes’s materialism and how it affected his notions of freedom and necessity. The essay also seeks to set the debate within its seventeenth-century context.

The Debate

Bramhall's Discourse of Liberty and Necessity

Bramhall's first discourse, which was composed but never published as an independent work, begins with an interesting observation. Bramhall notes that in composing his discourse on liberty and necessity he is either free to write or he is not free. "If I be free, then I have obtained the cause, and ought not to suffer for the truth." However, if I am not free in writing this discourse and in writing what I write, notes Bramhall, the consequences are that all blame must be removed, "since I do it not out of any voluntary election [or choice], but out of an inevitable necessity."[12] Bramhall then explains what he is pleading for in his conception of liberty: "by liberty I do understand neither a liberty from sin, nor a liberty from misery, nor a liberty from servitude, nor a liberty from violence." Instead, he pleads for

> a liberty from necessity, or rather from necessitation, that is, a universal immunity from all inevitability and determination to one, whether it be of exercise only, which the Schools call a liberty of contradiction and is found in God and in the good and bad angels, that is, not a liberty to do both good and evil, but a liberty to do or not to do this or that good, this or that evil, respectively; or whether it be a liberty of specification and exercise also, which the Schools call liberty of contrariety and is found in men endowed with reason and understanding, that is, a liberty to do and not to do good and evil, this or that.[13]

Here we see Bramhall's affinity for Scholastic definitions and distinctions, as well as his dependence upon writers out of the Roman Catholic tradition. We also see that Bramhall wishes to stand in the tradition of those who define freedom as the power of contrary choice. He sets out to defeat determinists, whether they are Christians or heathen philosophers, using Scripture to rebut the former and reason to refute the latter.[14]

Bramhall distinguishes between liberty as the power of choice versus a liberty of spontaneity. Liberty of choice "is an act of judgment and understanding." Spontaneity, however, consists of persons or creatures acting according to their desires or fancies, and with their desires being determined by the thing desired. He defends his notion of liberty as the power of contrary choice from Scripture. A husband has the liberty of choice to establish or make void his wife's vow (Num. 30:13). Joshua bids the Israelites to choose whom they will serve, as he is resolved and chooses to serve God (Josh. 24:15). Thus liberty of choice is clearly affirmed. In 2 Samuel 24:12, God gives David three options, one of which he must choose. "If one of these three things was necessarily determined, and the other two impossible, how was it left to him to choose what should be

done? Therefore," concludes Bramhall, "we have liberty."[15]

Bramhall also is concerned to emphasize that whether persons leave undone things they may have done or do things they may have left undone, in either case they are not compelled or necessitated "to do what they do, but have true liberty." Solomon, for example, has the liberty to ask for long life or riches or the death of his enemies. But he does not ask for these things, instead he asks for wisdom (1 Kings 3:11). Likewise, Ananias had the liberty (the power) either to give the money from the sale of his field or to keep it (Acts 5:4). "Therefore," says Bramhall, "we may do what we do not, and we do not what we might do"[16]—which is to say, liberty consists of freedom from necessity.

Next Bramhall considers the numerous "interrogations," "objurgations," "reprehensions," and "expostulations" found in Scripture (cf., e.g., Gen. 3:6, 11, 13; Ezek. 18:31). Does God command Adam not to eat and yet secretly, by second causes, necessitate him to eat? "Does [God] reprehend him for doing that which he has antecedently determined that he must do?" Or by way of analogy, "Does a loving master chide his servant because he does not come at his call, and yet knows that the poor servant is chained and fettered so as he cannot move, by the master's own order, without the servant's default or consent?" Bramhall judges as pure nonsense the notion of a twofold will of God (secret and revealed), such that the one stands opposed to the other. If the agents are kept "distinct," then this idea has merit, for then God might will the death of a father while He calls upon the man's son to pray for his life. The secret will then refers to what God will do, while the revealed will refers to what God would have us do. "But for the same person to command one thing, and yet to necessitate him that is commanded to do another thing; to chide a man for doing that, which he has determined inevitably and irresistibly that he must do; this were (I am afraid to utter what they are not afraid to assert) the highest dissimulation."[17] In fact, that God chides us for failure to do what He commands proves human liberty.

Bramhall also makes the point that if either God's decree or the divine foreknowledge or "the concatenation of causes" or "the last dictate of the understanding" forfeit liberty, then the prelapsarian Adam did not have true liberty. In fact, even those who opposed Bramhall's conception of liberty wish to affirm the liberty of Adam. Consequently, what supposedly stands in the way of the liberty of contrary choice actually prove to be no "impediments" at all.[18] Moreover, for Bramhall, without true liberty there can be no judgment day, indeed, no rewards or punishments whatsoever. For people cannot be "justly punished" if what they do, being worthy of punishment, they were constrained to do or were not free to refrain from doing. Thus heaven and hell are both taken away.[19]

Having offered something of a scriptural argument for his idea of liberty, Bramhall next turns to rational argumentation—that is, reason supports the liberty of contrary choice. Bramhall recalls the ancient story, wherein a servant offers as an excuse for his unlawful behavior that necessity compelled him to steal, to which his master replies that the same necessity compels me to beat you. Bramhall also argues that all laws are yielded if true liberty is yielded. The order of society must be overthrown, for "the laws are unjust which prohibit that which a man cannot possibly shun." Similarly, "all consultations are vain if everything be either necessary or impossible." For example, who ever ponders whether the sun shall rise tomorrow or whether he should take a boat over the mountains? It is as foolish to reprimand persons of understanding as the insane if all things are necessary. There is no reason to praise a person or hold a person blameworthy if there is no liberty. In fact, all counsel and instruction, all labor and study are vain "if all things come to pass alike, whether we sleep or wake, whether we be idle or industrious, by unalterable necessity."[20] If all affairs are certainly determined and certainly come to pass, there is no sufficient motive for us to act since we cannot hope to alter the course of things by our actions. "Let the necessary causes do their work, we have no remedy but patience, and shrug up the shoulders." The alternatives are simple: "Either allow liberty or destroy all societies."[21]

Piety also falls with the destruction of true liberty. "Who will bewail his sins with tears?" Who will be careful to do what is right or to obey God if all that happens is inevitable? Why bother to pray to God to avert evils if these evils are inevitable or to bestow favors if they are impossible? If all things happen from necessity, then "our devotions and endeavours cannot alter that which must be." Yet that the proponents of this necessity still pray or repent is due to the light of nature and the strength of reason, as well as the testimony of Scripture, which so impresses the truth upon them that they cannot stand on their ill-chosen grounds and live according to the stoical fancies in their heads. "Either allow liberty or destroy Church as well as commonwealth, religion as well as policy."[22]

Bramhall also believes that the created order requires agents of all sorts in order for its beauty and perfection to be properly displayed. Thus what is required is a variety of agents, some necessary, some free, and some contingent. "He that shall make either all things necessary, guided by destiny, or all things free, governed by election, or all things contingent, happening by chance, does overthrow the beauty and the perfection of the world."[23] Weightier still, however, is the reality that if liberty is forfeited then the very nature and formal reason of sin is surrendered. "The essence of sin consists in this, that one commit that which he might avoid." However, if God's will, as the first cause,

necessitates our evil action or our willing an evil action, either immediately by itself or mediately by necessary second causes, then we cannot be responsible for the evil done, but God is responsible. “If there be no liberty to produce sin, there is no such thing as sin in the world.”[24]

Bramhall concludes that both Scripture and reason support the idea of “true liberty.” He is aware, however, that advocates for necessity seek refuge by way of certain distinctions. The first distinction is that between Stoical necessity and Christian necessity. For Bramhall, this is a difference without significance, for God’s decree functions as fate. Necessity in whatever form, whether attributed to God and His decree or to the stars or to the connection of causes, is all the same thing. Thus when the opponents of true liberty try to offer their own pretended notion of liberty or contingence, we meet with absurdity, for what they propose is no more than a “titular liberty.” If any event that is or shall be cannot not be, or cannot be otherwise, after any other manner, in any other place, time, number, order, measure, or to any other end, than it is, according to God so determining it to be as it is, then to employ terms like “liberty” and “contingence” in connection with such an event is “ridiculous,” says Bramhall.[25]

The second distinction that Bramhall challenges is that between the first cause and second causes. “They say that in respect of the second causes many things are free, but in respect of the first cause all things are necessary.” Bramhall disputes this notion. If the one cause makes all causes necessary, that is, if it determines the rest, so that it makes the effect necessary, then true liberty is again abandoned. “Necessity or liberty is not to be esteemed from one cause, but from all the causes joined together.” Or as Bramhall states, “If one link in a chain be fast, it fastens all the rest.”[26] In short, Bramhall wishes to know whether or not the second causes are predetermined by the first cause. If yes, then the effect—even in respect to second causes—is determined. If no, then how is the effect determined since the second cause remains undetermined? “Nothing can give that to another which it has not itself.” In the deterministic scheme the power of the faculty of choice is not free “in order to the act,” for it is determined. “It is free *in sensu diviso* [in the divided sense], but not *in sensu composito* [in the composite sense].” If a bird is firmly held in one’s hand, it is not free to fly wherever it will even, though it has wings to fly. If a man is imprisoned, he is not free to walk wherever he wishes, though he has legs to walk. To claim freedom of the faculty of choice, because it can choose, while it remains determined, is “a miserable subterfuge.”[27]

The last distinction Bramhall rejects is that between liberty from compulsion and liberty from necessitation. “The will, say they, is free from compulsion but not free from necessitation.”[28] However, for Bramhall, “the proper act of liberty

is election, and election is opposed not only to coaction but also to coarctation, or determination to one." Moreover, appealing to the Schoolmen, Bramhall argues that there is a double act of the will, the one being more remote (called *imperatus*) and the other being nearer (called *actus elicitus*). The former entails the act of an inferior faculty which must heed the command of the will, such as to open or shut one's eyes. The latter involves an act drawn out of the will, such as to will, to choose, or to decide.[29] This may be thwarted by the understanding, otherwise the will would function with a kind of omnipotence. "But the will cannot be compelled to an act repugnant to its inclination…for that is both to incline and not to incline to the same object at the same time, which implies a contradiction." Therefore to speak of the will being necessitated is to speak of the will being compelled insofar as the will can be compelled. If a strong fellow seizes the hand of a person who is weaker than himself and forces that weaker hand to kill someone, we would not say that the weaker person is guilty of the crime. Similarly, if one's will is controlled by some stronger force of necessity, inclining and compelling it to act in accordance with that necessity, how can we reckon this situation as being any different from the first?[30]

Bramhall closes out his discourse on liberty and necessity by dispelling five "umbrages." Since the first two are of no importance, we briefly examine Bramhall's treatment of the last three. He faces a question: What influence do outward objects have upon us? For the most part, argues Bramhall, outward objects have an influence upon us by our "own default." Strong drink is a case in point. Although alcohol can have a devastating affect on a person, the original choice to drink is not coerced and therefore uncompelled. Consequently, one's current drunken state or addiction to alcohol might be unwilling, yet, says Bramhall, his "intemperance was willing, whereby he contracted this infirmity." Likewise, outward objects—such as bad company—do indeed bring us to a propensity or proclivity to act wickedly, but this is not necessity. Habits can be reversed by the right use of other—i.e., wholesome—outward objects, which produce different proclivities and inclinations, so that we gain victory over former corruptions and dispositions.[31] Furthermore, "a resolved mind, which weighs all things judiciously and provides for all occurrences, is not so easily surprised with outward objects." Job made a covenant with his eyes not to look lustfully at a girl (Job 31:1). Joseph was steadfast against the enticements of Potiphar's wife (Gen. 39). Daniel's companions were likewise unwavering in serving God in obedience (Dan. 3). "It is not the strength of the wind but the lightness of the chaff, which causes it to be blown away"—which is to say, outward objects do not impose a moral necessity upon us, destroying true liberty. For temptation and necessity are not the same thing.[32]

Bramhall next deals with the opinion of the natural philosopher that the will necessarily follows the last dictate of the understanding. He agrees that the will follows the direction of the understanding, but he disputes that it always does so. For sometimes we know and approve of what is good, but follow that which is worse. Reason often is defeated by affection: “Things nearer to the senses move more powerfully.” Moreover, we do not weigh every ordinary trivial action as to its expedience or inexpedience, just as we do not fret and ponder over every piece of clothing we shall wear or whether to drink each drop in our mug or to chew each morsel of bread on our plate: “God leaves many things indifferent.” Liberty doesn’t require such meticulous concern and deliberation. Besides, sometimes there is no discernible difference whether we choose one thing over another. More to the point, however, “Admitting that the will did necessarily follow the last dictate of the understanding, as certainly in many things it does, yet, first, this is no extrinsical determination from without, and a man’s own resolution is not destructive to his own liberty, but depends upon it.” Thus the fellow is still free. In addition, “this determination is not antecedent but joined with the action.” Says Bramhall, “the understanding and the will are not different agents, but distinct faculties of the same soul.” What we have is “a hypothetical necessity,” whatsoever is, when it is, necessarily is as it is—that is, “a necessity of consequence, but not a necessity of consequent.”33 In short, although an agent certainly determines a given action, so that that action is infallible, yet if the agent determined freely that action, the action also is free.34

Lastly Bramhall responds to attempts to reconcile liberty with divine foreknowledge and the divine decrees. He believes that the best way to reconcile contingence and liberty with God’s foreknowledge and decrees is “to subject future contingents to the aspect of God, according to that presentiality which they have in eternity.” Bramhall is not saying that what lies in the future and not yet existing is coexistent with God. But inasmuch as God’s knowledge is infinite and encircles “all times in the point of eternity,” thus reaching unto their future being, so in this way, from their future being, their objective and intelligible being proceeds. The reason most people do not grasp this is because they think of eternity as everlasting succession rather than as one indivisible point.35

But if they consider that whatsoever is in God is God; that there are no accidents in Him (for that which is infinitely perfect cannot be further perfected); that as God is not wise but wisdom itself, not just but justice itself, so He is not eternal but eternity itself; they must needs conclude that therefore this eternity is indivisible because God is indivisible, and therefore not successive but altogether an infinite point, comprehending all times within itself.36

Bramhall’s position, as is obvious from this brief exposition, clearly places

him within the non-determinist camp. It also places him outside of confessional Reformed orthodoxy, especially as represented by the Canons of Dort (1618–1619) and the Westminster Standards (1646). Nor is it clear that Bramhall's position is in harmony with the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England. Article 10 of that confession explicitly limits human freedom in ways that Bramhall doesn't seem ready to do: "The condition of man after the fall of Adam is suche, that he can not turne and prepare hym selfe by his owne naturall strength and good workes, to fayth and calling vpon God: Wherefore we haue no power to do good workes pleasaunt and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christe preuentying us, that we may haue a good wyll, and workyng with vs, when we haue that good wyll" (English ED. 1571). In fact, his position clearly lines up with Arminianism and Molinism.

Interestingly, Hobbes does not attack Bramhall's position for failing to rise to the standards of classic Reformation theology. Instead, he simply asserts that his own position is nothing more than the Christian orthodoxy of Luther and Calvin. As we shall see, that is not an altogether accurate claim. We turn next to consider Hobbes's reply to Bramhall's discourse.

Hobbes's Treatise Of Liberty and Necessity

Hobbes composed his treastise *Of Liberty and Necessity* as a direct rebuttal of Bramhall's work, for as earlier noted, Bramhall had sent Hobbes a copy of his discourse. Hobbes's work is written in the form of a letter to the Marquess of Newcastle. Hobbes notes that he finds nothing new in Bramhall's argument. Whereas Bramhall seems to think (referring to his discourse) that his statements "I was free to write it" and "It was not necessary I should write it" are one and the same thing, Hobbes argues the contrary. "For," says Hobbes, "he is free to do a thing, that may do it if he have the will to do it, and may forbear if he have the will to forbear." Yet if a necessity exists that he shall have the will to do a certain thing, then that action is necessarily to follow. Likewise, if a necessity exists that he shall forbear, his forbearing will be necessary. "The question therefore is not whether a man be a free agent, that is to say, whether he can write or forbear, speak or be silent, according to his will; but whether the will to write and the will to forbear come upon him according to his will, or according to anything else in his power." Hobbes wishes to define liberty as the ability to do what one wills. Thus I am free to do what I will or even "to do if I will," but it is absurd to say, "I can will if I will."[37] Bramhall in fact fails to define liberty. He wishes to affirm liberty from necessitation, but this is the very thing in dispute. His notions of liberty of contradiction and of contrariety only make matters more uncertain. "For how is it possible that the liberty of doing or not doing this or that good or

evil can consist, as he says it does in God and angels, without a liberty of doing good or evil?”[38]

Hobbes next takes up Bramhall’s appeals to Scripture. Numbers 30:13 merely proves that a husband is a free and voluntary agent, but not that the choice he makes “is not necessitated or not determined to what he shall choose by precedent necessary causes.” While Joshua 24:15 and 2 Samuel 24:12 each clearly affirm that human beings make choices, these texts do not prove choices are not “necessitated by the hopes and fears and considerations of good and bad to follow, which depend not on the will nor are subject to election [choice].” This applies to all like scriptural texts.[39]

Hobbes also argues that Bramhall’s distinction between free choice and spontaneous action actually works against his position:

> His Lordship [i.e., Bishop Bramhall] is deceived if he think any spontaneous action, after once being checked in it, differs from an action voluntary and elective. For even the setting of a man’s foot in the posture for walking, and the action of ordinary eating, was once deliberated how and when it should be done. And though it afterward became easy and habitual, so as to be done without forethought; yet that does not hinder but that the act is voluntary and proceeds from election. So also are the rashest actions of choleric persons voluntary and upon deliberation. For who is it but very young children that has not considered when and how far he ought, or safely may, strike or revile? Seeing then his Lordship agrees with me that such actions are necessitated, and the fancy of those that do them is determined to the actions they do, it follows out of his Lordship’s own doctrine that the liberty of election does not take away the necessity of electing this or that individual thing. And thus one of his arguments fights against another.[40]

Hobbes considers Bramhall’s appeal to 1 Kings 3:11 and Acts 5:4 as well, texts which suggest that one could have chosen differently if they had willed to do so. Again such texts only prove that there is such a thing as choice; they do not argue against the necessity of the choices made. Indeed, Hobbes goes on to explain what he means by the necessity of our actions. For what necessitates and determines every action “is the sum of all those things which, being now existent, conduce and concur to the production of that action hereafter, whereof if any one thing now were wanting, the effect could not be produced.” Thus Hobbes looks to a “concourse of causes,” so that what exists and all actions are as they are by this confluence of former causes and events, all of which were set and ordered by the eternal cause of God’s decree. Divine foreknowledge,

however, is not strictly speaking the cause of anything inasmuch as "foreknowledge is knowledge, and knowledge depends on the existence of the things known, and not they on it."41

Hobbes also notes that Bramhall's distinction between natural efficacy of objects and moral efficacy is incomprehensible. But as for the last dictate of the understanding being the cause of choice, Hobbes argues that such is not properly speaking "the whole cause"; rather, it is only "the last part of it." Yet in being the last part we may say that it produces the effect of necessity, just as the last feather may break a horse's back, even though the whole load forms the cause of the horse buckling under its weight.42 Likewise the concatenation of causes, necessitating an effect, does not jeopardize Adam's liberty, for not only the effect but also the choice of the particular effect is necessary, since the will itself and every proclivity and inclination of an individual in the act of deliberation is likewise together necessitated and dependent upon a sufficient cause. Liberty is simply to do what one has a fancy to do, "though it be not in his will or power to choose his fancy, or choose his election or will."43

Hobbes also answers Bramhall's contention that praise and blameworthiness, along with punishment and reward, are undermined if necessity determines our choosing. In defending his position, Hobbes makes a biblical appeal of his own, quoting from Romans 9:11–18. The apostle Paul meets this same objection in regard to divine election. The apostle's answer does not deny that God's decree concerning Esau stands firm, or that Esau was not necessitated to do what he did. Rather, the apostle challenges our right to cross-examine God. Hobbes states that God's power is its own justification in any action it takes. "That which men make amongst themselves here by pacts and covenants and call by the name of justice, and according whereunto men are counted and termed rightly just or unjust, is not that by which God Almighty's actions are to be measured or called just, no more than his counsels are to be measured by human wisdom." Whatever God does is just, and His doing it makes it just.44

In this context Hobbes explicitly disputes the Scholastic distinctions between divine will and divine permission, such that God sometimes permits sin and even foreknows that the sin He permits will be committed, yet He does not will or necessitate the sin. Likewise the distinction between the action and the sin of the action, whereby God is said to cause the action but not the sinfulness of the action, is, for Hobbes, a distinction that dazzles the understanding.45 "I find no difference between the will to have a thing done and the permission to do it, when he that permits can hinder it and knows it will be done unless he hinder it."46 Yet Hobbes is also jealous not to impute sin to God. "This I know: God cannot sin, because his doing a thing makes it just and consequently no sin; and

because whatsoever can sin is subject to another's law, which God is not." In fact, it is blasphemous to suggest that God can sin, "but to say that God can so order the world as a sin may be necessarily caused thereby in a man, I do not see how it is any dishonour to him." Is this not Saint Paul's position as well?47

Having dealt with Bramhall's scriptural arguments and set forth biblical arguments of his own, Hobbes gives his attention to Bramhall's arguments from reason. As for the story of the servant who was forced by necessity to steal, whose master replied that the same necessity compelled him to flog him, Hobbes observes that this episode actually supports the idea of necessity, for it certainly does not challenge it. More weighty is Bramhall's contention that Hobbes's determinism compromises all laws that prohibit any action, makes all consultations vain, renders admonitions superfluous, undermines all praise and dispraise, reward and punishment, and cripples all counsels, words of instruction, study, and right use of various means and remedies.

Hobbes argues that the necessity of an action does not make the laws that prohibit it unjust, for it is not necessity but *the will* to break the law that makes the action unjust. Law is directed at the will. Moreover, the laws aren't unjust since the same people who will to break the law will to establish the law. The willingness of an action renders that action responsible and punishable. The penalty for breaking the law, indeed witnessing violators of the law being punished, functions to cause behavior that promotes justice and necessitates justice. Consequently, it is not unjust to establish laws.48

Consultations are not made vain, for it is the consultation that causes (and so makes it necessary) for a person to choose to do one thing rather than another, such that, "unless a man say that cause to be in vain which necessitates the effect, he cannot infer the superfluousness of consultation out of the necessity of the election proceeding from it." In other words, the consultation is part of the necessity, not apart from it.49 The same applies to admonitions and the like.

As for the allegation that, if necessity is true, praise and blame, along with reward and punishment, are undermined, Hobbes argues that what makes an action good is that it is as I would wish it to be or as another would wish it to be or as the state would wish it to be, which is to say, according to law. Does Bramhall think that no action can please him if it is necessary? This is absurd. Things may be both necessary and praiseworthy, or simultaneously blameworthy and necessary. In fact, reward and punishments function to shape the will—which is to say, they can function as part of the necessity that dictates the will.50 Bramhall wrongly thinks that if the effect shall necessarily come to pass, then its coming to pass can be or shall be without its causes. This is a wholly erroneous notion. The use of means and the like are not called into question or rendered

expendable due to necessity; rather, they are established.[51]

Indeed, is societal and ecclesiastical life threatened as Bramhall alleges? Are people cast into indifference so that they become negligent of religious duties and lose their zeal for God? Hobbes answers in the negative on both counts. “The necessity of events does not of itself draw with it any impiety at all.” Whether we go astray or repent, in every case the necessity is the same. Moreover, we may say that the necessity of actions does not take away the parts of repentance, namely grief for one’s error and joy for one’s turning away from sin and turning toward God. The same may be said of prayer. “For though prayer be none of the causes that move God’s will, his will being unchangeable, yet since we find in God’s word, he will not give his blessings but to those that ask them, the motive of prayer is the same.”[52]

Hobbes meets Bramhall’s argument that beauty and perfection call for a variety of agents—necessary, free, and contingent—by alleging a contradiction in the bishop’s position. For inasmuch as God makes anything, the fact that He makes it means that it is necessary, thus in making all things God makes them necessarily to be. If a piece of clothing is sewn together, it being made means it must necessarily be. But perhaps the beauty of the world requires that some agents work without deliberation, and some with deliberation, and that some work and we do not know how they work. “But this hinders not but that he that elects [chooses] may have his election necessarily determined to one by former causes, and that which is contingent and imputed to fortune be nevertheless necessary and depend on precedent necessary causes.” Bramhall mistakenly supposes that contingent means that something has no cause; rather, maintains Hobbes, contingency means that we do not perceive the cause of something. For example, if a fellow on a journey meets with rain, the journey has its own cause and the rain has its own cause, but since the journey did not cause the rain and the rain did not cause the journey, we say that these were contingent with respect to one another. Thus three sorts of events—necessary, contingent, and free—may yet all be necessary, and the beauty and perfection of the universe maintained.[53]

Bramhall’s last argument from reason asserts that if liberty is undermined, then the nature and formal reason of sin is forfeited. Hobbes denies this consequence. “The nature of sin consists in this, that the action done proceed from our will and be against the law.” When a judge renders a verdict as to the guilt of a person, he looks simply at the will of the perpetrator. Hobbes is not saying that if something is necessary, then it happens against the will of the perpetrator; rather, what is done is done “with his will,” and necessarily so, “because man’s will, and every volition or act of the will and purpose of man, had a sufficient and therefore a necessary cause; and consequently every

voluntary action was necessitated." This means that an action may be simultaneously voluntary, sinful, and necessary.54

As for the various distinctions that Bramhall contests, Hobbes maintains that he has never heard of the distinction between Stoical versus Christian necessity; nor is he ready to defend the distinction between first and second causes as formulated by Bramhall. But the distinction between a liberty from compulsion versus a liberty from necessitation he does wish to defend. While persons may be compelled to act from fear, as when fear makes them willing to submit to an enemy in order to avoid being killed, persons who act according to love or revenge or lust are not being compelled by these desires, although the action may be as necessary as that done by compulsion. Indeed, no one is free from necessitation. Hobbes however does not feel compelled to argue for or to "fortify" this distinction in the way Bramhall proposes. Bramhall points to the common appeal theologians make to hypothetical necessity. Hobbes offers his own explanation of this type of necessity. An example of hypothetical necessity is the proposition, "if I shall live I shall eat." This is a necessary proposition, which is to say, "it is necessary that that proposition should be true whensoever uttered." However, this is not to affirm the necessity of the thing, "nor is it therefore necessary that the man shall live or that the man shall eat." Says Hobbes, "I do not use to fortify my distinctions with such reasons; let his Lordship [Bramhall] confute them how he will, it contents me. But I would have your Lordship [the Marquess of Newcastle] take notice hereby, how an easy and plain thing (but withal false), with the grave usage of such terms as hypothetical necessity and necessity upon supposition and such like terms of Schoolmen, may be obscured and made to seem profound learning."55

Hobbes argues that there is no freedom greater than for a man "to do what he will." Liberty, contrary to Bramhall's contention, cannot be more or less intense. Heat can have varying intensities, but not liberty. Persons who can do what they will have all the liberty possible, while persons who cannot do what they will have no liberty at all. Thus Hobbes finds Bramhall's use of the distinction between the liberty of exercise and the liberty of specification to be ridiculous. The Schools say that the liberty of exercise, that is, the liberty to act or not to act, cannot be without a liberty of specification, which is "a liberty to do or not to do this or that in particular." Again, says Hobbes, the vanity of the distinctions used in the Schools is evident. How can the exercise of liberty not require the liberty to do a particular thing? In fact, Hobbes views such distinctions as harmful. "For nothing is more apt to beget hatred than the tyrannizing over men's reason and understanding, especially when it is done, not by the Scriptures, but by the pretence of learning, and more judgment than that of other men."56

Meanwhile Hobbes wishes to keep the distinction, contra Bramhall, between liberty from compulsion and liberty from necessitation. Bramhall sees no difference between compulsion and necessitation and maintains that free choice is inconsistent with each. Hobbes sees it otherwise:

> For when a man is compelled, for example, to subject himself to his enemy or to die, he has still election left him, and a deliberation to think which of the two he can best endure. And he that is led to prison by force has election, and may deliberate whether he will be haled and trained on the ground or make use of his own feet. Likewise when there is no compulsion, but the strength of temptation to do an evil action being greater than the motives to abstain, it necessarily determines him to the doing of it; yet he deliberates while sometimes the motives to do, sometimes the motives to forbear, are working on him, and consequently he elects which he will. But commonly when we see and know the strength that moves us, we acknowledge necessity; but when we see not, or mark not, the force that moves us, we then think there is none, and that it is not causes but liberty that produces the action. Hence it is that they think he does not choose this that of necessity chooses it; but they might as well say fire does not burn, because it burns of necessity.[57]

Next Hobbes turns to Bramhall's appeal to the Schools, and the distinction between *actus imperatus* and *actus elicitus*, where Bramhall had argued that the former of these can be compelled but the latter cannot be compelled. Hobbes responds by noting that for a voluntary act to be compelled is simply to say that the act is willed, for the will commands our actions. Thus in plain English *actus imperatus*, contrary to those who invented the term, is simply "a voluntary action." As for *actus elicitus*, it conveys the notion that to will is an act of the will, which is to say the will wills itself to will or "to will is an act allured or drawn out of the power to will, which power is commonly called the will." But this then means that "to will may be made as necessary as anything that is done by compulsion." Consequently, Hobbes reckons the distinction between *actus imperatus* and *actus elicitus* to be mere words and "of no effect against necessity."[58]

In Bramhall's treatment of the influence outward objects have on us, the bishop argues that their effect is due to our own default; that is, we make choices regarding outward objects that subsequently subject us to the influence and power of these objects. Hobbes points back, however, to our default. Does our initial choice proceed from causes that are not in our power? This begs for an answer. Bramhall also asserts that we can alter evil habits and develop

wholesome ones. Hobbes agrees. But there are causes that bring about the contrary habit and make it necessary. Outward objects—such as pious company, godly preachers, and the like—move and dispose us to wholesome habits and make them necessary.59

Regarding the idea that the will necessarily follows the last dictate of the understanding, an idea Bramhall rejects, Hobbes challenges his opponent's understanding of the concept. Whereas Bramhall thinks this notion would require that every miniscule action receive deliberation, Hobbes simply understands it to mean that the will follows the last opinion or judgment that immediately precedes the action. For example:

> When a man strikes, his will to strike follows necessarily that thought which he had of the sequel of his blow immediately before the lifting of his hand. Now if it be understood in that sense, the last dictate of the understanding does necessitate the action, though not as the whole cause, yet as the last cause, as the last feather necessitates the breaking of a horse's back, when there are so many laid on before as there needed but the addition of one to make the weight sufficient.60

But Bramhall objects. Agreeing with Medea in the ancient poem, Bramhall notes that although we see and approve the better, we do the worse. Hobbes disputes this assertion. "For though Medea saw many reasons to forbear killing her children, yet the last dictate of her judgment was that the present revenge on her husband outweighed them all, and thereupon the wicked action necessarily followed." Bramhall also affirms that things nearer to the senses move more powerfully so that reason is defeated by affection. But this doesn't help his cause, argues Hobbes. "What follows thence but this, that the sense of the present good is commonly more immediate to the action than the foresight of the evil consequence to come?"61

As for Bramhall's attempt to reconcile liberty with prescience and the divine decrees, Hobbes responds by again affirming that there are certain and necessary causes which make all persons to will as they will. The will is caused by the empirical data we take in every day as we witness praise and dispraise, reward and punishment, the good or the unwelcome consequence of people's actions. These are retained in our memory and shape and make us choose whatever it is we do choose. Of course, our memory of such things proceeds from the senses; and sense proceeds from the operation of the objects of sense; and almighty God alone governs these external objects. Thus all of our actions as free and voluntary agents are necessary.62 Moreover, Hobbes controverts Bramhall's attempt to subject future contingents to the aspect of God other than the divine

will and decree. Bramhall opts instead to root future contingents in the "presentiality" of God's eternity (supposing eternity is not understood as everlasting succession but as an indivisible point). For Hobbes, this is incomprehensible. "To this I answer that as soon as I can conceive eternity to be an indivisible point, or anything but an everlasting succession, I will renounce all that I have written on this subject."[63] He offers a final barb for Bramhall and the Schoolmen:

> I know Saint Thomas Aquinas calls eternity *nunc stans,* an ever-abiding now;[64] which is easy enough to say, but though I fain would, I never could conceive: they that can are more happy than I. But in the meantime his Lordship allows all men to be of my opinion, save only those that can conceive in their minds a *nunc stans,* which I think are none. I understand as little how it can be true, as his Lordship says, that God is not just but justice itself, not wise but wisdom itself, not eternal but eternity itself, nor how he concludes thence that eternity is a point indivisible and not a succession, nor in what sense it can be said that an infinite point, and wherein is no succession, can comprehend all time, though time be successive. These phrases I find not in the Scripture. I wonder therefore what was the design of the Schoolmen to bring them up, unless they thought a man could not be a true Christian unless his understanding be first strangled with such hard sayings.[65]

Having dispensed with Bramhall's arguments, Hobbes turns from negative attack to a positive exposition of his own views in eight parts:

> 1. When humans act with no time to deliberate, their actions necessarily follow the present thought they have of the good or evil consequence of such actions. For example, in a fit of anger the action follows the desire or thought of revenge. In the case of sudden fear, the action follows the desire or thought of escape. Sometimes people are not given to deliberate because they judge that there is no need for deliberation (that is, they immediately judge that there is no unwelcome consequence to the action they take, meaning the action that follows their opinion of doing or not doing it). All such actions Hobbes calls *voluntary* (what Bramhall calls *spontaneous* actions). "I call them voluntary because those actions that follow immediately the last appetite are voluntary, and here it is reasonable to punish a rash action, which could not be justly done by man to man unless the same were voluntary."[66] Indeed, strictly speaking, no action of a man can be said to be performed without deliberation. For if one acts out of a sudden passion, he still has deliberated prior to this action whether he

should do such a thing in such a circumstance. Thus a man who murders someone in a fit of rage is not declared innocent on that basis. Rather, he is justly put to death. He has continually deliberated on murder. Perhaps in a flash he opts contrary to his earlier opinion. Thus he follows his last desire.67

2. To deliberate is simply to consider or weigh whether something is good for oneself to do or not to do. And to consider an action is to imagine the consequences of it, both good and evil. Therefore, "deliberation is nothing but alternate imagination of the good and evil sequels of an action."

3. In all deliberation, then, the last desire or appetite is what we call the will, and immediately precedes the doing of the action. All other desires in the course of deliberation are "intentions" or "inclinations" but not "wills." There is only one will—the last will—whereas we may have many intentions that change.68

4. Actions done voluntarily and actions that follow choice are one and the same thing.

5. Liberty, as Hobbes defines it, is the absence of all the impediments to action that are not contained in the nature and intrinsical quality of the agent. As, for example, the water is said to descend freely, or to have liberty to descend, by the channel of the river, because there are no impediments. And though the water cannot ascend, yet men never say it wants the liberty to ascend, but the faculty or power, because the impediment is in the nature of the water and intrinsical. So also we say he that is tied wants the liberty to go, because the impediment is not in him but in his bands; whereas we say not so of him that is sick or lame, because the impediment is in himself.69

6. Nothing takes beginning from itself. This means that the cause of the will is not the will itself, but the cause is something else not in one's own disposition. Thus in that all agree that the will is the necessary cause of voluntary actions, since the will is caused by other things to which it disposes not itself, it follows that voluntary actions all have necessary causes and are therefore necessitated.

7. A sufficient cause, says Hobbes, does not lack anything in order to produce the effect; otherwise it would not be sufficient. The same is true of a necessary cause. This means that it is impossible for a sufficient cause not to produce the effect, and so it is a necessary cause inasmuch as it produces its effect necessarily. "Hence it is manifest that whatsoever is produced is

> produced necessarily, for whatsoever is produced has a sufficient cause to produce it, or else it had not been; and therefore also voluntary actions are necessitated."[70]
>
> 8. The ordinary definition of free agent Hobbes judges to imply a contradiction, which makes it nonsense. For the typical definition is this: "a free agent is that which, when all things are present which are needful to produce the effect, can nevertheless not produce it."[71] Thus amounts to saying that the cause is sufficient (thus necessary) while the effect need not follow.[72]

Hobbes argues that if Bramhall's conception of liberty and necessity was valid, the decrees of God could be frustrated and overturned by human actions. Similarly, following Bramhall's scheme, God must either not foreknow what shall come to pass and so not decree it, or He must foreknow what shall be as shall never be, and accordingly decree that which shall never come to pass.[73]

Analysis of the Debate

The debate between John Bramhall and Thomas Hobbes portrays the subtle shift taking place in seventeenth-century Europe on matters of philosophical commitment and the understanding of the physical world. Graeme Hunter rightly observes that this skirmish not only introduced new philosophical issues, which Spinoza and Leibniz would later explore at a deeper level, but it represents "the losing battle fought by metaphysical and religious orthodoxy against the rising physics and secular humanism."[74] From the narrow perspective of theology, the debate looks similar to any debate between those who are, broadly speaking, semi-Pelagian in orientation versus those who follow in the Augustinian line, though it has flourishes of philosophical sophistication not characteristic of many theological debates. As has been observed, Bramhall took a rather conventional semi-Pelagian position, "buttressing it, as Hobbes scornfully observed, with a host of scholastic distinctions."[75] Thus Hobbes is quick to point to Bramhall's sources. "Whosoever chanceth to read Suarez's *Opuscula*, where he writeth of free-will and of the concourse of God with man's will, shall find the greatest part, if not all, that the Bishop hath urged in this question."[76] Bramhall's dependency upon the Schoolmen, as they are frequently referred to in the debate, evidences the desire to defend his views with something more than the weapons of Scripture's teeth. He aimed to bolster his argument through the use of reason as well. Since he was committed to an essentially Arminian theological position in regard to freedom and necessity, his appeal to Jesuit writers (even if covert) demonstrates his desire to make use of the most potent

arguments available for his position. The fact that Hobbes frequently ridicules the subtleties of the Scholastics, despite his own careful and subtle distinctions, demonstrates his own commitment to explore and develop an alternative philosophical perspective.

The nature of this alternative philosophy is manifest in the tussle with Bramhall. While it might appear that the issue of human freedom is the lone topic of debate between Bramhall and Hobbes, actually more is at issue. In fact, how one answers the question of human freedom is dependent upon answers given to other questions as well: What is human nature? How do physical laws operate and function? And how does God relate to and interact with the world?

Lying in back of Hobbes's determinism are his own convictions about the physical universe, the laws of motion, and his metaphysical materialism. Hobbes maintains that everything is material being—including the human soul, even God and angels. God is, for Hobbes, "a most pure, simple, indivisible, spirit corporeal."[77] This was a radical notion in the seventeenth century. Hobbes's materialism pressed him to rethink how human beings function, for on the view that prevailed at the time, "the human mind or soul is an immaterial substance with special powers that can only be exemplified in such a substance."[78] Standing apart from this, Hobbes labored to develop his own materialist psychology, which in turn had direct implications for his conception of human freedom—particularly his conception of desire (or appetite) and will. For Bramhall, following a more traditional scheme, people act as they do because they choose the actions they perform. This means that the choices a person makes are directed and informed (though not determined) by desires or wants or appetites which that person has with respect to a given object. Thus for Bramhall and many of his theological contemporaries, the traditional psychology, going back to the medieval Scholastics, maintained a clear distinction between desire and will. To desire something, as an appetite or want, is characteristic of both human beings and animals. However, to will something, as a function of reason, requires a rational soul and is characteristic of humans alone. Moreover, the soul is immaterial. The will for Bramhall possesses sovereignty over itself. The will can act in accord with desires or contrary to desires. The will can also opt for a lesser desire over against a more potent desire. This is the power of the soul. The will exercises dominion over itself, which means it exercises dominion over its own willing without any extrinsical necessitation. In short, the will determines itself.[79]

For Hobbes, as noted above, nothing is immaterial. The power (or powers) that humans exercise is simply the power of material things. This means that Bramhall's conception of the will, and the whole tradition in back of it, is, in

Hobbes's view, a wholly imaginary thing. He exhibits great acuity in attacking Bramhall's faculty psychology and asks "how the will can possibly rise above itself and will its own willing."[80] With relish, he points out the absurdity of this notion. Indeed, what is the self that presides over its own operations? How does the will will itself to will? And isn't such willing induced by prior willing, and so on *ad infinitum*?[81] Hobbes also questions whether the power of any being could possess the properties that Bramhall attributes to it. "Bramhall speaks of the will as performing actions and as suspending its act, as commanding and moving things, as being advised by the understanding, and so forth."[82] But do not properties require an agent, or at least a substance, for their subject? If so, it is a mistake to treat powers, which are properties of agents, as if they were agents themselves. A property is not rightly attributed to another property. Hence the idea of "will" presupposed by Bramhall is fiction. The will is not the cause of the will.[83] The will does not possess a power to will itself, nor to act contrary to the most potent desire, nor to act contrary to any and all desires. The will is simply the last desire prior to the act of choosing, i.e., the will is the last desired thing. Thus Hobbes does not abandon the notion of "will." Yet for him will is not a unique kind of mental operation, different from a desire; rather, will is a subclass of desires.[84] This fits with Hobbes's notion that nothing takes beginning from itself (except God) and that a self-causing self is nonsense.

Bramhall, for his part, failed to grasp the distinction between *being free to do if one wills* and *being free to will.* For Hobbes, an agent is free only with respect to particular actions. This means that doing *x* and not doing *x* are distinct particular actions (though doing or not doing *x* are treated as the same action). Chappell explains,

> What Hobbes should have said is that "a free agent is he that can do *x* if he wills to do *x*, or forbear doing *x* if he wills to forbear." An even better way of stating his position would be: "an agent is free with respect to a particular performance or forbearance only if he is able to carry out or accomplish that performance or forbearance should he will to do so"—with the proviso, of course, that "is able to accomplish" means not "has the natural capacity or power to accomplish" but "is not externally impeded from accomplishing."[85]

In not comprehending Hobbes's position, Bramhall never addressed Hobbes's fundamental argument. The will is externally determined, for Hobbes, and so it is nonsensical to say an agent can fail to will what his will has been determined to do. Meanwhile, in Hobbes's scheme, deliberation does not really seem to be an exercise of reason, and to the degree it is reasonable, reason itself has been

determined by external causes. Perhaps this is why he "dismisses the scholastic definition of rational appetite and accounts for all the phenomena of volition by the sensitive appetite which man had long been said to share with the animals."[86]

Liberty or freedom, for Hobbes, is logically compatible with necessity. What is not clear, however, is whether Hobbes has in mind a logical necessity or a natural or physical necessity. Graeme Hunter does not hesitate to call Hobbes's position a "natural necessity" and to label it "fatalism."[87] For Hobbes, every effect depends upon external causes and all events are reducible to changes in the motion of matter.[88] Vere Chappell, on the other hand, maintains that Hobbes's notion of necessity is of the logical variety. He points to a passage in Hobbes's *De corpore* where Hobbes says that when a cause is "supposed to be present, it cannot be understood but that the effect is produced" (II.ix.3). "This suggests," writes Chappell, "that a cause not followed by its effect is inconceivable, a violation of the laws not merely of nature but of thought. And if so then Hobbes's view is that effects follow their causes with logical and not merely with physical necessity—the same view that was explicitly put forward later on in the seventeenth century by Spinoza."[89] Chappell also points to Hobbes's argument in his treatise: a proposition of the form "*P* or not–*P*" is true of necessity because it is a logical truth.[90]

Although Hobbes asserts that all that is or all that happens has a necessary cause, he does not as such understand the necessary cause of a particular being or action to be another particular being or action. Thus at times a singular event may be a cause—such as the last feather that breaks the horse's back. The feather, however, is really part of a more cohesive chain of causes, forming not the whole cause itself but being part of the whole cause.[91] Thus while Hobbes's notion of causality gives us a picture of reality in which all things are caused by other things, there are nonetheless innumerable causal chains, distinct and separate from one another in the sense that they cannot be reduced at every link to one another, but still interconnected perhaps in innumerable ways or if in no other way than their identical and original first link—God.[92] "For Hobbes, the 'cause simply' or the 'entire cause' of any action, that which, he says, 'necessitates and determines' it, 'is the sum of all things which…conduce and concur to [its] production.'"[93]

Furthermore, since every member of such a "concourse" of (partial) causes is itself "determined to be such as it is by a like concourse of former causes," each of which is in its turn determined by another such concourse, and so on, and since all these causes were "set and ordered by the eternal cause of all things, God Almighty," it follows that the entire cause of every present action is a vast

series of collections of partial causes extending back to and including the original action by which God created all things. So God Himself, or more precisely the will of God, though not the whole cause, is nonetheless a partial cause of everything that happens in the world.94

Moreover, with this scheme, Hobbes could also dismiss the problem of reconciling God's providence and the divine decree with human freedom "by defining freedom as nothing more than the action of the will in response to a chain of causes that begins with God."95 Yet, as Damrosch correctly asserts, "like everything else in his system the model is mechanist, causation being envisioned as one body pressing upon another."96 This seems to fit into a notion of natural necessity. Consequently, it seems best to say that Hobbes opted for both natural and logical necessity.

Meanwhile, as noted above, Hobbes does not deny freedom in the face of necessity. His scheme is clearly a species of determinism. Damrosch maintains that since Hobbes asserts "the compatibility of his mechanist system with one version at least of traditional Christian belief, he forced religious apologists on to the defensive with a new and special urgency."97 Perhaps! Certainly what was most objectionable about Hobbes's system was his materialism, which gave his doctrine of necessity a different flavor than the traditional Dortian or Calvinist scheme. Although Hobbes manages to look like a proponent of Reformation theology, he does not manage to retain its portrait of God as one who is near and immanent. He offers more of a caricature of Christian doctrine. In preserving aspects of divine sovereignty and the like, Hobbes does not sense that the "spiritual vitality" of the Christian gospel has been drained away. "His God is a *deus absconditus* with a vengeance: Reformation voluntarism stressed God's ever-present power, Hobbes his omnipotent remoteness."98 Bramhall, though following a trajectory at odds with the theology of Luther and Calvin on human freedom, sensed that Hobbes's scheme was up to something different than traditional Augustinianism. Yet he never quite defined precisely where the shift had taken place.99 Indeed, other than God functioning as a kind of unmoved mover, Hobbes's system does not seem to need God any further. Perhaps his materialism cracked open the door for the deism that would become prominent in the next century. In any case, Hobbes's system agitates and perplexes Bramhall "because it is presented not as atheism or even eccentric theism, but as familiar Reformation theology as confirmed by the findings of mechanist psychology."100

An interested interloper into this seventeenth-century discussion, who also proved to be an early critic of Hobbes, was none other than G. W. Leibnitz. In one of the appendices of his *Theodicy* entitled, "Reflexions on the Work that Mr.

Hobbes published in English on ‘Freedom, Necessity and Chance,’” Leibnitz refers to “strange and indefensible” features of Hobbes’s opinions. Says Leibnitz, “His philosophy, which asserts that bodies alone are substances, hardly appears favorable to the providence of God and the immortality of the soul.”[101] The implications of this involve Hobbes in sometimes sounding as if “everything happened through an absolute necessity.” Leibnitz agrees with Bramhall insofar as the Bishop argues, against Hobbes, for hypothetical necessity vis-à-vis divine foreknowledge. For “what happens by a hypothetical necessity happens as a result of the supposition that this or that has been foreseen or resolved, or done beforehand.” Hobbes’s position, however, posits an absolute necessity of events in God’s foreknowledge of them. Similarly, Hobbes refuses to acknowledge the idea of moral necessity since he maintains that all which happens—every event—“happens through physical causes.” But Leibnitz endorses the idea of a moral necessity, which refers to “an obligation imposed upon a person by reason, which is always followed by its effect in the wise.”[102]

At this point, observes Leibnitz, Hobbes seems to keep company with the likes of Epicurus, Strato, and Spinoza, where physical causes exist and bring about things apart from intelligence or choice, and so likewise apart from God. This notion of necessity means that everything has “existence through its own essence.” Everything that was, is, and shall be is absolutely necessary, as necessary as 2 + 3 = 5. Leibnitz, again, argues that hypothetical necessity and moral necessity are legitimate and better alternatives to Hobbes’s materialism and its implied doctrine of a blind and absolute necessity.[103]

For his part, Leibnitz contests Hobbes’s view of freedom and necessity by arguing that we as human beings “have some power…over our volitions, but obliquely, and not absolutely and indifferently.” Hobbes rightly views freedom as not involving the necessity of coercion. And Leibnitz believes Hobbes is correct to assert that “the certainty of events, and necessity itself, if there was any in the way our actions depend upon causes, would not prevent us from employing deliberations, exhortations, blame and praise, punishments and rewards: for these are of service and prompt men to produce actions or to refrain from them.” But Hobbes is mistaken in taking the necessity of such events and actions in the absolute sense, whereas in fact the means employed only “render the actions determinate and certain, as they are indeed; for their nature shows that they are not subject to an absolute necessity.”[104] Leibnitz also contests Hobbes’s repeated confusion over necessary causes, determining causes, and contingency, for Hobbes states that God’s will makes the necessity of all things. This is incorrect, according to Leibnitz, since God’s will, on the contrary, “produces only contingent things, which could have been differently, since time,

space and matter are indifferent with regard to all kinds of shape and movement."[105]

Meanwhile Leibnitz cannot follow Bramhall in maintaining that a person can choose what he or she wills to will or the view that the will can choose whether to will or not to will. For any present volition, says Leibnitz, that cannot be so.[106]

Leibnitz wonders whether Hobbes's notion of God isn't thoroughly compromised, for given Hobbes's materialism it appears that what "he calls God is nothing but the blind nature of the mass of material things, which acts according to mathematical laws, following an absolute necessity, as the atoms do in the system of Epicurus." Hobbes's God acts from "the necessity of its power, and not by the choice of its wisdom."[107] Leibnitz, in agreement with Bramhall, believes that Hobbes's notion of God succumbs to certain notions of the Schoolmen wherein God is *ex lex,* exercising absolute power, standing apart from all right and human notions of equity, and acting the Tyrant creates millions of persons to be eternally miserable as displays of His power. Thus notions of God's goodness and justice suffer in Hobbesian hands. As for divine wisdom, it is incomprehensible. Leibnitz offers this retort to Hobbes: "It seems as if he means that it is an indescribable something attributed to an indescribable something, and even a chimerical quality given to a chimerical substance, to intimidate and to deceive the nations through the worship which they render to it. After all, it is difficult for Mr. Hobbes to have a different opinion of God and of wisdom, since he admits only material substances."[108]

Conclusion

Scholars are not united regarding who won the debate between John Bramhall and Thomas Hobbes. "On its own terms Hobbes's system is massively well defended." Indeed, some have judged that Bramhall came off the worst in the debate.[109] Nonetheless, even if the debate is judged to be a "standoff," it succeeds in pointing to the changing intellectual climate characteristic of the seventeenth century. In the Hobbesian universe—where motion is what defines and describes the physical world, for all things, being material, are in motion according to a chain of motion, all of which finally derives its motion from God Himself as the first link in the chain—in that universe traditional theological concepts are set within the framework of the new science of motion. In the Hobbes-Bramhall debate, then, we catch a glimpse of the collision taking place between the traditional metaphysics of Arminian/Molinist writers, such as Bishop Bramhall, and the new science and philosophy of Hobbes. The English philosopher himself gave expression to that collision in his own autobiographical

poem when he wrote:

> The question at that time was, and is still
> Whether at God's or our own choice We Will,
> And this was the result proceeding thence,
> He the schools followed, I made use of Sense.110

Given this context, the Hobbes-Bramhall debate has wider implications than the traditional polemics waged by Calvinists and Arminians against one another on questions of freedom and necessity. Even though the debate between Hobbes and Bramhall successfully draws the battle lines between the old and new science, I am left wondering how Calvinistic theologians, particularly Reformed Scholastic authors, may have responded to Hobbes (and Leibnitz as well). How would the Reformed orthodox wish to distinguish their Calvinism from Hobbes's materialism? This would be an interesting question to explore, especially in view of the recent publication, in English translation, of Zanchi, Junius, Gomarus, Voetius, Turrettini, and Bernardinus de Moor treating human freedom.111 Bramhall, for his part, though an Arminian of sorts, rightly sensed that Hobbes's peculiar notion of freedom and necessity—with its radical materialism—places Christianity in jeopardy.

1. For an orientation to Hobbes's life and philosophy, see A. P. Martinich, *Hobbes: A Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Quentin Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univeresity Press, 1996); Arnold A. Rogow, *Thomas Hobbes: Radical in the Service of Reaction* (London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1986); A. E. Taylor, *Thomas Hobbes* (first published 1908; repr., London: Kennikat Press, 1970); Marshall Missner, *On Hobbes*, Wadsworth Philosophers Series (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, Thomson Learning, 2000); Tom Sorel, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Richard Tuck, *Hobbes*, Past Masters Series (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, vol. 5, *Modern Philosophy: The British Philosophers*, pt. 1, *Hobbes to Paley* (Garden City, N.Y.: Image Books, 1964), 11–60; W. T. Jones, *A History of Western Philosophy: Hobbes to Hume*, vol. 3, 2nd ed. (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1969), 118–153. The literature on Bramhall is considerably less ample; see "Life of Archbishop Bramhall" in vol. 1 of his collected works, *The Works of the Most Reverend Father in God, John Bramhall* (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1842–45), 1:iii–xv; *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, ed. John M'Clintock and James Strong (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1879), 1:875–876; *The Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, ed. Samuel Macauley Jackson (repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1952), 2:251–252; F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press, 1974), 195–196.

2. Vere Chappell, introduction to *Hobbes and Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity*, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy, ed. Vere Chappell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), ix; G. W. Leibniz, "Reflexions on the Work that Mr. Hobbes Published in English on 'Freedom, Necessity and Chance,'" in Leibniz's *Theodicy: Essays on the Goodness of God, the Freedom of Man, and the Origin of Evil*, ed. Austin Farrer, trans. E. M. Huggard (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1985), 393ff.

3. Chappell, introduction to *Hobbes and Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity*, ix.

4. Chappell explains that when Bramhall composed his *Vindication* (later published under the slightly

revised title *Defence*), he included in that work not only the passages by Hobbes to which he made a direct reply, but also the passages from his original discourse which Hobbes responded to in his original treatise. "The *Defence* consists, therefore, of three different works printed together." Since Hobbes's *Questions* prints the whole text of Bramhall's original discourse, Bramhall's discourse can be extracted from Hobbes's work. Chappell has done this and the whole of Bramhall's original discourse is printed in the Cambridge edition. However, Bramhall's original discourse is not published as a separate treatise in *The Works of John Bramhall* (see vol. 4). Instead, all of Bramhall's works against Hobbes are printed there under their original published titles: *Defence of True Liberty from Antecedent and Extrinsical Necessity, Castigations of Mr. Hobbes,* and *The Catching of Leviathan or the Great Whale*.

5. F. C. Hood, "The Change in Hobbes's Definition of Liberty," *The Philosophical Quarterly* 17 (April 1967): 150–163.

6. Leopold Damrosch Jr., "Hobbes as Reformation Theologian: Implications of the Free-will Controversy," *The Journal of the History of Ideas* 40 (July–Sept. 1979): 339–352.

7. Graeme Hunter, "The Fate of Thomas Hobbes," *Studia Leibnitiana* 21 (1989): 5–20.

8. M. M. Goldsmith, "Hobbes on Liberty," *Hobbes Studies* 2 (1989): 23–39.

9. Skinner, "Thomas Hobbes on the Proper Signification of Liberty," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 40 (1990): 121–151.

10. Cees Leijenhorst, "Hobbes's Theory of Causality and Its Aristotelian Background," *The Monist* 79 (July 1996): 426–447.

11. Chappell, introduction to *Hobbes and Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity,* ix–xxiii.

12. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," in *Hobbes and Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity,* 1; Bramhall, "A Defence of True Liberty from Antecedent and Extrinsical Necessity," in *Works,* 4:23. Hereafter corresponding references in the *Defence* will be simply cited as *Works,* vol. 4.

13. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 1; Bramhall, *Works,* 4:33. Cf. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* I–II.ix.I, I–II.x.2; Bellarmino, *De gratia et libero arbitrio* III.iii: "Est namque libertas arbitrii triplex, sez. a necessitate, a peccato, et a miseria." Peter Lombard, *Libri Quattuor Sententiarum,* lib. II. dist. xxv. qu. i. art. 5. For the distinction of liberty of exercise, etc., see Bellarmino, *De gratia et libero arbitrio,* lib. Iii. C. 3; Op. tom. iii. ppp. 651. C, 654. A.

14. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 1; Bramhall, *Works,* 4:37.

15. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 2; Bramhall, *Works,* 4:38.

16. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 2–3; Bramhall, *Works,* 4:54–55.

17. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 3; Bramhall, *Works,* 4:56–57.

18. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 3–4; Bramhall, *Works,* 4:58.

19. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 4; Bramhall, *Works,* 4:64.

20. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 4–5; Bramhall, *Works,* 4:82, 84.

21. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 5; Bramhall, *Works,* 4:84.

22. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 5; Bramhall, *Works,* 4:101–102.

23. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 5–6; Bramhall, *Works,* 4:109.

24. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 6; Bramhall, *Works,* 4:112.

25. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 6–7; Bramhall, *Works,* 4:115–117.

26. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 7; Bramhall, *Works,* 4:117.

27. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 7–8; Bramhall, *Works,* 4:117–118. See Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* I.xiv.13 ad 3; *Summa contra Gentiles* II.xxv.23–4.; and *De veritate* ii.2 ad 4.

28. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 8–9; Bramhall, *Works,* 4:121.

29. See Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* I–II.vi.4.

30. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 9–10; Bramhall, *Works,* 4:130–131.

31. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 10–11; Bramhall, *Works,* 4:143.

32. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 11; Bramhall, *Works,* 4:144.

33. See Richard A. Muller's *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006), 200, where he explains that *necessitas consequentiae* does not refer to "an absolute necessity, but a

necessity brought about or conditioned by a previous contingent circumstance; thus, conditional necessity." The idea is that necessity arises out of a given situation or set of circumstances or out of disposition hypothetically rather than absolutely conceived. *Neccessitas consequentis* on the other hand refers to "the necessity of something that cannot be other than what it is, which is to say, a simple and absolute necessity. A necessity of the consequent arises out of the connection of necessary causes with the effects that must follow from them."

34. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 12–13; Bramhall, *Works*, 4:147–148.

35. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 13–14; Bramhall, *Works*, 4:153.

36. Bramhall, "Discourse of Liberty and Necessity," 13–14; Bramhall, *Works*, 4:153.

37. Thomas Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" in *Hobbes and Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity,* 15–16; also in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes*, ed. Sir William Molesworth, Bart. (originally pub. 1839; repr., Scientia Aalen, 1962), 4:239–240 [hereafter cited as *English Works*, vol. 4].

38. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 16–17; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:240–241.

39. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 17; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:241–242.

40. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 19; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:245.

41. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 20; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:246.

42. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 20–21; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:247.

43. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 21; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:247.

44. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 22; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:248–249.

45. Cf. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I–II.lxxix.2.

46. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 23; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:250.

47. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 23; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:250–251.

48. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 23–25; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:251–253.

49. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 25; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:254.

50. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 26; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:255–256.

51. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 26; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:256.

52. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 27; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:257–258.

53. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 28; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:258–259.

54. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 29; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:259–260.

55. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 29–30; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:260–262.

56. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 30–31; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:262–264.

57. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 32; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:264–265.

58. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 32–33; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:265–266.

59. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 33; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:267.

60. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 34; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:268–269.

61. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 34–35; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:269.

62. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 35; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:269–270.

63. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 36; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:271.

64. See Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I.x.2.

65. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 36; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:271.

66. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 37; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:272.

67. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 37; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:273.

68. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 37; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:273.

69. Hobbes, "Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*" 38; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:273–274. Hobbes argues in a similar fashion in *Leviathan:* "*Liberty,* and *necessity* are consistent: as in the water, that hath not only *liberty,* but a *necessity* of descending by the channel; so likewise in the actions which men voluntarily do: which, because they proceed from their will, proceed from *liberty;* and yet, because every act of man's will, and every desire, and inclination proceedeth from some cause, and that from another cause, in a continual chain, whose first link is the hand of God the first of all causes, [they] proceed from *necessity.*" Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651), ed. Michael Oakeshott (Oxford, 1946), 2:xxi, 137–138.

70. Hobbes, “Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*” 38; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:274–275.

71. Chappell observes that this “libertarian” notion of agency was very common among Jesuits and Arminians and first set forth by Molina, see his *Liberi arbitrii cum gratiae donis, divina praescientia, providentia, praedestinatione et reprobatione concordia* (ad xiv. 13), I.ii.3: “Illud agens liberum dicitur quod positis omnibus requisitis ad agendum potest agere et non agree” (That agent is said to be free that, all things required for acting having been posited, is able either to act or not to act). Chappell, introduction to *Hobbes and Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity,* 39–54.

72. Hobbes, “Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*” 38–39; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:275.

73. Hobbes, “Treatise *Of Liberty and Necessity,*” 41; Hobbes, *English Works*, 4:278.

74. Hunter, “Fate of Thomas Hobbes,” 5.

75. Damrosch, “Hobbes as Reformation Theologian,” 341.

76. Hobbes, “The Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance,” in *English Works*, 5:37.

77. Hobbes, “An Answer to ‘Catching of the Leviathan,’” in *English Works*, 4:313.

78. Chappell, introduction to *Hobbes and Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity,* xii.

79. See Chappell, introduction to *Hobbes and Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity,* xv.

80. Damrosch, “Hobbes as Reformation Theologian,” 347.

81. Damrosch, “Hobbes as Reformation Theologian,” 347.

82. Chappell, introduction to *Hobbes and Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity,* xv.

83. See Chappell, introduction to *Hobbes and Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity,* xvi.

84. Chappell, introduction to *Hobbes and Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity,* xiii.

85. Chappell, introduction to *Hobbes and Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity,* xviii–xix.

86. Damrosch, “Hobbes as Reformation Theologian,” 348.

87. Hunter, “Fate of Thomas Hobbes,” *Studia Leibnitiana* 21 (1989): 5ff.

88. Hunter, “Fate of Thomas Hobbes,” *Studia Leibnitiana* 21 (1989): 11.

89. Chappell, introduction to *Hobbes and Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity,* xvii.

90. Chappell, introduction to *Hobbes and Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity,* xvii.

91. Chappell, introduction to *Hobbes and Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity,* xvii.

92. Hunter, “Fate of Thomas Hobbes,” *Studia Leibnitiana* 21 (1989): 10. For a full treatment of Hobbes’s notion of causality, see Leijenhorst’s article “Hobbes’s Theory of Causality and Its Aristotelian Background,” 426–447.

93. Chappell, introduction to *Hobbes and Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity,* xvii.

94. Chappell, introduction to *Hobbes and Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity,* xvii–xviii.

95. Damrosch, “Hobbes as Reformation Theologian,” 342.

96. Damroscch, “Hobbes as Reformation Theologian,” 346.

97. Damrosch, “Hobbes as Reformation Theologian,” 340.

98. Damrosch, “Hobbes as Reformation Theologian,” 346.

99. Damrosch, “Hobbes as Reformation Theologian,” 346.

100. Damrosch, “Hobbes as Reformation Theologian,” 349.

101. Leibnitz, *Theodicy,* 394.

102. Leibnitz, *Theodicy,* 395.

103. Leibnitz, *Theodicy,* 395.

104. Leibnitz, *Theodicy,* 396.

105. Leibnitz, *Theodicy,* 397.

106. Leibnitz, *Theodicy,* 397.

107. Leibnitz, *Theodicy,* 398–99.

108. Leibnitz, *Theodicy,* 403.

109. Damrosch, “Hobbes as Reformation Theologian,” 349, 350.

110. Quoted from Hunter, “Fate of Thomas Hobbes,” 15.

111. See Willem J. van Asselt, J. Martin Bac, and Roelf T. te Velde, eds., *Reformed Thought on Freedom: The Concept of Free Choice in Early Modern Reformed Theology,* Texts and Studies in

Reformation and Post-Reformation Thought, ed. Richard A. Muller (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010).

CHAPTER 13

Bible Commentary for the Untutored: The *Bijbelverklaring* of 1780–1795, by Jacob van Nuys Klinkenberg and Gerard Johan Nahuys (with Appendix)

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In answer to the question, "Which scholars deserve historical study?" Peter T. Van Rooden writes that Constantijn L'Empereur, professor of Hebrew and theology at the University of Leiden from 1634 to 1648, "was an ordinary scholar, who does not deserve a biography on the grounds of his originality or new concepts developed by him." He goes on to argue, however, that "this very lack of originality has its attractive side. Because L'Empereur's work possesses a traditional and commonplace character, his work provides a window on rabbinical and Old Testament studies in the 16th and 17th centuries."1 Jacob van Nuys Klinkenberg, professor of theology and church history at the Athenaeum Illustre of Amsterdam in the late eighteenth century, exemplifies a similar commonplace character with respect to the untutored in the Christian church of his day. He evidences deep pastoral concern at a time when Deism and the Enlightenment had "penetrated to the so-called 'ordinary person,' and the 'untutored.' It is that kind of popularization of Enlightenment thought that is such an important characteristic of the end phase of the Enlightenment," opines E. G. E. van der Wall in her study of Klinkenberg.2 As an exponent of "moderate Christianity," and devoted to improving family devotions, Klinkenberg excelled at and was recognized for his skill at popularizing the Christian faith.3

This essay will introduce the *Bijbelverklaring. De Bijbel door beknopte uitbreidingen, en opheldernde aenmerkingen, verklaard*,4 a commentary on the Bible which Klinkenberg began with colleague Gerard Johan Nahuys.5 It was their intention to "write for the general public…. We make no show of scholarly learning, rather we seek to express ourselves with clarity and brevity."6 After a brief introduction to Klinkenberg and Nahuys7 and the intellectual climate in which they published the *Bijbelverklaring*, this essay will describe how two preachers from Amsterdam taught late eighteenth-century untutored Christians

of the Netherlands to read Scripture with a pious understanding of and attitude toward the biblical text; how they organized their commentary; and how contemporaries in the academy and the church received the series. Throughout it will also be suggested that the commentaries evidence a post-confessionality characteristic of German universities of the time.[8]

Nahuys died on October 9, 1781, little more than a year after the first volume of the *Bijbelverklaring* appeared and the work on Leviticus had been completed. With Deuteronomy Klinkenberg assumed full responsibility for the series, Nahuys having contributed material up to Deuteronomy 8.

Klinkenberg and Nahuys: Mentors of the Untutored

After completing Latin School in Haarlem, Klinkenberg (1744–1817) studied theology at the University of Harderwijk, whose theological mindset had been shaped by Cocceian[9] theology under the guidance of Samuel van Diest (1664–1681) and Bernardus Sebastiaan Cremer (1717–1750).[10] In 1764 he received the "Artium Liberalium Magister et Philosophiae Doctor" degree from Leiden, having defended a *Dissertatio physico-philosophica de Aëre ejusque Proprietatibus et Usu*. After pursuing theological studies at Leiden, he was ordained at Eemnester-Buiten on April 13, 1766, serving there until 1773, when he moved to Overschie. Subsequently, he served Reformed churches at Oudewater, Deventer, and Amsterdam. In 1783, five years after coming to Amsterdam, he was appointed to teach theology at Leiden, but pressure from his consistory led him to decline. Shortly thereafter, however, he accepted an appointment as professor of theology and church history at the Athenaeum Illustre[11] of Amsterdam. Klinkenberg received his doctorate in theology from Leiden on March 10, 1784, and on March 29 delivered his inaugural lecture, "The deleterious influence of unbelief upon the Republic."[12] Klinkenberg died on September 14, 1817.[13]

After completing his theological studies at Utrecht, Nahuys (1738–1781) served Reformed churches at Ede, Oud-Beyerland, Middelburg, and Rotterdam, where he was appointed professor of philosophy and ethics in 1772. His name was mentioned in connection with a chair at the university of Groningen in 1773; a short time later he declined an appointment to Harderwijk. In 1778 Nahuys accepted a call to Amsterdam; two years later he received and accepted an appointment to Leiden University. On April 30, 1781, he delivered his inaugural lecture, "Concerning the disadvantages of a refined paganism, infiltrating contemporary Christians, and the means to combat it."[14] Having delivered only a few lectures, Nahuys fell ill and died on October 9, 1781, three days after the tragic death of his wife, Catherina van Mansfelt. He was forty-

three years old, “cut off in the flowering of his life.”15

The last quarter of the eighteenth century provided a stimulating intellectual environment. English deism challenged the traditional understanding of the relationship between faith and reason,16 and rationalist critique of Scripture was ascendant in Germany, its effects spilling over the border.17 The Voetian and Cocceian conflicts about the nature of theology and piety had by then merged into something of a broad single stream, in its place there arose heated discussions about confessional-theological toleration,18 a toleration fed by the “enlightened Protestantism” that distinguished the Dutch Enlightenment from its more insidious forms elsewhere.19 During the late eighteenth century, “virtuousness, calmness, and reasonableness were emphasized…. Preachers increased in social stature and exchanged reformed orthodoxy for a ‘rational’ religion permeated with Enlightenment thought.”20 What came to be known as critical Bible scholarship had taken root in the European universities, the German educational project focusing on a renewed classical humanist approach to theological education, one which bypassed the increasing difficulties between it and the developing modern sciences.21 The political situation was divided, largely between the Patriots, confessionally less orthodox, and the Orangists, more orthodox—the one party seeking greater democracy, the other a republic under the House of Orange. By 1793, the French began to influence Dutch church and society.22 During this intense socio-politico-ecclesiastical upheaval, Klinkenberg and Nahuys began, and Klinkenberg finished, their Bible commentary. Klinkenberg himself was not untouched by these events. In 1796, one year after publishing the last volume of the *Bijbelverklaring,* he and seventeen other ministers were defrocked for refusing to sign an oath of allegiance to the French supported republic. Under the National Assembly’s restoration act of 1803 the ministers were reinstated on August 11 of that same year.23

Description of the *Bijbelverklaring*

General Format

The first volume begins with general hermeneutics and Bible-reading suggestions which apply to the subsequent twenty-seven volumes,24 each of which receives its own special introduction. The introduction to Genesis consists of a summary of the content in the form of a detailed outline, a chronology based on Ussher, and a list of recommended commentaries. Matters of Mosaic authorship are included in the general introduction. The commentary on Exodus expands this to eight elements: discussion of the name of the book; the main points of the content; its chief interest, benefit and use; its trustworthiness and

divine authority; an outline of the contents, first in its several main parts followed by a detailed outline of the pericopes;[25] a chronology, often attributed to Ussher; and books available in Dutch for further study.[26]

Klinkenberg and Nahuys's preference for Johann David Michaelis's translation of the Old Testament and attendant philological commentary, over that of the Dordtian translation, links them closely to the new German educational program being developed at Göttingen. The leading Orientalist of his time, "Michaelis's recovery of Hebrew was an attempt to move beyond confessional interpretation and to render the Bible relevant as a new but old sort of cultural authority."[27] Similar was their recommendation of a Roman Catholic work, Augustin Calmet's *Dictionnaire historique*.[28]

Pericope headings with brief explanations of the section's content are introduced with Deuteronomy 18:9; academic footnotes begin to appear in the volume on Proverbs and Song of Songs. Beginning with Joshua, Klinkenberg adds a separate section on the author and the scope (*oogmerk*)[29] of the book, which describes the chief goal or aim of the book and its benefits for both Israel and the church. Expanded explanations are added as required by issues pertaining to individual books: the identity of the judges, Job's friends, the number and canonical order of the Gospels, or the different interpretations of the Revelation.[30] There are no explanations or discussions of doctrinal matters related to the Cocceian and Voetian controversies. This is explained by their irenic approach, cited above, but may also signal a post-confessional tendency, expressive of their preference for Michaelis's translation of the Old Testament—recommended for Genesis, Exodus, and Job—and, as we will see, the commentary format.

Commentary Style

The explanatory section of the title, *De Bijbel door beknopte uitbreidingen, en opheldere aenmerkingen, verklaard* ("The Bible: Explained through brief expansions and clarifying commentary"), points to a major difference between the *Bijbelverklaring* and extant commentaries in Dutch:[31] Klinkenberg and Nahuys avoid fragmenting the text for the sake of reading. This is especially clear with historical literature where narrative continuity is crucial.

Commentary on the text begins with a chapter summary, including a segmentation into sense units but always within the inherited chapter divisions of the biblical text. Phrases or verses of the text are followed by running interpretive and explicative commentary in smaller font (represented as italics in this essay). For example:

> *In the beginning*, when all things first came into being, because before this there existed nothing except the Eternal God; *God created the heavens and the earth*, he brought all being out of nothing, he created two heavens, as the text itself states. And also the third heaven, inhabited by its blessed angels, that immeasurable space, with all the awesome spheres within; he created the earth, which later was prepared for human habitation (ad Gen. 1:1).

Exposition runs from short sentences or phrases to extended paragraphs, each giving the literal and spiritual senses of the text, illuminating it with historical and cultural explanations, frequently referring to classical authorities such as Josephus.

Now and then the authors interrupt their running commentary with expanded explanations of varying lengths.[32] For example, a three-page excursus follows the genealogies of Genesis 5, and a twenty-three page discussion of the foreshadowing character of the cult after Leviticus 16. These explanations are usually introduced thus: "When reading this chapter one should remember the following" (ad Genesis 5), or, "Now it remains for us to understand the spiritual sense of this material, what did the Day of atonement and its rituals foreshadow?" (ad Leviticus 16). At times the reader is addressed with a plea for understanding the length or the nature of the commentary: "These matters show that this wish for blessing is obscure and difficult for us to comprehend. Because of that the kind reader will know why I dwelt on this point a little longer than is my wont" (ad Deut. 33:1). Here and there the authors provide a transition from the excursus to the text under discussion: "Now follows the narrative of Israel's journeys from Mt. Horeb, around the land of Edom, to the border of King Sihon's territory" (ad Num. 21:9), thereby maintaining the flow of the text. One looks in vain for expanded explanations on the covenants of works and grace.

The running commentary and careful maintenance of narrative continuity sets the *Bijbelverklaring* apart from the commentary style of its sources and predecessors such as Franciscus Burmannus's *Wet en Getuigenis* (1660, 1737$_3$), P. Van Staveren's *Over de Huishouding Gods* (1695), and Nikolaas Hartman's *Huysbybel* (1747$_3$). Burmannus and Van Staveren explain the biblical text, but neither includes it. Such commentaries often have more exposition than Scripture text per page. Burmannus also organizes his commentary in a catechetical question and answer format: Q.: "With what does Scripture begin?" A.: "With the beginning of all things, the creation of heaven and earth." Q.: "Who wrote this?" A.: "The holy prophet and man of God, Moses."[33] Hartman's commentary is complicated by a severely detailed and atomistic

outlining that makes a thoughtful reading impossible; it is also more theological. For example, his outline of Genesis is divided into three parts: The work of creation, chapters 1–2; the fall, chapter 3:1–7; and the rest of Genesis: the work of recreation through the covenant of grace. This covenant of grace is established with Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:8–24) and executed in history (Gen. 4:1–8:19), then renewed and executed through Noah and the patriarchs (Gen. 8:20–50).

The Goals of the *Bijbelverklaring*

"As far as we know," Klinkenberg and Nahuys write, "nothing of this kind has ever appeared in our language," because "we write…to help the untutored to understand the Bible."[34] It was not for lack of commentary literature in the late eighteenth century that Klinkenberg and Nahuys began their project, but because those available in the Dutch language—such as those by the English divines Patrick, Poole, Wells, Henry, and Stackhouse—were designed for the learned, material unsuited for and unfriendly to the untutored. The ratio of commentary to text in this material overwhelmed the text; the separation of the commentary from the text breaks up the reading because it forces the reader constantly to move from text to commentary, thereby making even more complicated an experience meant to clarify Scripture. Their example is Nikolaas Hartman's *Huysbybel* (1747$_3$). The title, they argue, suggests family devotions as its goal, but Klinkenberg and Nahuys judge that this work "offers not so much a regular exposition or brief explanations of Biblical expressions, as an atomistic and nearly impossible to follow analysis or outline. Imagine a Christian father reading this book at family devotions, how little the hearers will profit. The majority, if not all, will be incapable of following the atomistic structure of the reading, and, should they be able to do so, will receive little clarification" (viii).

In addition to the problems of contemporary commentaries, the authors also give reasons for the limited usefulness of the Dutch Authorized Version (the *Statenvertaling*): the comments are short and superficial because they are limited to the same page on which the biblical text appears; constant reference to the marginalized glosses leads to loss of narrative continuity; the comments are dated, for knowledge of the biblical languages and of antiquity in general has increased greatly since the Dutch Authorized Version's publication in 1637. The glosses remain useful, however, when it comes to doubtful readings or interpretations. Although not stated, this must be a reference to the work of Michaelis.

With respect to the theological position of the *Bijbelverklaring,* the authors judge that the informed reader will recognize their clear commitment to the

Reformed confessional tradition throughout their explanations. But, because they do not want to nourish heavy handed inter- and intra-church theological debate —evidence of their "moderate Christianity"—they commit themselves "to avoid everything which could lead to unchristian bitterness, including not mentioning the names of those who differ from us, so far as possible" (xiii).35 Formerly, writes Klinkenberg, discussions of predictive prophecy were often characterized by factionalism and the personality of theologians. He continues,

> Fortunately, such *was* the case. Persons with any understanding no longer exercise this hateful factionalism. These days everyone makes his own judgments, and decides about the nature of prophecy as best he can, without being carried away by the desire to have imitators. Authority has made room for evidence…. Since physics and philosophy has been more exercised, and consecrated youth have learned more to let evidence convince their judgments, rather than allow ingenious solutions to fuel the imagination, the tendency to find predictions everywhere has diminished.36

Klinkenberg then dispassionately describes two kinds of prophetic psalms, the various messianic psalms, and those whose prophetic characteristics lack certainty,37 without mentioning names. Thus the *Bijbelverklaring* seeks to break with a traditional means of theological discourse in Dutch commentary literature.

Because deism typifies the sophisticated unbelief of the age, however, it merits public critique. Nevertheless, because answering deists' objections throughout the commentary goes beyond their stated goal, "here and there we will make brief comments so that our readers can arm themselves against the arrows of unbelief. The more schooled will note that here and there we are responding to the Deists" (xii–xiii). Only Lord Bolingbrooke and the pantheist Spinoza are named opponents.38 They end their foreword thus:

> With this work we mean to awaken the taste for Bible devotions, to provide material for the untutored to do so, to lead them into a right understanding of the Holy Scriptures. Especially, we want to encourage family devotions at home through this work, to present fathers and mothers of Christian families with this resource, to read God's Word daily with greater fruitfulness and joy. To best achieve this goal we suggest that when someone reads this *Bijbelverklaring* with its interwoven explanations, other members of the household follow in their own Bibles. Reading and comparing in this manner will make the Word come alive, and help to properly hear and understand the explanations (xxi–xxii).39

Having explained their goal, the authors proceed to instruct the untutored how to read sola Scriptura, but not without attention to orthodox Christian belief as expressed in the confessions.[40]

The Bible Reading Primer[41]

The authors introduce their primer with a discussion of the necessity of biblical revelation. Reason cannot discern the truths and duties necessary for a rational religion ("redenlyken godsdienst"); only a right use of the gift of biblical revelation "will clarify one's understanding through a proper comprehension of given truth, and improve his heart and conduct at the same time" (ii). Christians, the authors argue, are obliged to study revelational truth because only it discloses the duties which lead to human contentment, and only it reveals the promises and threats which apply to all, leaving none to plead ignorance of the truth. Following this, they treat 1. the prerequisites for a theological understanding of Scripture; 2. the literary requirements for a true understanding of Scripture; and, 3. special introductory matters concerning the Pentateuch.[42]

Theological Understanding of Scripture

Divine authorship and inspiration of the Holy Spirit guided the production of Scripture; divine authority guarantees its truth and is the source and ground of the Christian faith. From this basis the authors address the perfection of Scripture and combine it with a discussion of the canon and its transmission, emphasizing throughout the role of personal piety for understanding and reading Scripture.[43]

Klinkenberg and Nahuys rank the books of the Old Testament and New Testament without further explanation of what they mean by the ranking, but their division reflects the Masoretic canonical order, not that of the Septuagint, common among Protestants. Thus, Genesis through Deuteronomy belong to the first level, the Former and Latter Prophets to the second, and the Writings to the third. Similarly the New Testament: the Gospels and Acts belong to the first level; Paul's fourteen epistles, including Hebrews, and the Catholic Epistles to the second; the Apocalypse to the third. The difference in canonical order between the Jewish and Christian Old Testaments makes no essential difference to the perfection of Scripture.

After fully acknowledging God's special providential care in the transmission of Scripture, Klinkenberg and Nahuys turn to its historical character. The early church was uniquely qualified to distinguish "divine from human writings," and thus was able to secure the six antilegomenal books of the NT by the fourth century. To the objection that the vicissitudes of transmission might lead to

errors and false doctrine the authors declare that divine providence secured the essential perfection of Scripture. Furthermore—referring to the instruction of Deuteronomy 4:2: “Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it”—the Jewish tradition of reading Moses at home and in the solemn assemblies also prevented the falsification of Scripture, as did the Jewish abhorrence of changing even one word of the text. Whether this is an example of special providence is not clear. Finally, Jesus and the apostles accepted the perfection of Old Testament Scriptures, neither ever having charged the Jews with having corrupted them.

With respect to texts and translations, readers learn that variants are unusually valuable for clarifying textual obscurities, especially when such occur with respect to crucial doctrines. Because variants do not corrupt Scripture’s essential message, Scripture is trustworthy in its original languages: “reading the *original* Scripture of the Old and New Testament, we are truly reading the word of the living God” (xx). The authors review the translations of the Old Testament into the Septuagint and the Targums; the translation of the New Testament into Syrian and Arabic; and, the Latin translations of both testaments, especially the Vulgate. They note that many errors crept into the latter. Klinkenberg and Nahuys also assume the Hebrew in their possession to represent the original Scripture, noting the variants between it and the Septuagint. Having thus reviewed translations and underscored their human character, they recommend the Dutch Authorized Version, in spite of its limitations, counseling that the errors it contains are minor.44

Klinkenberg and Nahuys also urge the following instructions on their readers for a proper and beneficial reading of Scripture at family devotions:

> 1. Read Scripture reverently; it is the word of God. Only so will the reader humbly hear the word of the King.
>
> 2. Be fully attentive like a humble servant who wishes to properly understand and carry out the King’s instructions.
>
> 3. Interest in Scripture helps to remember it. Complaints of faulty memory are to be rejected. People remember all sorts of earthly matters, the more so they ought to remember what concerns their eternal destiny.
>
> 4. Set aside personal interests so that Scripture may speak without prejudice.
>
> 5. Read with discernment to find those texts that clearly teach the faith. Do not dwell on difficult passages, even though they contain God’s truth. Such discernment will also distinguish between ethical injunctions meant for

particular times and places, and those with a universal and enduring obligation.

6. Apply God's word personally: "Everyone must remember that the doctrines are presented *to the reader personally* in order to believe them. All warnings, punishments and threats apply to *him* to turn *him* from the error of his way and deter him from sin, so that hearing the declaration and offer of forgiveness and salvation, *he* may receive them for Christ's sake."

7. The proper goal or scope of Scripture is faith in Christ. Reading Scripture with its scope firmly in mind prepares the faithful for eternity (John 5:39; 20:32; and 2 Tim. 3:16–17).

8. Spend time reflecting on what has been read, so that Scripture may have the proper impact on the mind, heart and feelings.

9. Pray for enlightenment (like David in Psalm 119:18, 27, 34, 35a, 36a; or Paul in Ephesians 1:16–19; 3:14–19) in order to rightly believe and practice the faith,[45] for the human mind is by nature darkened.

Although the order is generally chronological, and piety is encouraged throughout, the act of reading does not begin with prayer. Furthermore, the instructions assume Scripture addresses the eighteenth-century reader directly. Because Christ is the scope of Scripture, its historical character is not an obstacle to be overcome by a special hermeneutics required by natural religion as understood by the deists.[46]

Literary Requirements for a True Understanding of Scripture

With respect to the literary aspects of Scripture,[47] the authors reflect the problems introduced by deism. Readers ought not expect an ordered structure of truths in their reading of biblical history, prophecy, ethical, and doctrinal instructions, because such orderliness might raise suspicions that the Bible was merely authored by humans. Nevertheless, taken together, Scripture's several genres do set forth the structure of revealed religion. Furthermore, readers should not expect Scripture to exhibit the classical rhetoric of Greece; doctrinal literature, though comprehensible, suffers from a style uncharacteristic of Western literature. The plurality of authors also complicates the Bible's literary style. Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit's inspiration provides a clear and uniform message.

Klinkenberg and Nahuys's description of the nature and reason for obscure and difficult texts and prescriptions for their proper interpretation, also reveal their anti-deist program. First of all, passages owe their obscurities to the nature

of revelation; if reason itself were sufficient then revelation would not be necessary. Second, prophecy by nature is obscure because it foretells what must yet come to pass. Had Christ's crucifixion been prophesied in complete detail, no one would have participated in the terrible acts that led up to it. Failure to understand Hebrew syntactical peculiarities, its expression of mode and time, and Greek syntactical order can yield an obscure translation. Finally, the distinctive qualities of Hebrew poetry and narrative, dischronologies, the nature of historiography, and the diversity of genre all challenge a right understanding of the Old Testament. For all the difficulties these obscurities bring, they are useful in debates with the deists, for uniformity in style and grammar would only encourage their objections to orthodox Christianity. Obscurities inculcate a reverence for the Word, put reason in its place—immediate understanding would only feed human arrogance—and promote diligent research to better comprehend these matters.

To help their readers deal with these obscurities, Klinkenberg and Nahuys suggest they reflect on and/or exercise the following:

1. By its nature divine revelation passes far beyond the abilities of limited human intellectual power (Job 16:14).

2. Authorial intention should guide the reader to the meaning of the text. This guides a reader to truly understand why James and Paul do not oppose each other.

3. The occasion of the writing is crucial, especially in the case of the apostolic epistles.

4. The location of a text within its own literary context, taking care to note the antecedent and subsequent material, will prevent twisting the meaning of words.

5. Comparison of one Scripture with another, letting a clearer passage illuminate a more difficult one, helps the reader to arrive at the Holy Spirit's true meaning. This overarching unity is made possible by divine inspiration.

6. Pay attention to who speaks, to whom, and on what occasion and circumstances. Without this one might take mere human words for divine declarations, or mistake a particular meaning for the universal.

7. Think about the meaning of a word or locution until there is good reason to continue reading with understanding. Failure to do so led the Fathers to allegories and, at times, obscured the clearest matters.

8. Never explain a text such that by itself or in its consequences, the meaning conflicts with sound reason, divine perfections, revealed truth, our

duty, or with anything which leaves no room for doubt.

9. Divisions into chapters and verses were added later. Though useful, such have separated what belongs together and vice versa. Disregard for these divisions helps a clear reading.

10. Do not disregard the work of those schooled in reading Scripture. Their knowledge is a sure aid against the Deists who argue that apparent contradictions, digressions, and deforming repetitions, are evidence of Scripture's mere humanity. Careful reading discloses there are reasons for them.

Special Introductory Matters Concerning the Pentateuch

Klinkenberg and Nahuys defend the historicity of Scripture: Moses authored the Pentateuch, and the events therein depicted actually happened.[48] In this they differ from the nascent critical developments (Astruc, Simon), which were more concerned with Moses' sources than his status as author. They refute Bolingbrooke's thesis that the Pentateuch was written at the time of the Judges, that it originated in Josiah's time—and is thus a pious fraud—or that Ezra authored the Pentateuch. In this they demonstrate that they understand the Pentateuch to represent straightforward history, as a representation of things, but within the interpretive mode of the analogy of faith. Thus, they advocate a history that speaks directly to its eighteenth-century audience. There is no evidence of an epistemological rupture between "then" and "now," between what Scripture meant and what it means.[49]

Moses' historicity and integrity is crucial to their anti-deist apologetic; the difference between "then" and "now" was understood, but not definitive of the text as Scripture. Typically, their argument is based on received, not critically arrived at, authority. Pagan authorities, themselves incapable of being deceived about matters historical, testify to a wise and learned Moses, one capable of distinguishing between truth and falsehood. To this end they cite Strabo (*Geogr.* L. 16 p. 1103). Moses' integrity is undoubted because he does not hide his own weaknesses and rebellion against the Lord, nor those of Israel (see pp. lxxiii–lxiv). Moses' writings also reflect oral traditions whose few guardians were dedicated to securing the truth; this is all the more so for their hope in the coming Messiah, promised to Adam and Eve. The analogy of faith guides their understanding of history.

The Reception of the *Bijbelverklaring*

How was the *Bijbelverklaring* received? Was it successful? Klinkenberg and

Nahuys anticipated critique when they wrote in their preface to the first volume:

> We only ask that the learned not look down on our labor, as costing little effort. Let them remember two things: that we write for the general public, and that it takes greater effort to write material fitting for the untutored than is generally thought to be the case. We make no show of scholarly learning, rather we seek to express ourselves with clarity and brevity.[50]

Klinkenberg and Nahuys's response to the reception of the first volume is revealing.[51] They report that readers from all social levels expressed approval, some appreciating its edifying value, others the new format. Expressing gratitude for receiving clarifications on Genesis 32, the authors announce they will publish the names of any contributors in the prefaces of subsequent volumes, but maintain a common style throughout.[52] Readers are also informed that the authors' efforts to keep publishing costs to a minimum led publisher Johannes Allart[53] to offer volume two for ƒ2.02[54] rather than the expected ƒ2.16.

They remind readers who found the volume on Genesis too long or too short of their principles of selection. What is well known or treated at length in other available material requires little extra comment, as for example the material on the opening chapters of Genesis. Nor will the authors treat matters by speculating about what may be interesting but about which even the learned know little. They allow that Genesis 48–49 deserves more space, as does the foreshadowing character of the cult in Exodus, but their goal is conciseness.

To the suggestions that there should have been a section on fundamental doctrines and their practical application for edifying family devotions, the authors reply that adding such a section goes beyond the particular goal of the *Bijbelverklaring* and that such practical material is already abundantly available. Moreover, they believe that doctrinally edifying material already receives too much attention, while reading to understand Scripture received too little attention. Human theological constructs/proposals, no matter how edifying, should not be elevated above the Word of God itself. They write:

> In general people seek the usefulness of and become dependent upon a human construct/proposal of doctrine and its practical use. Too little do they, with the goal of practicality in mind, turn to the Word of God itself, inquire of it themselves, see themselves in it, and accept all its counsel, so as to apply all its rules to their behavior. Moreover, those who so read Scripture or hear those explanations that are proper to lead us into the meaning and power of the word, too often fail to apply the message to themselves (xii).

The practical implications of Scripture are crucial, they agree, but "given our corruption such material is often abused to the point of carelessness and the neglect of a careful study of the immediate Word of God itself" (xiii). There is a tendency toward having one's eternal identity dependent upon human reading, judgments, and delimitation, rather than on the immediate Word of God. Human theological constructs/proposals are secondary, mediating instruments; reading Scripture itself, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is of greater benefit. Hence the nature and form of the *Bijbelverklaring.* Finally, Klinkenberg and Nahuys announce their willingness to receive suggestions from their readers, but will not enter into polemics or ongoing correspondence. Forty years later the series still received high praise:

> These men were among the first to provide their fellow citizens with a Bible commentary free of party spirit. They are the predecessors of such as Van Vloten, Van Hamelsveld, and other learned men who followed in their footsteps. Their labor was all the more beneficial because of the manner in which they executed it. Without concealing their own membership in the Reformed Church, they avoided strife among the various ecclesiastical communities.[55]

In 1853, Klinkenberg's grandson, B. Glasius, reported that 3300 copies were sold and more were still sought after, and in 1893 A. C. Kruseman comments favorably on the publication.[56] There were negative responses. Early reviews "detested Klinkenberg as a patronizing vestige of an obsolete orthodoxy"; later reviews evaluate Klinkenberg negatively, arguing he expressed more interest in the public than the smaller group of his own students. Furthermore, it is judged that his publications are ordinary and that they fail to promote biblical studies for the "schooled" reader.[57]

Summary and Brief Evaluation

By the end of their introduction to the *Bijbelverklaring* Klinkenberg and Nahuys have so instructed the untutored that those who follow their directions will no longer find themselves among the less educated. They will also have been coached into the Cocceian view of the primacy of the biblical text, moving them further to the Reformation goal of enabling ordinary believers to read Scripture with confidence in the truth of revelation and its historical referents. The length and quality of the hermeneutical primer discloses the authors' high opinion of their untutored readership's intellectual capacity and patience, as does their introduction to the Pentateuch. Their goal of improving family devotions has been given greater chance of success by their running commentary on the

biblical text. When the more learned discussions are inserted, narrative continuity markers allow the reader to ignore them without losing either a sense of the text or the exposition, especially compared to Hartman's work. Finally, without entering into great detail about the debate against the sophisticated paganism of the day, the *Bijbelverklaring* represents a successful example of the authors' goals expressed in their inaugural lectures: to help God's people hear the truth of a dependable Scripture in an age of scepticism.

Critique of the lack of visible scholarship in the *Bijbelverklaring* notwithstanding, Klinkenberg and Nahuys bring the best of contemporary biblical scholarship and the ideas of the moderate Dutch Enlightenment to bear on an ancient text for the sake of the common people. Neither did they hesitate to consult and promote cutting-edge material such as Michaelis's translation of the Old Testament with philological notes and Augustin Calmet's *Dictionnaire historique*.[58]

APPENDIX

List of literature recommended in the Dutch language for further study (as listed in the *Bijbelverklaring*)

Genesis

F. Burmannus, *wet en getuigenis.*

W. Momma, *over de huishoudinge Gods.*

P. van Staveren, *over the huishoudinge Gods.*

S. van Til, *eerste Werelds op en ondergang.*

J. D. Michaelis, *nieuwe overzetting des Ouden Testaments…in het Nederlands overgebracht* onder de bekende zinspreuk *Tendimus ad Caeliestem Patrem* IIde deel.

Exodus

In addition to the general works by Hartman, Henry, and the English divines:

F. Burmannus, *Wet en getuigenis.*

H. Ainsworth, *over de vijf Boeken van Moses.*

S. van Til, *voorhof der Heidenen.*

A. Calmet, 2 Deel 2 Stuk, *van het Oude Verbond.*

J. D. Michaelis, *Nieuwe overzetting…*(as above)

P. Van Staveren, *over de 15 eerste Capittelen.*

Leviticus-Numbers

no recommendations

Deuteronomy

F. Burmannus, *Wet en getuigenis.*

H. Ainsworth, *over de vijf Boeken van Moses.*

S. van Til, *voorhof der Heidenen.*

Joshua

Burmannus, *Wet en getuigenis.*

Ridderus, *Schrivtuurlyk licht.*

_____, *Apollos.*

Calmet, *in het tweede deel van het Oude Verbond.*

Judges

Burmannus, *Wet en getuigenis.*

Ridderus, *Schrivtuurlyk licht.*

_____, *Apollos.*

Calmet, *over het Oude Verbond,* 2de Deel.

Hess, *Geschiedenis der Israëliten,* 6de Deel.

Ruth

Burmannus, *Wet en Getuigenis.*

Outhoff, *over het Boek van Ruth.*

Crucius, *over het Boek Ruth.*

Samuel

"With the exception of the general Bible commentaries by the English divines, Henry and Stackhouse, the House Bible of Hartman, F. Burman's *de Wet en* Getuigenis, and such like I know of no one who has expressly commented on the books of Samuel in our language."

Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah

As with Samuel, above, Klinkenberg knows of no commentaries on these books in the Dutch language.

Esther

Burman, *Wet en Getuigenis* 4.

J. Smith, *het boek van Esther verklaerd en toegepast, in verscheidene leerredenen* 4.

P. Brouwer, *leerredenen over het Boek van Esther* 8.

Y. Van Hamelsveld, *twee leerredenen over Kap. IX en X.* 8.

Job

The following are the most important:

F. Spanheim, *Geschiedenis van Job, in* 4.

G. Hutcheson, *over het boek van Job, 2 deelen in* 4.

C. Tuynman, *Kleurstoffen uit het Boek van Job, 2 deelen in* 4.

P. van Hoeke, *ontledende Uitlegging van het Boek Jobs, in* 4.

J. J. Scheuchzer, *Jobs heilige Natuurkunde, in* 4.

J. Caryl, *over het Boek van Job, 2 deelen in* 4.

J. D. Michaelis, *Nieuwe Overzetting des Ouden Testaments, I Deel. het Boek Jobs behelzende, in gr.* 8.

Psalms

The following are the most important. There are many books treating one or more Psalms,

S. Van Til, *Verklaring van alle de vijf Boeken der Psalmen, IV. Deelen, in* 4.

J. Bugenhagen, *over de Psalmen, in Folio.*

P. De Groot, *over de Psalmen, in* 4.

P. Hamer, *over de Psalmen, III. Deelen in* 4.

H. Groenewegen, *over de Psalmen, in* 4.

M. Gargon, *over de Psalmen,* in 4.

J. Plevier, *over de Psalmen, VI. Deelen,* in 4.

J. A. Cramer, *Verhandelingen over David's Psalmen, in* 8.

Proverbs

With the exception of the English divines, Henry and Stackhouse, little has been published on Proverbs. On p. 141 and following of his *Huisbijbel,* N. Hartman reflects on the connections among the Proverbs.

J. Ojers, *over de SPREUKEN SALOMONS, II Deelen* in 4.

Een ieder zal geprezen worden, nae dat zijne verstandigheid is, in 8. A pamphlet commenting on several chapters of Proverbs prepared by various learned men and distributed by the *Bijbel-Genootsschap.*

Ecclesiastes

J. Smith, *over den Prediker van Salomo,* II Deelen in 4.

G. Bonnet, *Schetsgewijze opheldering van Salomons Prediker,* 2 Deelen in gr. 8. Precursor of an expanded version, not yet available.

Song of Solomon

Het Lied van Salomo, op nieuw vertaald uit het oorspronglyk Hebreeuwsch, met eene uilegging van het zelve, en daertoe behoorende aenteekeningen: uit het Englesch overgezet, in 8. 1771.

Het Hooglied, door eene gemakkelyke en eenvouwige verklaring, van de

bezwaren tegen het zelve ingebragt, vry gesproken; nevens een betoog, dat het zelve, voor den leevtijd van Salomo en deszelvs opvolgeren, zeer leerijk en heilzaem geweest zij, en eenen heiligen Dichter voegde: door J. F. Jacobi, uit het Hoogduitsch, met eene Voorrede van N. Barkey, 1774.

J. Van Iperen, *Brieven over het Hooglied, waerin de nadruk der betuigingen, de afwisselingen der zamenspraken, en het fraije der Poëzy, uiut de zegswijzen en gebruuiken der Oosterlingen, op eene nieuwe wijs worden opgeheldered,* II Deelen in 8. 1776.

T. Harmer, *Schets eener nieuwe verklaring van Salomons Hooglied, overgezet, en met eene Voorrede en Aenmarkingen Verrijkt, door J. Van Iperen, als een vervolg zijner Brieven,* in 8. 1778.

J. B. Luderwald, *het Hooglied van Salomo, geschiedkundig en gegrond verklaerd, uit de omstandigheden des volks Israëls, inzonderheid ten tijde van Salomo,* in 8. 1780.

A Hellenbroek, over het Hooglied Salomons, II Deelen in 4.

H. Geesteranus, *over het Hooglied Salomons,* in 4.

H. Groenewegen, *over het Hooglied Salomons,* in 4.

C. Carolinus, *over het Hooglied Salomons,* II Deelen in 4.

J. D'Outrein, *over het Hooglied Salomons,* 8.

Patrik, Polus, Wells and other English divines.

Henry and Stackhouse

Hartman, *Huisbijbel.*

Isaiah

English divines, Henry, Stackhouse, Hartman's Huisbijbel

H. Sibersma, *over Jesaias,* in 4.

A. Hellenbroek, *Evangelische Jesaias,* of *deszelvs voorname Evangelische Prophecyen,* vier Deelen in 4.

C. Vitringa, *Uitlegging over het Boek der Prophecyen van* Jesaias, zes Deelen in 4.

Jeremiah

E. Noordbeek, *over den Propheet Jeremia* II Deelen in 4.

The English divines, etc.

Lamentations

Only the following have commented on Lamentations in our language.

H. Langenes, *volledige verklaring over de Klaegliederen,* in 4.

J. Lamotius, *over de Klaegliederen van Jeremia,* in 12.

Ezekiel

The English divines etc.

W. Greenhill, *verklaring over de Prophetie van Ezechiel,* uit het Engelsch vertaeld, IV Deelen in 4.

Daniel

J. Coccejus, *over den Propheet Daniel,* in 4.

B. Bekker, *over den Propheet Daniel,* in 4.

J. A. Vos, *Uitlegging van het Boek van den Propheet Daniel,* II Deelen in 4.

Hosea

Nothing in Dutch on Hosea except generally, in

G. Hutcheson, *over de XIII Kleine* Propheten, II Deelen in 4.

Translations into Dutch

J. A. Marck, *over den Propheet* Hosea in 4.

J. Bierman, *over de vier eerste Kapittelen van Hosea* in 4.

Joel

G. Hutcheson, *over de XIII Kleine* Propheten, II Deelen in 4.

T. Van Tol, *over den Propheet Joel,* in 4.

The English divines, etc.

Amos

T. Van Tol, *over den Propheet Amos,* in 4.

Obadiah

G. Hutcheson, *over de XIII Kleine* Propheten, II Deelen in 4.

G. Outhof, *over den Propheet Obadja,* in 4.

Jonah

G. Outhof, over den Propheet Jona, in 4.

L. Steversloot, *Jona de boetgezant,* in Dichtmaet in 4.

J. C. Lavater, *Leerredenen over het Boek van Jona,* in 8.

(P?) A. C. Hugenholtz, *verklaring over Jona,* in 8.

Micah

G. Hutcheson, *over de XIII Kleine* Propheten, II Deelen in 4.

G. Outhof, *over den Propheet Micha,* in 4.

Nahum

P. Hoeke, *over den Propheet Nahum,* in 4.

Habbakuk

P. Hoeke, *over den Propheet Habakuk,* in 4.

J. Bierman, *over den Propheet Habakuk,* in 4.

Zephaniah

J. Flevier, *over den Propheet Zephanja,* 4.
T. Van Tol, *over den Propheet Zephanja,* 4.
P. Van Hoeke, *over den Propheet Zephanja,* 4.

Haggai

P. Van Hoeke, *over den Propheet Haggai,* 4.

Zacharia

P. Van Hoeke, *over den Propheet Zacharia,* in 4.
H. Gerbaden, *over den Propheet Zephanja,* 4.
J. Bierman, *over den Propheet Zephanja,* 4.
J. De Mann, *over den Propheet Zephanja,* 4.

Malachi

W. Teeling, *over den Propheet Maleachi,* in 4.
P. Van Koeke, *over den Propheet Maleachi,* in 4.
E. Noordbeek, *over den Propheet Maleachi,* in 4.
J. Costerus, *over den Propheet Maleachi,* in 4.

Matthew

S. Van Til, *over het Evangelie van Matthaeus,* in 4.
J. Huyzinga, *over het Evangelie van Matthaeus,* III Deelen. in 4.
C. Hartzoeker, *over het Evangelie van Matthaeus,* IV Deelen. in 4.
H. Groenewegen, *over het Evangelie van Matthaeus,* in 4.
Rombout, *over het Evangelie van Matthaeus,* III Deelen. in 4.
H. Bruyning, *over het Evangelie van Matthaeus,* in 4.

Mark

C. Hartzoeker, *over het Evangelie van Marcus,* IV Delen. in 4.
J. C. Wirts, *over het Evangelie van Marcus,* in 4.
R. Toe Laer, *over het Evangelie van Marcus,* in 4.

Luke

R. Toe Laer, *over het Evangelie van Lucas,* III Deelen in 4.
H. G. Clemens, *ontledende Verklaring van het Evangelie, naer de beschrijving van Lucas,* III Deelen in 4.
H. Bruining, *over het Evangelie van Lucas,* in 4.
J. C. Wirts, *over het Evangelie van Lucas,* in 4.

John

F. A. Lampe, *over her Evangelie van Joannes* III Deelen. in 4.
H. Sibersma, *over her Evangelie van Joannes* in 4.
C. Hartzoeker, *over her Evangelie van Joannes* IV Deelen. in 4.
H. Bruyning, *over her Evangelie van Joannes* in 4.
J. L. Mosheim, *Verklaring over her Evangelie van Joannes* in 4.

Acts

J. Plevier, *over de Handelingen der Apostolen,* IV Deelen in 4.
G. Van Leeuwen, *over de Handelingen der Apostolen,* II Deelen in 4.
H. Bruining, *over de Handelingen der Apostolen,* in 4.
P. Van Limburch, *over de Handelingen der Apostolen,* in 4.

Romans

J. Calvinus, *over de Briev aen de Romeinen,* in Folio.
M. Leydekker, *over de Briev aen de Romeinen,* in 4.
G. Van Leeuwen, *over de Briev aen de Romeinen,* in IV Deelen.
S. Van Til, *over de Briev aen de Romeinen,* in 4.
T. H. Van den Honert, Voorbereiding over de Romeinen, in 4.
J. A. Turrettin, over de elv eerste Kappittelen aen de Romeinen, in 4.
G. H. Elsnerus, *over de Briev aen de Romeinen,* IV Delen, in 4.
S. De Brais, Uitbreidende Ontlediging van den Briev aen de Romeinen, in 4.
H. Bruyning, *over de Briev aen de Romeinen,* in 4.
H. Groenewegen, *over de Briev aen de Romeinen,* II Delen in 4.
M. Van Peenen, *over de Briev aen de Romeinen,* in 4.
E. Meiners, *over de Briev aen de Romeinen,* IV Delen in 4 o.

1 Corinthians

J. Calvinus, *over den Eersten Briev aen de Corintheren,* in Folio.
S. Van Til, *over den eersten Briev aen de Corintheren,* in 4.
H. S. Van Alphen, *over den eersten Briev aen de Corintheren,* in 4.
H. Bruyning, *over den eersten Briev aen de Corintheren,* in 4.
L. Mosheim, *over den eersten Briev aen de Corintheren,* in 4.
J. Bierman, *over den eersten Briev aen de Corintheren,* II Delen in 4.
M. Koning, *over den eersten Briev aen de Corintheren,* II Delen in 4.
D. Goltzius, *over den eersten Briev aen de Corintheren,* in 4.
T. Akersloot, *over den eersten Briev aen de Corintheren,* in 4.
J. Creygton, *over den eersten Briev aen de Corintheren,* in 4.

2 Corinthians

J. Bierman, *over den tweeden Briev aen de Corintheren,* in 4.
H. S. Van Alphen, *over den tweeden Briev aen de Corintheren,* in 4.
S. Van Til, *over den tweeden Briev aen de Corintheren,* in 4.
H. Bruyning, *over den tweeden Briev aen de Corintheren,* in 4.
M. Koning, *over den eersten Briev aen de Corintheren,* in 4.
J. L. Mosheim, *Verklaring over den tweeden Briev aen de Corintheren,* in 4.

Galatians

J. Steengragt, *over den Briev aen de Galaten,* III Deelen in 4.
N. Schiere, *over den Briev aen de Galaten,* in 4.
T. Akersloot, *over den Briev aen de Galaten,* in 4.
C. Vitringa, *over den Briev aen de Galaten,* in 4.
J. Plevier, *over den Briev aen de Galaten,* II Deelen in 4.
B. Brouwer, *over den Briev aen de Galaten,* in 4.

Ephesians

A. Royaarts, *over den Briev aen de Epheseren,* III Deelen in 4.
P. Dinant, *over den Briev aen de Epheseren,* II Deelen in 4.
D. Knibbe, *over den Briev aen de Epheseren,* II Deelen in 4.
H. Gerbade, *over den Briev aen de Epheseren,* in 4.
S. Hazevoet, *over den Briev aen de Epheseren,* in 4.
P. Du Bosc, *over den Briev aen de Epheseren,* III Deelen in 8.
J. A. Cramer, *verklaring van den Briev aen de Epheseren,* II Deelen in 8.
P. Curtenius, *der Epheseren geluk mert dankzegging erkend enz. Of het eerse Hoofdstuk van den Briev aen de Ephesiërs verklaert en toegepast,* 8.

Philippians

S. Van Til, *over den Briev aen de Philippensen,* in 4.
H. Bruining, *over den Briev aen de Philippensen,* in 4.
P. Van Der Hagen, *over den Briev aen de Philippensen,* in 4.
A. Landreben, *over den Briev aen de Philippensen,* in 4.
J. Elsner, *over den Briev aen de Philippensen,* II Deelen in 4.
G. J. Nahuys and G. De Haas, *over den Briev aen de Philippensen,* II Deelen in 8.

Colossians

H. Bruyning, *over den Briev aen de Colossensen,* in 4.
C. Streso, *over den Briev aen de Colossensen,* in 4.
J. D'Outrein, *over den Briev aen de Colossensen,* in 4.

T. Akersloot, *over den Briev aen de Colossensen,* in 4.

D. Knibbe, *over den Briev aen de Colossensen,* II Deelen in 4.

T. A. Clarisse, *nagelaten Leerredenen, over den Briev aen de Colossensen,* IV Deelen in 8.

1 Thessalonians

H. Van Alphen, *over den eersten Briev aen de Thessalonicensen,* in 4.

H. Bruining, *over den eersten Briev, aen de Thessalonicensen,* in 4.

A. Landreben, *over den eersten Briev, aen de Thessalonicensen,* in 4.

C. Streso, *over den eersten Briev, aen de Thessalonicensen,* in 4.

2 Thessalonians

A. Landreben, *over den tweeden Briev, aen de Thessalonicensen,* in 4.

C. Streso, *over den tweeden Briev, aen de Thessalonicensen,* in 4.

H. Bruining, *over den tweeden Briev, aen de Thessalonicensen,* in 4.

1 Timothy

M. Gargon, *over den eersten Briev, aen Timothëus,* in 4.

P. Hulsius, *over den eersten Briev, aen Timothëus,* in 4.

J. L. Mosheim, *over de beiden Brieven, aen Timothëus,* II Deelen in 4.

P. Brouwer, *over de Brieven, aen Timothëus,* II Deelen in 8.

2 Timothy

M. Gargon, *over den eersten Briev, aen Timothëus,* in 4.

P. Hulsius, *over den eersten Briev, aen Timothëus,* in 4.

J. L. Mosheim, *over de beiden Brieven, aen Timothëus,* II Deelen in 4.

P. Brouwer, *over de Brieven, aen Timothëus,* II Deelen in 8.

Titus

C. Vitringa, *over den Briev, aen Titus,* in 4.

G. Outhof, *over den Briev, aen Titus,* in 4.

H. Bruining, *over den Briev, aen Titus,* in 4.

W. Kohne, *over den Briev, aen Titus,* in 4.

Philemon

No literature recommended.

Hebrews

C. Sreso, *over den Briev, aen de Hebreen,* in 4.

P. Hulsius, *over den Briev, aen de Hebreen,* II Deelen in 4.

H. Groenewegen, *over den Briev, aen de Hebreen,* in 4.

H. Bruining, *over den Briev, aen de Hebreen,* in 4.

T. Akersloot, *over den Briev, aen de Hebreen*, in 4.

P. Van Hoeke, *over den Briev, aen de Hebreen*, in 4.

J. D'Outrein, *over den Briev, aen de Hebreen*, IV Deelen, in 4.

J. Owen, *over den Briev, aen de Hebreen,* IV Deelen, in 4.

J. A. Cramer, *Verklaring van Paulus Briev, aen de Hebreeuwen,* II Deelen, in 4.

J. D. Michaelis, *Verklaringover den Briev, aen de Hebreen,* Iste Deel, in 4.

James

J. Smit, *over den Briev van Jacobus,* in 4.

H. Bruining, *over den Briev van Jacobus,* in 4.

J. Creygton, *over den Briev van Jacobus,* in 4.

D. Goltzius, *over den Briev van Jacobus,* in 4.

T. Antonides, *over den Briev van Jacobus,* in 4.

J. H. Janzonius, *de algemeene Briev van Jacobus,* in 4.

1 Peter

H. Van Alphen, *over den eersten Briev van Petrus,* in 4.

D. Goltzius, *over den eersten Briev van Petrus,* II Deelen, in 4.

H. Bruining, *over den eersten Briev van Petrus,* in 4.

C. Streso, *over den eersten Briev van Petrus,* in 4.

T. Antonides, *over den eersten Briev van Petrus,* II Deelen, in 4.

2 Peter

T. Antonides, *over den tweeden Briev van Petrus,* in 4.

H. Bruining, *over den tweeden Briev van Petrus,* in 4.

D. Goltzius, *over den tweeden Briev van Petrus,* in 4.

B. Brouwer, *de tweeden Briev van Petrus schriftmaetig verklaerd,* in 4.

1 John

D. Van Staveren, *over den eersten Briev van Joannes,* in 4.

J. Creijgton, *over den eersten Briev van Joannes,* in 4.

A. T. Gilde, *over den eersten Briev van Joannes,* in 4.

T. P. Elsnerus, *over den eersten Briev van Joannes,* in 4.

A. Voget, *ontleedende Verklaering van den eersten Algemeene Zendbriev des Apostols Joannes,* II Deelen, in 4.

2 John

J. Creygton, *over den tweeden Briev van Joannes,* in 4.

J. Bruining, *over den tweeden Briev van Joannes,* in 4.

A. T. Gilde, *over den tweeden Briev van Joannes,* in 4.

T. P. Elsnerus, *over de tweeden Brieven van Joannes*, in 4.

3 John

Nothing listed

Jude

J. Crychton, *over den Briev van Judas,* in 4.

T. Antonides, *over den Briev van Judas,* in 4.

H. Bruining, *over den Briev van Judas,* in 4.

J. H. Janssonius, *over den Briev van Judas,* in 4.

Nagelaten Leerredenen van J. De Leeuw, over de eerste zes versen van den Briev des Apostols Judas, benevens eene doorlopende verklaring over den zelvden gehelen Vriev, en het tweede hoofdstuk des tweeden Brievs van Petrus, door G. J. Nahuys, in 8.

Revelation

Because he does not hold to the "seven periods" of interpretation in Revelation, Klinkenberg recommends the following books that coincide more with his own views:

M. Lowman, *over de Openbaring van Joannes*

Dr. Doddridge, *Huis-Uitlegger des Nieuwen Testaments*

Those seeking to study the interpretation of "seven periods" should consult:

C. Vitringa, *Naeuwkeurig onderzoek van de Goddelyke Openbaering des Heiligen Apostol Joannes,* enz, meerdeels vertaelt, door M. Gargon, Predikant te Vlissingen, II Deelen in 4, te Amsterdam, 1728.

Those seeking the interpretation of "seven periods" presented in shorter form should read:

Ysbrand van Hamelsveld, *korte aenmerkingen, over het Nieuwe Testament, voor Ongeleerden*.

1. Peter T. Van Rooden, *Theology, Biblical Scholarship and Rabbinical Studies in the Seventeenth Century. Constantijn L'Empereur (1591–1648) Professor of Hebrew and Theology at Leiden,* trans. J. C. Grayson. Studies in the History of Leiden University (Leiden: Brill, 1989), 6:1–2.

2. E. G. E. van der Wall, "Verlicht christendom of verfijnd heidendom? Jacob van Nuys Klinkenberg (1744–1817) en de Verlichting." Inaugural lecture…delivered at the Rijks Universiteit Leiden, February 18, 1994 (Leiden, 1994), 4, 17.

3. Jack De Mooij, "Protestantse Huisgodsdienst in Nederland in het Begin van de Negentiende Eeuw," *Nederlands Archief voor kerkgeschiedenis* 82, no. 2 (2002): 311, 315; Joris Van Eijnatten, *Liberty and Concord in the United Provinces. Religious Toleration and the Public in the Eighteenth-Century Netherlands* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 372–373. Klinkenberg "prepared readings in Dutch church history for citizens of Amsterdam. He belonged to the founders of the first Sunday schools in the city where he lived. To realize this goal he wrote extensively. *Waerschouwing in de allerbelangrijkste zaak aen mingeoeffenden en jongelieden* (1798) is an excellent example. This booklet explains the Christian faith in easy-to-

understand language, especially in its reaction against a notorious deistic publication, Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason* (1794). Klinkenberg's booklet was reprinted many times and was sold at a low price on purpose. "By request of the author it was distributed free of charge to the poor, corresponding to the ideal of enlightening the people." Van der Wall, "Verlicht Christendom," 13. J. J. Van Oosterzee, *Practical Theology. A Manual for Theological Students,* trans. Maurice J. Evans (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), 504, refers to Klinkenberg's catechetical material. The title of this work in Dutch is *Practische Theologie. Een Handboek voor Jeugdige Godgeleerden* (Utrecht: Kemink & Zoon, 1877, 1878). The word "jeugdige" is omitted from the title of the English publication. According to F. J. Los, *Grepen uit de Geschiedenis van Hervormd Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: J. R. Vrolijk, 1929), 101, Klinkenberg authored 355 numbers of *De Christen,* a weekly magazine dedicated to combatting unbelief, from 1772 to 1778. Van der Wall, "Verlicht Christendom," describes publications, such as the journals *De Christen* and the *Zondagsblad voor Gereformeerden,* published for the untutored; her address and the detailed footnotes fail to mention the *Bijbelverklaring.*

4. Jacob Van Nuys Klinkenberg and Gerard Johan Nahuys, *Bijbelverklaring. De Bijbel door beknopte uitbreidingen, en opheldernde aenmerkingen, verklaard* (Amsterdam: Johannes Allart, 1780–1795) [hereafter cited as *Bijbelverklaring*]. (All translations in this essay by the author.) Klinkenberg published his *Onderwys in den godsdienst* (Amsterdam: Johannes Allart, 1780–1794) during the same time period as the *Bijbelverklaring.*

5. Also known for his skill at popularizing the Christian faith. In addition to his contributions to the *Biibelverklaring,* Nahuys published a two-volume commentary on Philippians for the untutored: G. J. Nahuys, *Over den Brief van Paulus aan de Philippensen* (Amsterdam: Johannes Wessing, Willemsz, and Martinus de Bruyn, 1780). On pp. xxii–xxiii of the "Voorreden" to this work he refers to the purpose of the *Bijbelverklaring* when discussing his brief commentary on the Philippian correspondence, specifically noting that it is a third to a half shorter than other commentaries on Philippians. A posthumously published work by Nahuys on Isaiah 53–55 received favorable reviews in the journal *Vaderlandse Letter-oefeningen,* 1 (Amsterdam: A. Van der Kroe and J. Yntema, 1785), 150–153.

6. Nahuys and Klinkenberg, "Voorbericht," *Bijbelverklaring,* 1:xiv. Nahuys and Klinkenberg preferred the Bible translation by J. D. Michaelis, which also included notes for the unschooled. J. D. Michaelis, *Nieuwe overzetting des Ouden Testaments met aenmerkingen voor ongeleerden in het Nederduitsch overgebracht. Met aanmerkingen voor Ongeleerden,* vol. 1–2 (Dordrecht: A. Blussé & Zoon, 1803); vol. 4, trans. W. E. De Perponcher (Utrecht: the widow J. Van Schoonhoven, 1783); orig.: *Teutsche Übersetzung des alten Testaments, mit Anmerkungen für Ungelehrte,* 13 parts (1769–1785). Klinkenberg valued the philological and exegetical insights of the German new reformers, such as "Ernesti, Nösselt, and Döderlein, [but] he particularly attacked Bahrdt, Kant, Johan August Dathe (1731–1791), and Eucharius F. C. Oertel (1765–1850)–all of whom he had read in the original German." Van Eijnatten, "History, Reform, and Aufklärung. German Theological Writings and Dutch Literary Publicity in the Eighteenth Century," *Journal for the History of Modern Theology* 7 (2000): 200. All citations from the Dutch in this essay are by the author.

7. Based on *Biografisch Lexicon voor de Geschiedenis van het Nederlandse Protestantisme,* eds. D. Nauta, A. De Groot, O. J. De Jong, S. Van der Linde, and G. H. M. Posthumus Meyjes (Kampen: Kok, 1978), 1:202–204; Glasius, *Godgeleerd Nederland,* 563–566 (Nahuys); and, *Biographisch Woordenboek van Protestansche Godgeleerden in Nederland,* eds. J. P. De Bie, J. Lindeboom, G. P. Van Itterzon, and D. Nauta (The Hague: Martinus Nijhof, 1943), 5:12–18; Glasius, *Godgeleerd Nederland;* Los, *Grepen uit de Geschiedenis van Hervormd Amsterdam,* 100–102.

8. See Michael C. Legaspi, *The Death of Scripture and the Rise of Biblical Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 32, 50, 81. Unintentional on the part of the authors, for their inaugural lectures make clear their commitment to the confessions. Nevertheless, the intentional moving away from controversy does create a commentary format expressive of the late eighteenth-century preference for tolerance and a diminished emphasis on confessional points of view. Their patriotism, worn on their sleeves throughout the inaugural lectures, may also be part of a slow movement toward a Dutch form of culture

Christianity, which eventually led to a “verzuiling,” a sort of balkanization of cultural groups typical of the Netherlands (see below note 37 for an example).” On the “verzuiling” and “ontzuiling,” see Hijme Stoffels, *Als een briesende leeuw. Orthodox-protestanten in de slag met de tijdsgeest* (Kok: Kampen: 1995), 57–62.

9. Los, *Grepen uit de Geschiedenis van Hervormd Amsterdam,* 102, identifies Klinkenberg as a Cocceian.

10. F. A. Van Lieburg, “Het Gelders Athene in Neerlands Israel. De Theologische Faculteit van Harderwijk,” in *Het Gelders Athene. Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis van de Gelderse Universiteit in Harderwijk (1648–1811),* eds. J. A. H. Bots, M. Evers, W. Th. M. Frijhoff, F. Keverling Buisman, and J. Kuys (Hilversum: Verloren, 2000), 172–175. See also the earlier, Hermannus Bouman, *Geschiedenis van de voormalige Gelderse Hoogeschool en hare hoogleeraren,* vols. 1–2 (Utrecht: J. G. van Terveen en Zoon, 1844, 1847). On Bernardus Sebastiaan Cremer see Jacobus van Sluis, “De Zinnebeeldige theologie van Bernardus Sebastiaan Cremer (1683–1750),” in *Het Gelders Athene,* 177–199.

11. “An Athenaeum Illustre offered higher education that came close to university training, or at least that given at a Faculty of Arts, but with one major difference: it could not bestow academic degrees.” Hans De Waart, “Academic Careers and Scholarly Networks,” in *The Early Enlightenment in the Dutch Republic, 1650–1750,* selected papers of a conference held at the Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel 22–23, March 2003, ed. Wiep Van Bunge (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 19. By the seventeenth century there were universities in Leiden (1575), Franeker (1585), Groningen (1614), and Harderwijk (1648); and, Atheneae or Illustrious Schools in Harderwijk (1600–1648), Deventer (1630), Amsterdam (1632), Utrecht (1634–1636), Bois-le-Luc (1636), Dordrecht (1636), and later Zutphen (1686). Dirk Van Miert, “The Long Life of the Humanist Tradition: The Amsterdam Athenaeum Illustre in the Golden Age,” *History of Universities* 22, no. 1 (2006): 55. Van Miert discusses the nature and function of the Athenaea in detail on pp. 4–15.

12. Delivered in Latin: *Oratio de machinationibus incredulorum reipublicae valde perniciosis.* It was subsequently published in Dutch: *Inwijingsredevoering. Over den verderflyken invloed van het ongeloof op het gemeenebest,* trans. Wilhelmus Chevallerau (Amsterdam: Johannes Allart, 1784), 7–73.

13. Klinkenberg is included in the so-called Vander Palm generation, a group of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century learned theologians, who were born between 1740 and 1770 and died before 1850, who dedicated themselves to the production of theological knowledge. This production, however, was not narrowly limited to theological faculties or related institutions. Some worked as preachers at the same time and others were deeply involved in politics or occupied important social positions; still others taught in the five universities or the Illustrious schools or Athenea, as did Klinkenberg. Johannes Hendrik Van der Palm was emblematic of this group, being responsible for 151 publications. Of this generation, and à propos of the schools they attended: “The careers of this group are notable…. No self-respecting theologian wanted to stay long at Harderwijk. Each of the five theologians who began at Harderwijk ended his career at another academy. Similarly with Franeker and the less important academies. Nevertheless, an honorary professorate in one of the cities was a worthy end to the career of a preacher. Ultimately Leiden was the highpoint of a theological career, followed by Groningen and Utrecht.” Van Eijnatten, “De Generatie-Van der Palm, 1760–1840. Nederlandsche academische theologen en de productie van religieuze kennis,” *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 59, no. 3 (2005): 218–221, 225. Klinkenberg is listed with a total of seventeen publications. Interestingly, this article substantially appears in English, but with another name to identify this generation: Van Eijnatten, “The Burgess generation: Dutch Academic Theologicans and Religious Knowledge, 1760–1840,” in *Bishop Burgess and his World. Culture, Religion and Society in Britain, Europe and North America in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,* ed. Nigel Yates (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007), 51–84.

14. Delivered in Latin: *de subtiloris Ethnicismi, inter Christianos nostra aetate serpentis, noxis ac remediis.* It was subsequently published in Dutch: *Over de nadeelen van een verfijnd Heidendom, onder de Christenen van onzen tijd inkruipende, en de middelen daar tegen,* trans. Jacob Amersfoort (Leiden: S. and J. Luchtmans; Amsterdam: Cornelis Byl, 1781), i–iv, 67.

15. In Klinkenberg’s brief “word to the reader” at the beginning of vol. 3 of the *Bijbelverklaring.* See also the *memento mori:* n.a., *Rouwzang op het onverwacht overlijden van…Gerard Johan Nahuys* (1781);

De treurende kerk, wegens het onverwagte…overlijden van…Gerardus Joannes Nahuys (1781); Hendrik Bindervoet, *Getrouw Bericht en Truerige Overdenking van de vroegtydige dood van Gerard Johannes Nahuys* (Leiden: Johannes Hasebroek and Adrianus van Houte, 1781); and Petrus Hofstede, *Het Leven van Gerard Johan Nahuys* (Rotterdam: de weduwe Jacobus Bosch and Reinier Arrenberg, 1782). To Hofstede's short work is appended "the sermon with which professor Nahuys, had he lived, would have begun his work as preacher at the congregation of Leiden."

16. Van Eijnatten, *Liberty and Concord in the United Provinces*, 317, 320; and the inaugural lectures of Klinkenberg and Nahuys.

17. Van Eijnatten, *Liberty and Concord in the United Provinces*, 40–48.

18. Van Eijnatten, *Liberty and Concord in the United Provinces*, 251–64. For a brief discussion of this period see also Gerrit J. TenZijthoff, *Sources of the Secession. The Netherlands Hervormde Kerk on the Eve of the Dutch Immigration to the Midwest* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 15–24; J. Van Den Berg, "Het Stroomlandschap van de Gereformeerde Kerk in Nederland tussen 1650 en 1750," in *Een Richtingenstrijd in de Gereformeerde Kerk. Voetianen en coccejanen 1650–1750*, ed. F. G. M. Broeyer (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum), 20–21, 22; W. J. Van Asselt, "Scholastiek ten Tijde van de Late Orthodoxie, van circa 1700 tot 1790," in *Inleiding in de Gereformeerde Scholastiek*, ed. W. J. Van Asselt, T. T. J. Plezier, P. L. Rouwendaal, and P. M. Wisse (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 1998), 148–149, describes Campegius Vitringa Sr. (1659–1722) as a critical Cocceian; Herman Venema (1647–1787) described himself as a "raisonable bibliaan." They are, according to Van Asselt, along with Leiden professors Taco Hajo van den Honert (1666–1740) and his son Johan (1693–1758), representatives of a "Protestant Enlightenment that found itself at the edges of Dordtian orthodoxy."

19. The term "enlightened Protestantism" belongs to the Dutch historian J. Van den Berg. It refers to the kind of "changes that were open to other, dissenting, thought, a less strictly conceived dogmatics, and to receiving results of newer scientific insight." From the valuable discussion of the Enlightenment, with special reference to its character in the Netherlands, in J. J. Bosma, *Woorden Van Gezond Verstand. De Invloed van de Verlichting op de in het Nederlands Uitgegeven Preken van 1750 tot 1850* (Kampen: Kok, 1997), 47–134, esp. 68. For a brief discussion of shifts in the theological climate of the eighteenth century, see Van Asselt, "Scholastiek ten Tijde van de Late Orthodoxie, van circa 1700 tot 1790," 142–162; and Van Eijnatten, "The Debate on Religious Unity in the Eighteenth-Century Netherlands: The German Connection," in *Union, Konversion, Toleranz; Dimensionen der Annehrung zwischen den christlichen Konfessionen im 17. und 18 Jahrhundert*, ed. Heinz Duchhardt and Gerhard May (Mainz: von Zabern, 2000), 325–348.

20. Stoffels, *Als een briesende leeuw*, 49.

21. See "Bible and Theology at an Enlightenment University," in Legaspi, *The Death of Scripture*, 27–51. For a brief but devastating description of the de-theologizing effect of the Enlightenment, see Stephen D. Moore and Yvonne Sherwood, "Biblical Studies 'after' Theology: Onwards Towards the Past; Part Two: The Secret Vices of the Biblical God," *Biblical Interpretation* 18 (2010): 87–113; the publishers acknowledge Sherwood to be the principal author; and, on the disenchantment of the cosmos, see Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Paradise Mislaid. How We Lost Heaven and How We Can Regain It* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 43–67.

22. Van Den Berg, "Het Stroomlandschap," 20. See also, H. Bavinck, "De Hervorming en ons Nationale Leven," in *Ter Herdenking der Hervorming, 1517–1917* (Kampen: Kok, 1917), 26–32, and his review of the eighteenth century. In the context of the anti-revolutionary tradition fostered by Groen Van Prinsterer and Abraham Kuyper, Bavinck suggests that the French Revolution unified Dutch national life, one "dat met de lessen historie rekening hield en voordeelen uit de eerste and uit de tweede periode in onze geschiedenis met elkander verbond," including that it allowed "de oude liefde voor Oranje" to emerge. The French Period's influence in the Netherlands removed all kinds of party strife. He writes, "Wat eene geschiedenis van meer dan twee eeuwen niet tot stand kon brengen, dat kwam onder de leiding Gods in enkele ure tot beslissing. De fout, in 1579 en 1581 bedreven, werd in 1813 hersteld." Bavinck, "De Hervorming en ons Nationale Leven," 33–34.

23. A detailed treatment of their dismissal, including the names of those involved, committee minutes, and a portrait of Klinkenberg, is found in Los, *Grepen uit de Geschiedenis van Hervormd Amsterdam,* in his chapter on the French period, 80–115. See also TenZijthoff, *Sources of the Secession*, 19, 21.

24. The introduction to the NT does not review the Bible reading suggestions given in vol. 1. Rather, it provides a generous discussion of NT canonics, with respect to the Gospels, whose differences refute the deist charge that would result from uniformity. He then cites Michaelis's five reasons for the differences among the Gospels. *Bijbelverklaring,* 18:cii–cv.

25. Here and there Klinkenberg expresses gratitude to colleague J. C. Mohr for his work on the outlines.

26. See my appendix, which follows this essay, for the complete list.

27. Legaspi, *The Death of Scripture*, 81.

28. Augustin Calmet, *Dictionnaire historique, critique, chronologique, geographique et litteral de la Bible* (1716). The work was published in Dutch in 1723 with the approval of the theological faculty (Johannes a Mark, Franciscus Fabricius, Johannes Wesselius, Taco H. Vanden Honert). The faculty recommends this work to the Reformed reader, and set them at rest saying that the translator will warn the reader of any troubling doctrinal differences between the Reformed and Roman Catholic tradition, to which Calmet belonged.

29. So William Sewell, *A Compleat Dictionary, English and Dutch,* vol. 1 (Amsterdam: Kornelis de Veer, 1766). Klinkenberg begins to insert pericope headings at Deut. 18:9.

30. See my appendix for the titles.

31. Such as those of Fransicus Burmannus, Petrus Van Staveren, Nikolaas Hartman; see discussion below.

32. The number of expanded explanations increases about fourfold after Deuteronomy 8, the point at which Klinkenberg took over the project after Nahuys's sudden death.

33. In his foreword Burmannus describes the Bible as the catechism of all catechisms.

34. Klinkenberg and Nahuys, "Voorbericht," *Bijbelverklaring,* 1:iii, xiii. I use "untutored" to translate "ongeoeffende" or "ongeleerde." The Roman numerals in the subsequent text refer to pages in this work. When declaring their work to be unique the authors must be referring to commentaries because the interest in helping family devotions was widespread (De Mooij, "Protestantse Huisgodsdienst," 304–305). Klinkenberg and Nahuys ask their readers to refrain from seeking to identify which of them wrote a particular section, for they spent considerable time creating uniformity of style (xv–xvi). We limit the discussion to the material written by both Klinkenberg and Nahuys. The 108-page introduction to the New Testament, prepared by Klinkenberg alone and published July 1789, adds nothing new to the goals stated in vol. 1, nor to the hermeneutical primer described below.

35. Nahuys, "Inwijingsrede," 36–38, 40–41, reminds his audience of the intemperate theological discussions of the seventeenth century and their deleterious effect on the welfare of the Dutch Republic. Similar attitudes would weaken the church's necessary offense against deism. Thus, when he begins to explain the need for proper education of the people he writes: "De Leer van onzen Godsdienst is redenlijk, en moet niet met een zekere onbuigzaame stijfhoofdigheid, of eerzuchtige laatdunkendheid, maar met eene inwendige, en aan het richtsnoer der gezonde reden getoetste overreding; niet door bloot gezag of partijdig vooroordeel, maar door minnelijke overtuiging; niet door geschreeuw, maar door bondig betoog ingescherpt, bevestigd, en bevorderd worden." Nahuys, "Inwijingsrede," 45–46.

36. Klinkenberg and Nahuys, *Bijbelverklaring,* 10:li–lii. Here Klinkenberg is probably referring to the Voetian/Cocceian debates about the nature of prophecy.

37. Klinkenberg and Nahuys, *Bijbelverklaring,* 10:liii–lx; lx–lxiii.

38. In their "Voorbericht" (foreword) and "Inleiding" (introduction), Klinkenberg refutes deism at length in his inaugural lecture ("Inwijingsredevoering," 25, on the difference between English and French deism), and the second of his introductions to Archibald Campbell, *De Noodzaekelykheid der Openbaering*, vols. 1–2 (Utrecht: Henricus van Otterloo, 1774, 1777), iii–xxxvii.

39. Of some interest is the *Korte Verklaring,* a twentieth-century Bible commentary series still found in the homes of many Reformed believers. Unlike the *Bijbelverklaring*, this series was written to accompany a

new Bible translation; like the Bijbelverklaring, whose goal in part was the education of the Republic, this series sought to nourish a Reformed culture linked to a national self-consciousness. The project began in 1916. “The starting point of this cooperative project was that the Reformed position, exegetical method and biblical understanding, should move towards a Reformed culture.” Professors Greijdanus and Grosheide pointed out “‘that few commentaries are available in the Netherlands, and that our Dutch people (volk) has its own character, which makes it difficult for them to work through foreign commentaries,’” which leads to this conclusion: “There appears to be a link between a self-conscious striving for a typical *Reformed* culture and a *national* self-consciousness.” G. Harinck, “‘Het zou mij gewenschter voorkomen, die poging nog niet te wagen.’ De voorgeschiedenis van de Nieuwe Vertaling van 1951,” in *Leven en Werk van Prof. Dr. Seakle Greijdanus*, ed. George Harinck (Barneveld: De Vuurbaak, 1998), 128, 132 (italics in the original). The first volume of this series, J. Ridderbos, *De profeet Jesaja. Opnieuw uit den Grondtekst Vertaald en Verklaard.* Korte Verklaring der Heilige Schrift (Kampen: Kok, 1922–1926), is reviewed in *Gereformeerd Theologisch Tijdschrift* 23 (1922): 44–46.

40. Klinkenberg and Nahuys, “Voorbericht,” xii–xiii.

41. Klinkenberg and Nahuys, “Inleiding,” i–xcii.

42. An introduction to Genesis follows. Like the introductions to the Bible books in the remaining volumes, it reflects the book’s own particular shape and purpose.

43. Klinkenberg and Nahuys, “Inleiding,” iv–xxxi.

44. For further information about the Dutch translation Klinkenberg and Nahuys encourage their readers to consult Nicolaes Hinlópen, *Historie van de nederlandsche overzettinge des bybels* (Leiden: Joannes le Mair, 1777).

45. Many of these suggestions are typical of that time. De Mooij, “Protestantse Huigodsdienst,” 307–310. With respect to prayer, de Mooij notes: “The Reformed preacher Johann Martin Hoffmann (1696–1774) of Maastricht held Deism to be particularly dangerous for prayer before meals: if people are convinced God is not busy with the everyday world they will abandon prayer.” De Mooij, “Protestantse Huigodsdienst,” 303.

46. Indeed, deism leads to the destruction of all religion and ultimately to atheism. Klinkenberg, “Inwijingsredevoering,” 27, 45, 52. Deism also threatens the nature of the Dutch Republic in that it transforms the citizen into a servant of the laws of nature and not of God. Klinkenberg, “Inwijingsredevoering,” 28–38. He specifically addresses the extreme deism of Voltaire and Rousseau. Nahuys, “Inwijingsrede,” 34, speaks similarly of the dangers to the Republic. Indeed the Republic’s coinage demonstrates the proper attitude to citizenship and true religion (Godsdienst): “This is evident from our coins imprinted with the image of a chaste Dutch Maiden. She is not only the symbol of Freedom, which she protects, but also of Holy Scripture, her mainstay, and the main foundation of communal well-being. Especially the accompanying motto: on this (True Religion) we depend, this (Freedom) we protect.” Nahuys, “Inwijingsrede,” 35

47. Klinkenberg and Nahuys, “Inleiding,” xxxii–liii.

48. Klinkenberg and Nahuys, “Inleiding,” liv–lxxvi.

49. Moore and Sherwood, “Biblical Studies ‘after’ Theory,” 88–89.

50. Nahuys and Klinkenberg, “Voorbericht,” *Bijbelverklaring*, 1:xiv. “Alleenlyk verzoeken wy, dat mannen van geleerdheid niet laeg vallen op onze arbeid, als kostte dezelve ons weinig moeite. Zy gelieven zich twee zaken te herinneren: dat wy voor het gemeen schrijven, en dat het meer moeite kost, zich nae de vatbaerheid van het ongeoeffende gedeelte der menschen te schikken, dan men mischien over het algemeen denkt. Wy maken in het geheel geene vertooning van geleerdheid, wy beijveren ons, om ons kort en tevens duidelyk uittedrukken.” Note that the Bible translation Nahuys and Klinkenberg preferred (Michaelis, *Nieuwe overzetting des Ouden Testaments met aenmerkingen voor ongeleerden in het Nederduitsch overgebracht. Met aanmerkingen voor Ongeleerden*), included notes for the “ongeleerde,” the “untutored.”

51. The following roman page numbers refer to “Voorbericht,” vol. 2, which is signed December 8, 1780; the “Voorbericht” to vol. 1 was signed June 2, 1780.

52. For example, the following names appear: in prefaces to volumes 3 and 4, J. Hinlopen (Utrecht), A.

’s Gravenzande (Middelburg); in preface to vol. 5: J. Hinlopen (Utrecht), Krom, (prof. At Middelburg), Reguleth (Haarlem), A. ’s Gravenzande (Middelburg), and Schutte.

53. A prolific publisher in Amsterdam, Johannes Allart (1754–1816) printed 719 theological and educational titles from 1750–1787. During 1775–1799 Amsterdam had 179 publishers and bookstores, down 94 from the highpoint during 1675–1699. A. C. Kruseman, *Aantekeningen betreffende den boekhandel van Noord-Nederland, in de 17de en 18de eeuw.* Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis van den Nederlandschen Boekhandel. Uitgegeven door de Vereeniging ter bevordering van de belangen des boekhandels (Amsterdam: P. N. Kampen & Zoon, 1893), 6:258, 497. Kruseman praises Allart for being a writer and publisher at the same time, vocations not easily coincident, 501, fns. 2 and 3. For a list of publications by Allart see Ton Broos, *Lijst van Boek- & Plaatwerken Uitgegeven door of in Samenwerking met Johannes Allart* (Amsterdam, 1976).

54. The text reads ƒ2.2, but since this is less than ƒ2.16, it must be two florins and two cents, rather than two florins and sixteen cents.

55. N.a., “Gedachtenis aan de verdiensten van wijlen J. Van Nuys Klinkenberg,” *Christelijk Maandschrift voor den Beschaafden Stand* 1 (1822): 104–105. This journal was published by the “Ringsvergadering van Amsterdam.” On the character of groups like the “Ringsvergadering,” see Bosma, *Woorden van een Gezond Verstand,* 62, esp. notes 58 and 59.

56. Glasius, *Godgeleerd Nederland,* 2:275. Kruseman, *Aantekeningen betreffende den boekhandel van Noord-Nederland, in de 17de en 18de eeuw,* 6:284, reports that “Prof. Klinkenberg had een grooten naam.” He does not elaborate, but this probably refers to his many popular and apologetic publications, Gijsbertus Johannes Rooijens, *Godsdienstige Rede, gehoudenm bij het tweede Eeuwfeest der Doorluchtige School van Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: P. Meijer Warnars, 1832), 34–35.

57. Van Eijnatten, *Liberty and Concord in the United Provinces,* 372, note 255; Teyler’s Godgeleerd Genootschap, *Verhandelingen rakende de natuurlyke en Geopenbaarde Godsdienst* (Haarlem: Francois Bohn, 1860), 36:114. Van der Wall has no comments at all on the *Bijbelverklaring.* Several sets of the *Bijbelverklaring* made their way to North America and were donated to the Theological Library of Calvin Theological Seminary. One such extra set was given to the author of this article.

58. Research for this essay at Leiden University was made possible by the Heritage Fund of Calvin Theological Seminary.

CHAPTER 14

Herman Hoeksema Was Right (On the Three Points That Really Matter)

John Bolt

As is so often the case when academics become administrators, the scholarly promise shown by James De Jong in his dissertation[1] was put on hold for the nearly two decades he served the church as president of Calvin Theological Seminary. Among his accomplishments as president, the most significant may have been the rebuilding of the seminary faculty, including its expansion by adding the PhD program. It is here, as a builder, that he left his not insignificant mark on the seminary and the Christian Reformed Church as a shaper of Christian higher education. Coming as he did from one of the most prominent families in the CRC,[2] this seems a fitting destiny and legacy. Yet it is especially his post-retirement work, his research and writing in the history of the Christian Reformed Church,[3] that I want to celebrate in this essay of historical revisionism.

In 1924, the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, meeting in Kalamazoo, Michigan, adopted its (in)famous "three points of common grace."[4] Though the agenda for the 1924 CRC Synod included four overtures requesting the synod to appoint a study committee to address the issue of common grace that was disturbing the church,[5] synod eventually decided not to appoint a study committee and instead quickly crafted the subsequently contentious three points to guide the churches.[6] Furthermore, though the report by the synod's committee of pre-advice demonstrated great caution in dealing with the controversy,[7] including the recommendation *not* to appoint a study committee to work further on the issue because "there was no *communis opinio* in the Reformed churches on this matter," when the three points were adopted by synod, Classis Grand Rapids East did use them as disciplinary tools to demand confessional loyalty from Hoeksema. In this essay I want to take my analysis of the 1924 CRC tragedy a step farther than I did in my earlier essay[8] and defend the following proposition: With respect to the issues and events surrounding the common grace controversy generated by the decisions of the CRC's Kalamazoo Synod of 1924 and its aftermath, including the suspension of the Rev. Herman Hoeksema by Classis Grand Rapids East, on the three fundamental issues—that grace is

particular; that the doctrine of common grace is an extra-confessional matter on which Reformed people can have different opinions; and that Reformed Church polity was violated by hierarchical actions—Herman Hoeksema was right and the Christian Reformed Church[9] was wrong.

Grace is Particular

I will first consider the most important doctrinal issue in this controversy—the one that Hoeksema never tired of emphasizing: Grace is *particular*.[10] On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Protestant Reformed Churches, Hoeksema set forth the raison d'être of the Protestant Reformed Churches in this way:

> [Our calling] is to preserve the truth that the grace of God is always particular, to defend that truth with all our power, to develop it in all its riches, to impart it to the generation to come, and to give testimony outside of the pale of our churches of that very truth in word and in deed, in the midst of the church and in the midst of the world.[11]

It may come as a surprise to some readers that Hoeksema learned this from Abraham Kuyper. We are indebted to Patrick Baskwell's recent intellectual biography for an important clarification about Hoeksema's theological relationship to Abraham Kuyper. Contrary to what might be expected, even though the target of Hoeksema's battle was Kuyper's signature doctrine of common grace, this did not mean that the totality of Hoeksema's theology was the diametrical opposite of Kuyper's. In fact, Kuyper's influence on Hoeksema was deep and enduring. However—and this is the significant contribution that Baskwell's biography makes to our understanding of Hoeksema—this influence was positive as well as negative. The negative influence is generally well known. In Baskwell's words, "From a negative, or reactionary perspective, Kuyper's influence on Hoeksema was embodied in the doctrine of common grace."[12]

Our concern here, however, is not the difference between Kuyper and Hoeksema but the similarity in their thought. In other words, what was the *positive* influence of the former on the latter? According to Baskwell, it was "Kuyper's exposition of particular grace" [that] "had such a profound effect on Hoeksema."[13] This exposition is found in a book of biblical meditations, in the first volume of the second series, titled *Uit het Woord*.[14] The first section of this four-part set of reflections is headed, *Geen Christus pro omnibus* (No Christ for All), and in it Kuyper takes a close look at three biblical passages used by defenders of universal or common grace in a soteriological sense: 1 John 2:2[15]; 1 Timothy 2:4[16]; and 2 Peter 3:9.[17] He begins by addressing a presumption he finds in many allegedly "orthodox" circles in the Dutch Reformed Church that

the expression *Christus pro omnibus* expresses evangelical truth. Lest there be any doubt about the matter, Kuyper explains that "By 'Christ for all' is meant that Christ, according to the purpose and extent of his self-sacrifice, died for all men without exception" (3). What is chilling about Kuyper's opening gambit in this first meditation is the fierce evangelical passion with which the proponents of this "Christ for all" proclaim it. Kuyper describes one of them "shouting shamelessly" from the pulpit, "Whoever preaches another gospel is accursed!" (3). The slogan was so prevalent at the time, says Kuyper, that "whoever does not yield to that notion is cast out of the synagogue." (65) Kuyper explains further that, try as he may, he "could not live with *pro omnibus*" and received the courage to "venture at least a feeble attempt at a counter defense" (4) from "a whole cloud of glorious witnesses who were uniquely gifted by God's Holy Spirit" (5). It is his intention, he adds, "to demonstrate briefly that this cloud of witnesses actually did not know a grace that would *not* be particular"[18] (5).

For our purposes in this essay, we need not follow Kuyper's extended exposition of the three passages mentioned above; we need only take note of his conclusion: "The three major texts with which people usually attempt to terrify the one who confesses particular grace have been tested and examined so thoroughly that in that examination those arguments completely collapsed. There is *nothing* in these texts which provides proof for general grace" (53).

This is followed by a series of chapters that unpack the theological grounds for upholding the particularity of grace: total depravity (chaps. 6, 7); God's essence and attributes, particularly the attribute of righteousness (chap. 8); the person of the Redeemer (chap. 9); and the work of redemption (chap. 10).

With the preceding we have only touched on the first part of a four-part, 350-page book in which Kuyper mines Scripture and the history of the church in order to build an overwhelming cumulative case for the proposition that *grace must be particular.* Characteristic of the sort of treatment Kuyper gives biblical history is his commentary on Rebekah's pregnancy: "The *sovereignty* of election fully breaks forth as well in Rebekah's pregnancy. Indeed, here the *facts* of grace agree also with the *promises* of grace to prove that at least at that time, the living God, who prepared grace for us, intended that grace to be *particular*" (136).

It is this Kuyper, champion of particular grace, that Herman Hoeksema embraced with his whole heart, soul, and mind in *Van Zonde en Genade* (Of Sin and Grace), which, after its publication in 1923, became the occasion of the common grace controversy in the CRC. Hoeksema explicitly endorses Kuyper's views as articulated in *Dat de Genade Particulier Is.*[19] How then did the narrative shift to full-throttled critique of Kuyper as the expositor and promotor of common grace? To understand this we need, first of all, to take note of a very

important matter of terminology.

Kuyper's three-volume exposition and defense of common grace is titled *De Gemeene Gratie.*[20] The Dutch word for saving grace is *genade; gratie* can be translated as "grace" but might be better translated as "favor" when the point is to distinguish the two notions. This is not an insignificant nuance and Kuyper himself calls attention to it in the opening meditation of the first volume. The new series of articles he is beginning, he takes pains to emphasize, builds on two previous series of articles on *particular grace*[21] and *the doctrine of the covenants*[22] (*DGG,* 1, 5). The series on *gemeene gratie* must be understood in its order as the third piece of an organic web of Reformed convictions.

The story of salvation begins with the individual person, with the saved person as a child of God, chosen for eternal life by the free, sovereign, electing grace of God (*DGG,* I, 5). Kuyper underscores the connectedness of these three convictions—particularity of grace; doctrine of the covenants; common grace—by pointing to the error that arises when one attempts to take refuge in the doctrine of election apart from the accompanying doctrine of the covenants. An elect person is more than an individual but one who lives in communion, as a member of a body. To take election without covenant, argues Kuyper, is an attempt to grab the Holy Spirit without honoring the Son who promised His disciples that the Spirit of Truth "will take what is mine and declare it to you" (John 16:15). It is imperative that the children of God not only believe that they are chosen, but also that they are branches in the one Vine, members of the same body. For this reason, a confession of particular, personal grace is untrue and unbiblical if the doctrine of the covenants is not its background (*DGG,* I, 6).

In the same way that the doctrine of the covenants is the necessary, organic context for particular grace, so too, the work of creation, the existence of the world, and the life of the human race, provides the essential background for the covenant. "Neither our election nor our belonging to the communion of saints abolishes that which is human in us" (*DGG,* I, 6). Each child of God is *personally* called, incorporated into the *body* of Christ, and exists as a human being, born to and a member of the human *race.* Kuyper then turns to the Heidelberg Catechism's description of the divine, triune economy to make the same point. When we confess that God is triune, we speak of three things: of God the Holy Spirit and our sanctification; of God the Son and our redemption; of God the Father and our creation (Lord's Day 8). He quickly adds that the catechism reverses the order creation-redemption-sanctification since the movement in Christian experience follows the former rather than the latter. "But, in the understanding of the child of God, who looks inwardly and reflects on the course of his soul's journey, and thus reckons from the point at which he now

stands, the path of experience and memory is the exact reverse [of the Catechism's order]" (*DGG*, I, 7). Stated differently, the believer begins by "confessing the work of God the Holy Spirit who assures him of his personal election; he also confesses that *grace is particular* (*DGG*, I, 7). A proper confession of faith in the triune God goes like this: "I am chosen; I am in Christ; and for that reason I believe, now deeply and fully for the first time, in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, also Creator of my own being, body and soul" (*DGG*, I, 7).

With this background of the threefold character of Christian confession behind him, Kuyper calls attention to the title given to the series as a whole: it is *gemeene gratie* (*gratia communis*) and not *algemeene genade.* He chose this, he says, to remove all possibility of misunderstanding. Once the notion of "common grace" is introduced, he notes, there is an immediate effort to transform it into universal *saving* grace. Kuyper insists: "Saving [grace] in the full sense of the term is always particular, personal, grace" (*DGG*, 1, 8). What he means by "common grace" is not a difference of degree but of kind. It has "a completely different nature" (*DGG*, I, 9).

In the remainder of *De Gemeene Gratie*, Kuyper is not fully consistent with his own distinction and uses the two expressions interchangeably.[23] We need to acknowledge that the distinction in the Dutch language may be a distinction without a difference since both *genade* and *gratie* point to the same Latin noun, *gratia.* According to Richard Muller, Protestant orthodoxy made use of even more distinctions and terms. The basic distinction was between *gratia particularis sive specialis* (the particular or saving grace given only to the elect) and two different general graces, *gratia universalis* (the grace of God in the universal call of the gospel presented to all) and *gratia communis* (God's general bestowal of blessings on all people, reprobate as well as elect).[24] We need not explore these further, but, for our purposes, we do need to ask whether the treatment of common grace by the 1924 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church adequately protected Kuyper's own insistence on the *particularity* of saving grace. Let's consider the first point of Kalamazoo on common grace:

> Concerning the favorable attitude of God toward mankind in general and not only toward the elect, the Synod declares that it is certain, on the ground of Scripture and the Confessions, that there is, besides the saving grace of God, shown only to those chosen unto eternal life, also a certain favor or grace of God which He shows to all His creatures. This is evident from the quoted Scripture passages and from the Canons of Dordt II, 5, and III and IV, 8 and 9, where the general offer of the Gospel is discussed; while it is

> evident from the quoted declarations of Reformed writers of the period of florescence of Reformed theology, that our Reformed fathers from of old have championed this view.[25]

The difficulty with this particular formulation is not so much with the first sentence but with the linkage of God's broad-based general favor to "the general offer of the Gospel" as a ground. The broad favor of God "to mankind in general," the 1924 synod concluded, "is evident from [writings that discuss] the general offer of the gospel." This is precisely the linkage that Kuyper so vigorously warned against in his meditations on particular grace. I will not rehearse all the evidence marshaled by Randy Blacketer in his study of the first point but content myself with two key points. (1) Christian Reformed discussions about the "general offer" usually fail to distinguish carefully between "call" and "offer," and in so doing accept the Remonstrant definition of call as God's desire and intention to save those who receive the call.[26] (2) When the Canons of Dort do use the word "offer"—in III/IV.9—the reference is to Christ, and the Latin *offero* means "to show, reveal, exhibit." The article could be interpreted "as teaching that all persons who hear the gospel are *confronted* with Christ, or that they encounter Christ in the gospel."[27] The fundamental point is that "indiscriminate declaration of what is required for a person to receive eternal life, is not an offer of salvation to those whom God has decreed to leave in their sin."[28]

Blacketer concludes that "the substantial error committed by the 1924 synod was its acceptance of the Arminian definition of the sincere call—a doctrine that is clearly rejected by Canons III/IV. 8." That seems to me a reasonable conclusion and I would formulate it this way: The 1924 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, though it ostensibly wanted to defend Abraham Kuyper's doctrine of common grace, failed to guard its formulation from the perils of possible salvific universalism.[29] Kuyper would not have been happy with that; by joining Kuyper's insistence on the particularity of grace, Herman Hoeksema was right and the Christian Reformed Church was wrong.

Rather than restricting myself to a critique, let me also offer an alternative wording of the first point that tries to preserve the important point the synod wanted to make while avoiding the pitfalls Kuyper and Hoeksema warned against. My wording admittedly does introduce a significant change in emphasis. The 1924 synod emphasized the favorable attitude to humanity in general and tied it to the "general offer of the Gospel," thus opening the door for misunderstanding and even the potential error of *Christus pro omnibus.* That is why I chose to lead off with a clear affirmation of particular grace and place

general divine favor within the realm of providence.

1924 Synod's Wording of First Point	A Proposed Wording of the First Point
Concerning the favorable attitude of God toward mankind in general and not only toward the elect, the Synod declares that it is certain, on the ground of Scripture and the Confessions, that there is, besides the saving grace of God, shown only to those chosen unto eternal life, also a certain favor or grace of God which He shows to all His creatures. This is evident from the quoted Scripture passages and from the Canons of Dordt II, 5, and III and IV, 8 and 9, where the general offer of the Gospel is discussed; while it is evident from the quoted declarations of Reformed writers of the period of florescence of Reformed theology, that our Reformed fathers from of old have championed this view.	Concerning the doctrine of grace, Synod declares that God's saving grace is always particular, to the elect. The promise of the gospel "that whosoever believes in Christ crucified shall not perish but have eternal life…together with the command to repent and believe, ought to be declared and published to all nations, and to all persons promiscuously and without distinction, to whom God out of His good pleasure sends the gospel" (Canons of Dordt, II.5). In addition to this saving grace of God, shown only to those chosen to eternal life, there is also a favor of God shown to all creatures, whereby He providentially upholds all things, preserves life, and governs the world by His fatherly hand (Lord's Day 10). Whatever "light of nature" remains in man only serves to make him inexcusable (Canons III/IV. 4).

There is little doubt that a formulation of the first point along the lines suggested here would have met with Hoeksema's approval[30] and, at least on this point, would have averted a crisis and church division. For me, the intriguing question is whether those who so aggressively promoted the doctrine of common grace would have also been happy with it. The ironic tragedy of 1924 is that we will never know because a gracious effort to find common ground was not even attempted.

Common Grace is Extra-Confessional

According to Hoeksema's biographer, his daughter-in-law Gertrude Hoeksema, he was willing "to live with the issue of common grace and to have free discussion on it *if* it were not elevated to the status of a dogma. He could live in the same denomination with it, he said, if it were not binding, if he did not have to submit to it and to teach it as official doctrine of the church."[31] There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of Hoeksema's willingness to live with theological differences that did not have the status of a confession or dogma. After all, that is the pattern that properly pertains in the Reformed churches. To take one example, the contentious issues of election, covenant, and regeneration in the Dutch Reformed Churches (*Gereformeerde Kerken Nederland*) at the turn of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century were handled in precisely that manner by the "pacification" formula at the 1905 GKN Synod of Utrecht.[32]

• The Synod of the CRC adopted the conclusions of Utrecht in 1908.[33] With respect to the doctrine of election the pacification formula acknowledged that "our confessions…certainly…follow the infralapsarian presentation," but "this does not at all imply an exclusion or condemnation of the supralapsarian presentation." In his history of the CRC, Dietrich Kromminga points to this implication of the synodical statement: "Accusations of heresy must be avoided, in preaching and catechetical instruction the standards must be followed, and the deep problems involved in the disputes must not be obtruded upon the church."[34] A similar *non liquet* applies to the notions of "eternal justification" and "immediate regeneration." Concerning the latter, "the Synod declares, that this expression can be used in a good sense, insofar our churches have always confessed over against the Lutheran and Roman church that regeneration does not take place through the Word or the sacraments as such but through the almighty and regenerating activity of the Holy Spirit." At the same time, however, synod also cautioned that "this regenerating activity of the Holy Spirit must not be divorced from the preaching of the Word as if both were separate from each other."

• What we see in the pacification formula is a deliberate refusal to permit secondary theological disputes to become confessional matters, to elevate them to essential dogma. This recognition "that not all articles of true doctrine are of the same sort" goes back to John Calvin himself.[35] In the case of Herman Hoeksema and his rejection of common grace, the 1924 CRC Synod itself can be called in as an "orthodoxy witness" for the

defendant.

• In his own *apologia* for the formation of the Protestant Reformed Churches, Hoeksema is generous in his insistence that the 1924 Kalamazoo Synod was not a "packed" synod but a "weak synod."[36] If, by contrast, it would be too unkind to call the synod confused, it is necessary to say that it was conflicted. It decided not to appoint a study committee to examine the doctrine of common grace and stated this decision in rather remarkable terms. The advisory committee recommendation adopted by synod reads as follows:

> [That synod] make no statement concerning the church's position with regard to the doctrine of common grace [the Dutch reads "algemeene genade of gemeene gratie" thus incorporating both Dutch language terms]. Such a statement would presuppose that this doctrine had already been thoroughly thought through and developed in all its particularities, which most certainly is not the case. The necessary preliminary study for this is completely lacking. *Consequently, even among the Reformed churches there is definitely no common mind (communis opinio) on this matter*.[37]

• In response to the Muskegon overture, which had called for a study committee to formulate a dogma on common grace that could be incorporated into a confession, synod also declined, noting that this is not the way confessional dogmas are formed. These arise over a longer period of controversy and flow from a growing consensus of the church.[38] It then called for church leaders, preachers as well as professors, to continue studying the matter and engaging the church so that in good time a consensus could be achieved.[39] With this resolution, synod thanked the advisory committee for its work and considered the matter of common grace concluded.

• Note well, this conclusion came after synod had already adopted the three points. Furthermore, in each of the three points, synod was led to insist that it had Reformed confessional and theological backing for its claim. In each case, the positive statement is backed with this ground: "it is evident from the quoted declarations of Reformed writers of the period of florescence of Reformed theology, that our Reformed fathers from of old have championed this view." How does this square with "no *communis opinio*"? Conflicted or confused?

• Finally, we note that the 1924 synod was not minded to discipline

Hoeksema. Rather than repeat the more complete description I gave in my retrospective,[40] I will summarize the points here in two stages, considering the two questions before synod: (a) whether or not the synod should examine Hoeksema's and Danhof's views; (b) whether or not the synod should give the two brothers a public reprimand. Concerning the first (a), the synod's advisory committee recommended that synod not enter into discussion of key issues such as the accusation that Hoeksema and Danhof were one-sided in their emphasis on divine sovereignty and God's decree at the expense of human responsibility, because:

> o similar expressions have from time to time been used by supralapsarians without their being disciplined by the church;
>
> o the brothers Danhof and Hoeksema absolutely reject the conclusion that God is the author of sin, a conclusion which some maintain follows from their declarations;
>
> o it is characteristic of the supralapsarian to view everything in light of God's plan and this has never been condemned by the churches.[41]

This judgment was then immediately followed by the advisory committee's recommendation that "synod should declare itself specifically" on three points, namely, (1) God's favorable disposition to all men; (2) the restraint of sin in the individual person and in society; (3) the doing of so-called righteousness by the unregenerate.[42] Synod then went on to adopt the three points as formulated by the advisory committee.

On the second point (b), the advisory committee in its original report to synod recommended that

> Synod through its president…seriously admonish the brethren with a view to their deviations and ask them to promise that in the future they will adhere to what Synod expressed in the three points mentioned above; urge [them]…in all seriousness to refrain from all attempts to propagate in the church their deviating views regarding the three points; [and if they do not] …Synod, though very loath to do so, shall be obliged to make the case pending with their respective consistories.

Failing all this, a special committee, consisting of the officers of synod, would have to deal with the matter.[43] As Hoeksema himself put it in his characteristically colorful summary: "Surely, the committee of pre-advice had intended a sound synodical spanking for the two culprits."[44]

Once again, I will not repeat the details of my earlier coverage of this,[45] but only restate the conclusion: Synod did not adopt this recommendation of its

advisory committee. Instead, having adopted the three points, synod contented itself with this gentle judgment:

> Synod declares that there are various expressions in the writings of the Revs. H. Danhof and H. Hoeksema which do not harmonize well with what the Scripture and the confessions teach us regarding the three points mentioned above. Also, synod judges that the ministers, named above, use certain strong expressions in their writings from which it becomes evident that in their presentations they do not reckon sufficiently with the manner in which our confessions declare themselves, especially regarding point I of the Utrecht conclusion.

At the same time, synod provided the two ministers with a *nihil obstat* concerning "the basic truths of the Reformed faith":

> On the other hand, synod declares that the above-mentioned ministers, according to their own repeated declarations made in their writings, have no intent or desire other than to teach the Reformed teaching, the teaching of the Holy Scripture, and that of our confessions, and also to defend it. *Also, it cannot be denied that, in the basic truths of the Reformed faith as set forth in our confessions, they are Reformed, albeit with a tendency to be one-sided.*

It was thus decided.[46]

Notwithstanding this general acceptance, synod did add the following direct but mild admonition to Hoeksema and Danhof:

> In view of the divergent ideas of the ministers H. Danhof and H. Hoeksema regarding the three above-mentioned points, and in view of the conflict that has been ignited in our churches concerning the doctrine of common grace, synod admonishes both brothers to hold themselves in their preaching and in their writing to the standpoint of our confession with reference to the three points and at the same time admonishes the brothers and the churches in general to guard against all one-sidedness in the presentation of the truth and to be careful, moderate and unobtrusive in their statements.[47]

This caution was then followed immediately by a synodical "on the other hand" in which the two brothers were praised for reminding the church that abuses of the doctrine of common grace would lead to worldliness. An admonition against worldliness was sent to the churches along with its statements on common grace.[48] In order to keep the order of synod's decisions clearly before us, it should be noted that only after the three points were adopted along with the cautions just mentioned, that synod decided not to appoint a study committee

because, among other reasons, “there was no *communio opinis* in the Reformed churches on the issue.”

When we combine all of this evidence from the decisions of the 1924 synod, it is only fair to conclude that on the question whether or not common grace was to be regarded as a confessional issue, a matter of dogma defining Reformed orthodoxy, Hoeksema appears to have the right on his side. According to the CRC Synod of 1924, the doctrine of common grace is not a first-order confessional matter. Granted, out of the whole complex of issues associated with common grace—of the eleven identified by the advisory committee—synod did single out three points it believed were a matter of confessional integrity. Notwithstanding the insistence in each point that “Reformed fathers from of old have championed” the particular point, the synod did not fully demonstrate the confessional reasons for the claims it made. They were, at the very least, debatable. Add to this the numerous qualifiers inserted at key points in the discussion and the general stamp of orthodox approval that Hoeksema and Danhof received, it is fair to say that the CRC Synod of 1924 did not intend to make the doctrine of common grace in general a first-order confessional matter.[49] It was a grave mistake for the Christian Reformed Church, in the representation of Classis Grand Rapids East, to have made his denial of common grace a reason for deposing Herman Hoeksema later that year. And that brings us to the third area where Hoeksema can receive some vindication.

Reformed Church Polity Was Violated by *Hierarchical Actions*

The third point I wish to argue is more complex than the first two, and the case for it more contentious and debatable, because it involves a highly controversial point of Reformed church polity: Does a classis (or synod) have the right to discipline/depose a minister against the wishes of his consistory/council? The reason for the contention is obvious; the complexity arises from the fact that there were two related but still distinct issues involved in the decision of Classis Grand Rapids East to depose Rev. Herman Hoeksema. One was the question whether or not he would accept the doctrine of common grace; there could not have been any doubt that he would not. The issue here is whether Classis Grand Rapids East had the moral right to insist on a loyalty oath with respect to the three points. The other issue had to do with the consistory of the Eastern Avenue CRC, where Hoeksema was the pastor, placing three—and eventually, four—of its members under church discipline for the “public sin” of criticizing its minister. Had the issue only been a matter of demanding that Hoeksema submit to the “synodical yoke” of the common grace doctrine, the question of hierarchical action would be simple and obviously yes, particularly in view of

the 1924 synod's own reticence to activate heavy-artillery church discipline. But the conflict about whether the Eastern Avenue consistory had erred in imposing discipline on four of its members complicated matters considerably and it is to this that we must first turn.

If we are to start at the beginning, we need to turn to Hoeksema's own account of a visit to his home by three members of his Eastern Avenue congregation on January 24, 1924.[50] The three had come to register a protest against their pastor's view and offered a written protest to which they requested a quick answer. When Hoeksema asked for private conversations with the protestants individually, all but one refused, and when he showed a lack of familiarity with its contents, Hoeksema began to suspect that the protestants had not written it themselves, a suspicion confirmed a year later in the court case over the Eastern Avenue property.[51] Refusing to meet individually with their pastor, the protestants changed tactics and indicated that "they were under no obligation to discuss the matter of their protest with their pastor according to the rule of Matthew 18. For, they claimed, the matter really concerned a *public sin* on the part of their pastor, and as such they could lodge a complaint with the consistory against him directly."[52] The Eastern Avenue CRC consistory, however, refused to deal with the complaint on the ground that the protestants had not followed the pattern prescribed in Matthew 18. To have admitted the ground of the accusation was impossible, according to Hoeksema, because "the protestants were begging the question. They demanded of the consistory to assume what was still to be proven." The consistory could not admit that "the pastor was teaching a false doctrine."[53] The consistory asked the protestants to retract their accusation and when they refused told them that they could not partake of the Lord's Supper because "with the accusation of public sin against the pastor in their hearts they could not very well partake of communion with him."

In the meantime, the three protestants had now been joined by the Rev. J. Vander Mey, also member of Eastern Avenue CRC, who was not serving in a Christian Reformed pastorate but as the Educational Secretary of Calvin College and Seminary. His engagement with Hoeksema took a slightly different path. As Hoeksema recounts it, he was told by the three who visited him on January 19, 1924, that Vander Mey would also be registering an objection against Hoeksema's views. However, the course of this protest took several strange turns. Vander Mey did engage in personal conversation with Hoeksema, indicated he would not be joining the protests of the other three Eastern Avenue members, but then delivered a protest against Hoeksema's preaching and teaching to Eastern Avenue's consistory.[54] The consistory once again refused to accept the allegation of "public sin" against its pastor and asked Vander Mey to

join the other three in not partaking of communion.

The next chapter in the story is the meeting of Classis Grand Rapids East on May 21–24, 1924. In my seventy-fifth year retrospective reflections on the common grace controversy, I summarized Hoeksema's account of this classis meeting.[55] Since then I have also consulted the minutes of that meeting and can report that the main outlines of Hoeksema's account are accurate.[56] Classis took on two distinct but related sets of issues: (a) Doctrinal Issues: A request for investigation (*verzoekschrift*) into the teaching of Hoeksema and Danhof that came from Rev. M. M. Schans, pastor of the Kelloggsville CRC. In the same vein were the protests of the three Eastern Avenue members and Rev. J. Vander Mey against the teaching of their pastor, Rev. Hoeksema. In addition, the Rev. J. K. Van Baalen, pastor of the Munster, Indiana CRC, also sent a "Petition" (*bezwaarschrift*) to Classis Grand Rapids East, having failed to get a hearing from the Eastern Avenue consistory; (b) Church Polity Issues: Protests by the four Eastern Avenue members against the decision of their consistory to place them under censure. The first item—the so-called *verzoekschrift* from Rev. Schans—was supported, "in part or in whole," by the consistories of Detroit CRC, and two Grand Rapids congregations, Bates Street [First] CRC, and Neland Avenue CRC, with the last-mentioned indicating its desire to have the Schans document sent to Synod with this accompanying "instruction":

> Considering that in the last two years there has arisen a great disturbance in our churches with respect to certain aspects of Reformed doctrine;
>
> And considering that two of the ministers of our churches, namely Revs. H. Danhof and H. Hoeksema are accused of cherishing deviating opinions and even promoting unreformed views;
>
> And considering that the elements of doctrine that are in dispute are of fundamental significance, as is acknowledged by both sides (such as, e.g., the proclamation of the Gospel, election and reprobation, human responsibility, etc.); doctrines, moreover, about which we should have as much unity as is possible in our churches;
>
> And considering that the teaching of the named brothers, to which exception is taken, has been publicly proclaimed and disputed—these brothers coming under the jurisdiction of different classes, and the differences are of general concern to all the churches, so that, in our opinion, it is the responsibility of the Synod, the broadest assembly of our churches, to decide the matter, and this all the more because, in our opinion, it is only through a synodical pronouncement that the traumatized trust of

the churches can be restored.

The minutes are noteworthy because they include an extended discussion of Hoeksema's *Banner* column, "Our Doctrine"[57] along with Hoeksema and Danhof's book, *Sin and Grace*. Extended citations from these sources were countered with rebuttals of key points that appealed to the Reformed Confessions for support. The three (!) issues singled out were "the general offer of the Gospel," "divine restraint of evil," and existence of "civic righteousness." Since these were exactly the three points singled out by the 1924 synod, it is clear that the lengthy report of the classical sub-committee provided the template, the core language, and the grounds for synod's own declaration. On the matter of the general offer of the gospel, the classis declared:

> Our Confessions are perfectly clear on this point. These Confessions are established and have always been acknowledged by both Supralapsarians and Infralapsarians as Reformed teaching, so that, in our judgment, it is incorrect to say that they include only the minimum of Reformed identity (*Sin and Grace*) as though on this point one could be more Reformed than our Confessions. This would place one above the Confessions rather than be bound to them.[58]

The minutes of the May 21–24 classis meeting are a challenging read because they refer to documents that are themselves not readily available and classis not only changed its mind several times but also sent conflicting messages to synod. On the one hand, however, it took the overture from the Rev. Schans, apparently with all the textual support of Hoeksema's views and their refutation, and sent it along with an "instruction" to synod. In this "instruction" the synod is repeatedly asked to "test" ("*de Synode toetse*") Hoeksema and Danhof's ideas by Scripture and the Reformed confessions, both of which are cited copiously. Clearly the mind of classis was made up against Hoeksema and Danhof's teaching. On the other, however, the way classis treated the "protests" of the four Eastern Avenue members and the "petition" of Rev. Van Baalen was strange, to say the least. Classis decided to take up the protest against Hoeksema's teaching and the censure by the Eastern Ave consistory on these grounds:

> a. The consistory has had ample time to deal with the matter.
>
> b. The fact that it did not is due to an incorrect understanding of what the church order expects. According to article 74 of the Dort Church Order (according to the consistory's reply to the protestants in its last letter of May 10), the brothers were not required by the rule of Matthew 18 to first speak with the minister before they brought the matter to the consistory.

c. The consistory would not have been able to judge whether or not the "sin" named in the accompanying documents touched on an "opinion" of Rev. Hoeksema about which the church had not spoken until they had considered the content of the protest. And, had the consistory taken the matter under consideration, they then had the obligation to show that what the protestants called "sin" in fact was not sin.

At this point, so the minutes record, Hoeksema protested the decision of classis and then left the assembly with the elder delegates from Eastern Avenue.[59] This took place on the afternoon of Thursday, May 22, the second full day of classis's deliberations. At this point classis went into closed, executive session and appointed a committee, including the president of classis, Rev. Post, to plead with the Eastern Avenue delegates to return to the assembly to pick up the remaining business of classis. When that committee reported that the Eastern Avenue delegates were not so minded, at least not until the protests would be reconsidered, classis agreed to reconsider its decision, and went into recess, deciding to reconvene at 7:00 p.m.[60] At the—apparently very brief—evening session, classis appointed a committee of four ministers and three elders to prepare advice for classis and decided that classis would reconvene on Friday morning, May 23, at 9:00 a.m. in the Sherman Street CRC. I emphasize this because it meant a change of venue away from Eastern Avenue CRC. Classis expressed its thanks to the Eastern Avenue CRC for its hospitality and added that classis "had chosen another location because it was difficult to meet in committee" in the Eastern Avenue facility.[61]

At this point we need to take note of a significant difference in the way that the classical minutes record the reply of Hoeksema and his elder to the request to return to classis "in order to participate in the remaining business [of classis]," and Hoeksema's own summary. The minute reads as follows: "The delegation [*commissie*], having returned, reported that the delegates of Eastern Ave refused [*weigeren*] to return until the protests had been dealt with [*totdat de protesten behandeld zijn*]." Hoeksema puts it this way: "The delegates, however, replied that they would never return unless the classis would first rescind its decision regarding the protest."[62]

Classis reconvened on Friday, May 23, at 9:00 a.m. to *reconsider* [*weer in overweging te nemen*] the motion that had already been adopted.[63] The motion read: "That Classis proceed and consider the protest…[of the Eastern Avenue members]." The advisory committee first wanted to clarify what was meant by "protest" in the motion because "it soon became apparent, *after the motion had been approved,* that not everyone understood the motion correctly…. Hence the

motion to reconsider what classis had approved." The clarification offered to classis indicated that by "protest," the "person who made the motion and the seconder" intended to include both the original protest against Hoeksema's preaching/teaching as well as the decision of the consistory to place the protestants under censure. This clarification allowed classis to then "divide the question" into a doctrinal matter and an ecclesiastical discipline matter.

While classis was discussing whether to reconsider its earlier action, another delegation of two ministers and one elder was sent to ask the Eastern Avenue delegation to return to the meeting. Upon receiving word that they were willing, classis voted not to proceed with the business of the day and recessed for lunch. When the meeting reconvened, Hoeksema was given an opportunity to register his opinion about the decision classis had made the previous day concerning the protest of the three Eastern Avenue members, and he then departed to conduct a funeral.64 His place was taken by the alternate, elder Doezema. While Hoeksema was absent from the gathering, classis rescinded its previous decision with the following ground: "Because there is a more clear way [*een duidelijker weg*] by which ambiguous terms [*woorden met een tweeledige beteekenis*] can be avoided." This "better way" was to divide the question. Concerning the ecclesiastical matter, classis "advised" the Eastern Avenue consistory to lift the censure imposed on the three members on grounds that have already been noted above. On the matter of the original protest against Hoeksema's doctrine, classis returned the issue back to the consistory. It acknowledged that the protestants had not needed to follow the Matthew 18 rule and speak with their pastor before coming to the consistory (thus negating the applicability of Dort Church Order article 74 to this case), but it did give as ground for its decision Church Order article 30 which stated that items that could be handled by a minor assembly may not be dealt with by a major assembly.

Classis continued its deliberations into Saturday, not concluding its work until 1:30 p.m. on Saturday afternoon. Two matters before it were dealt with in the same manner as the protest of the three Eastern Avenue members. Concerning the "petition" [*bezwaarschrift*] of Rev. J. K. Van Baalen, classis ruled that the consistory had erred in demanding that Rev. Van Baalen first speak with Hoeksema. The rule of Matthew 18 and Church Order article 74 do not apply here. However, classis refused to judge the matter itself and referred it back to the Eastern Avenue consistory, invoking Church Order article 30 as ground (matters must first be dealt with in lower assemblies). It treated the protest of Rev. J. Vander Mey, the fourth Eastern Avenue petitioner, in the same way and referred it back to the consistory. Both Van Baalen and Vander Mey indicated that they would appeal to synod.

We need to bring this chapter in the story to a close. What are we to say about a set of classical decisions that seems so conflicted? When classis appealed to article 30 of the Church Order as ground for referring the doctrinal dispute between Hoeksema and his opponents, should it not have heeded its own advice and refused to send an "instruction" to synod that clearly indicated an agreement with the opposition? Why ask synod to start an investigation when classis itself had not done such an investigation? Surely, the "lesser" assembly had not yet completed its work. Undoubtedly the delegates were weary after the unusual three-and-a-half day meeting of classis. Perhaps that contributed to the lack of consistency in its decisions.

What about classis's demand that the consistory lift the censure of the four protestants? Herman Hanko, Hoeksema's successor at the Protestant Reformed Theological School, showed commendable self-critical courage and integrity in faulting Hoeksema on this point. He asks the question: "Was it church politically right for the consistory to put the protestants under censure for protesting the preaching of their pastor?" In spite of Hoeksema's detailed defense of this decision,65 Hanko disagrees: "Nevertheless, such action was surely not proper according to the government of the church of Christ."66 Hanko points to article 31 of the Dort Church Order, which reads:

> If anyone complain that he has been wronged by the decision of a minor assembly, he shall have the right to appeal to a major ecclesiastical assembly, and whatever may be agreed upon by a majority vote shall be considered settled and binding, unless it be proved to conflict with the Word of God or with the articles of the Church Order, also long as they are not changed by the general synod.67

The protestants, he continues, were simply exercising their appropriate freedom of conscience and "should not have been put under censure for challenging the Reformed character of the preaching and finally appealing their case to a broader assembly."68

Hanko is undoubtedly correct in stating the general principle. However, I would submit that the matter is not nearly as clean as he presents it. Without concluding that Hoeksema and the Eastern Avenue consistory were completely in the right, I do want to note some mitigating circumstances. In my seventy-fifth year retrospective on the events of 1924, I called attention to the evidence that the opposition to Hoeksema was orchestrated and even had some financial backing. How else to explain the professionally printed copies of the Schans protest and the similarly worded, professionally printed copies of the Eastern Avenue protestants?69 Hoeksema reports that he first got wind of the Schans

“overture” when he “filled a classical appointment at East Martin, Mich.” He came across it while having dinner in the home of a consistory member of this church and discovered that printed copies had been distributed to all the consistories of Classis Grand Rapids East in sufficient number to provide one for every consistory member.[70] Rev. J. Van Der Mey launched a similar attack. When the Eastern Avenue consistory told him that he had to first speak with Hoeksema before they would consider his protest, he had his protest printed and distributed. According to Hoeksema, in private conversation Vander Mey admitted that he had printed 500 copies, of which he still had 400.[71]

When we put this all together—protests written by people other than the protestants themselves, cooperation in writing protests, and then publicly printing these protests before any church assembly had adjudicated them—I am less inclined to fault Hoeksema and the Eastern Avenue consistory for its act of church discipline. Without giving them full exoneration, it seems to me that it is at least fair to judge the matter as ambiguous. When that ambiguity is acknowledged and combined with the 1924 synod’s refusal to condemn Hoeksema as “unreformed,” I am comfortable in suggesting that there is a good case for saying that Classis Grand Rapids East acted in a hierarchical fashion when it suspended and deposed Hoeksema for his refusal to sign a loyalty oath to the three points of common grace adopted by the 1924 CRC of Kalamazoo and the refusal by the Eastern Avenue consistory to lift the censure of the protesting members in his church. There was considerable unfinished business that needed the attention it never received.

More scholarly attention also needs to be paid to the 1924 common grace controversy itself. In this essay I raised but did not answer the church polity question of whether a broader assembly such as a classis has the right to depose an office bearer. Clearly Hoeksema[72] and Hanko[73] thought the answer was no. If we accept this as a general rule, is this no absolute? I am not so sure but leave the matter to those with greater expertise in matters of church polity. For that reason, I also did not cover the meetings of Classis Grand Rapids East in August and November of 1924 where the steps to Hoeksema’s suspension and deposition are chronicled. Though such an investigation would likely reinforce the conclusion of my third point, I leave it to others to pursue it further. Without fully endorsing his theology, I do conclude that on the three points I have identified in this essay, Herman Hoeksema was more right than his Christian Reformed opponents. Because his departure left too many important questions unanswered, it was a loss for the CRC.

1. James A. De Jong, *As the Waters Cover the Sea: Millennial Expectations in the Rise of Anglo-*

American Missions 1640–1810 (Kampen: Kok, 1970).

2. His grandfather, Ymen P. De Jong (1876–1958), was one of the first CRC ministers to earn a doctorate at the Vrije Universiteit (in 1913) and served what was then the largest congregation in the denomination, Grandville Avenue CRC, for twenty-eight years from 1917–1945. His father, Peter Ymen De Jong, was Professor of Pastoral Care at Calvin Theological Seminary from 1964–1970. His uncle, Alexander De Jong (1922–2003), in addition to a distinguished record of service in prominent CRC pastorates, served on the faculty of Trinity Christian College and a term as its president. Finally, Louis Berkhof, long-time Professor of Systematic Theology at Calvin Seminary, author of a best-selling and much-translated *Systematic Theology* and arguably the best-recognized name among CTS faculty in its history, was his step-grandfather.

3. Two post-retirement works deserve mention here: (1) The biography of influential CRC minister and long-time *Banner* editor, *Henry J. Kuiper: Shaping the Christian Reformed Church, 1907–1962*, The Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America 55 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007); (2) A new look at the RCA/CRC split in 1857, prepared while a fellow at the Van Raalte Institute, Holland, Michigan: "Reassessing 1857: Overlooked Considerations Concerning the Birth of the Christian Reformed Church," Lecture Series, No. 3 of the Visiting Research Fellows Program, Van Raalte Institute, Hope College, 16 February 2006.

4. For details, including the actual text of the three points, see John Bolt, "Common Grace and the Christian Reformed Synod of Kalamazoo (1924): A Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Retrospective," *Calvin Theological Journal* 35 (2000): 7–36.

5. Agenda CRC Synod, 1924, xxvi–xxvii; the overtures were from the following classes: Hackensack, Sioux Center, Hudson, and Muskegon. The overture from Classis Hackensack reads as follows:

> *Whereas, the* Doctrine of Common Grace is absolutely denied by two ministers of our Church in the book *Van Zonde en Genade,* and since the agitation caused by this is detrimental to the spiritual development of the Church,
>
> *Therefore*, Classis Hackensack asks Synod to declare that such denial is contrary to Scripture and to our Reformed Doctrine;
>
> *Further*, that Synod appoint a Committee to make a thorough study of the matter and enlighten the Church.

6. For a discussion about the chain of events leading to this decision, see Bolt, "Common Grace."

7. For example, in response to the charge leveled by Rev. Jan Karel Van Baalen and others that Hoeksema was one-sided in his emphasis on the sovereignty of God, the committee told synod not to go down that road:

> a) because similar expressions have from time to time been used by supralapsarians without being disciplined by the church. (Maccovius: "that the reprobates necessarily sin and are lost");
>
> b) because the brothers Danhof and Hoeksema absolutely reject the conclusion that God is the author of sin, a conclusion which some maintain follows from their declarations. *1924 Acts of Synod*, 122.

8. Bolt, "Common Grace."

9. By "Christian Reformed Church" here I mean the CRC *through its assemblies*, namely the CRC Synod of 1924 and Classis Grand Rapids East. This brief essay is suggestive rather than definitive. On a number of issues, such as the historical record concerning the relation between covenant and election in the Reformed tradition, further analysis is required. My reformulations of the three points of Kalamazoo, it barely needs mentioning, are those of one person and not of the Christian Reformed Church. My only goal in this essay is to argue that such further study is both an academic and an ecclesiastical obligation.

10. I am indebted to Patrick Baskwell's recently published *Herman Hoeksema: A Theological Biography* (Clover, SC: Full Bible Publications: 2009) for the inspiration to pursue this issue, especially the importance of Hoeksema's dependence on Abraham Kuyper's emphasis on the particularity of grace.

11. Cited by Herman Hanko, *For Thy Truth's Sake: A Doctrinal History of the Protestant Reformed Churches* (Grandville, MI: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 2000), 67.

12. Baskwell, *Herman Hoeksema*, 48.

13. Baskwell, *Herman Hoeksema*, 47. Earlier in this chapter (p. 45), Baskwell cited David Engelsma, professor of dogmatics at the Protestant Reformed Seminary, as distinguishing between Kuyper's theological works (which Hoeksema by and large affirmed) from his philosophical and more speculative works (which Hoeksema repudiated). The former included Kuyper's works on the particularity of grace and doctrine of the covenants; the latter included Kuyper's Stone *Lectures on Calvinism* and his three-volume work on common grace.

14. Abraham Kuyper, *Uit het Woord*, Tweede Series, Eerste Bundel, *Dat de Genade Particulier Is* (Amsterdam: J. H. Kruyt, 1884); Marvin Kamps, *Particular Grace: A Defense of God's Sovereignty in Salvation* (Grandville, MI: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 2001); page references that follow in the text are to this work.

15. "He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for our sins only but also for the sins of the whole world" (NRSV).

16. "Who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (NRSV).

17. "The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wishing any to perish, but all to come to repentance" (NRSV).

18. The point Kuyper is making here was made with considerably more precision a generation after his death by Klaas Schilder in his *Is de term "Algemeene Genade" Wetenschappelijk Verantwoord? Twee Bijdragen tot de Bespreking der "Gemeene-gratie" Idee* (Kampen: Ph. Zalsman, 1947).

19. Henry Danhof and Herman Hoeksema, *Sin and Grace*, ed. Herman Hanko, trans. Cornelius Hanko (Grandville, MI: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 2003), 72ff. The specific reference we cited at the conclusion of the previous paragraph is similarly appealed to by Danhof and Hoeksema on p. 77.

20. Kuyper, *De Gemeene Gratie*, 3rd ed. (Kampen: Kok, 1931) [hereafter cited as *DGG*, I]. Unless otherwise indicated, translations are my own; unless otherwise indicated, the emphases in the quotations are from Kuyper himself.

21. See note 14 above.

22. Kuyper, *Uit het Woord.*

23. Hanko and Hoeksema cite a lengthy section from *DGG*, I, chap. 34 where this shift is noticeable; see Danhof and Hoeksema, *Sin and Grace*, 106–109.

24. Richard A. Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), s.v., *gratia, gratia communis, gratia particularis sive specialis, gratia universalis.*

25. For what follows I am indebted to Raymond A. Blacketer's essay, "The Three Points in Most Parts Reformed: A Reexamination of the So-called Well-meant Offer of Salvation," *Calvin Theological Journal* 35, no. 1 (2000): 37–65.

26. Blacketer, "Three Points," 42.

27. Blacketer, "Three Points," 45.

28. Blacketer, "Three Points," 55.

29. It would take us too far afield to pursue this point here. I agree with Hanko's point that one consequence of the CRC's stance established in 1924 was the confusion in the CRC generated by the so-called "Dekker case" in which CTS professor Harold Dekker argued for a form of God's universal love. See Hanko, *For Thy Truth's Sake*, 83–84, n. 40.

30. I am confident of this because it agrees with Hoeksema's own objections to the first point and his insistence on the particularity of grace. See, for example, his "Catechism on the Doctrinal Issues of 1924," which first appeared in his *The Protestant Reformed Churches in America Their Origin, Early History and Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: n.p., 1947), 291–410; repr., Hoeksema and Hanko, *Ready to Give an Answer: A Catechism of Reformed Distinctives* (Grandville, MI: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 1997), 35–160.

31. Gertrude Hoeksema, *Therefore Have I Spoken: A Biography of Herman Hoeksema* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1969), 154–155.

32. An English translation was approved by the CRC Synod of 1942 and published in its *1942 Acts of*

Synod, Supplement 17, pp. 352–354. The passages cited in the next paragraph are taken from this translation. For a valuable introduction to the debates, especially as they involved some of Abraham Kuyper's controversial views, see Mark Beach's introduction to *Saved by Grace: The Holy Spirit's Work in Calling and Regeneration*, by Herman Bavinck, (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2008), ix–lvi; the classic study of the century-long debate, beginning with the fathers of the 1834 Secession and concluding with the Liberation of 1944 involving Klaas Schilder, is E. Smilde, *Een Eeuw van Strijd over Verbond en Doop* (Kampen: Kok, 1946).

33. *Acta der Synode* 1908, 40ff., 80.

34. D. H. Kromminga, *The Christian Reformed Tradition: From the Reformation till the Present* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1943), 128.

35. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, Library of Christian Classics 20–21 (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), IV.i.12.

36. H. Hoeksema, *Protestant Reformed Churches*, 64–65.

37. *Acta der Synode* 1924, 149; emphasis added.

38. *Acta der Synode* 1924, 149–150.

39. *Acta der Synode* 1924, 150.

40. Bolt, "Common Grace," 22–24.

41. *Acta der Synode* 1924, 122–23.

42. *Acta der Synode* 1924, 124.

43. This material from the original advisory committee report is not included in the official 1924 *Acta der Synode* but can be found in H. Hoeksema, *Protestant Reformed Churches*, 192. For the details of my own confirmation of Hoeksema's account, see "Common Grace," 30–32.

44. H. Hoeksema, *Protestant Reformed Churches*, 79.

45. Bolt, "Common Grace," 29–32.

46. *Acta der Synode* 1924, 147; emphasis added.

47. *Acta der Synode* 1924, 147.

48. *Acta der Synode* 1924, 147–49. I provided the English translation of this statement in "Common Grace," 26–27. It was of course only four years later that a CRC synod adopted the equally notorious study committee report on "worldly amusements."

49. A personal anecdote: When I was going through the final stages of examination toward candidacy for ministry in the Christian Reformed Church in 1973, I was specifically asked by a minister member of the Calvin College and Seminary Board of Trustees whether or not I fully subscribed to the synodical statement on common grace. At the time, I did. Today, I would have to give a more nuanced answer.

50. H. Hoeksema, *Protestant Reformed Churches*, 28ff.; the summary that follows is taken from this source.

51. H. Hoeksema cites court records where one of the protestants, W. Hoeksema, under oath, acknowledged that the letter had been written in its final form by his brother, the Rev. G. Hoeksema, who at the time was the minister of Bethel CRC, Grand Rapids.

52. H. Hoeksema, *Protestant Reformed Churches*, 30.

53. H. Hoeksema, *Protestant Reformed Churches*, 30.

54. H. Hoeksema, *Protestant Reformed Churches*, 32–34.

55. Bolt, "Common Grace," 18–21.

56. My thanks to Dick Harms and the staff of Heritage Hall, Calvin College, for going far beyond the call of duty in providing me with the minutes of Classis Grand Rapids East at a time when the facilities were under construction and the archives in separate locations. Material that is cited in the paragraphs that follow is taken from these minutes and all translations from the Dutch are mine.

57. As best I am able to determine (by consulting the Christian Reformed Church Periodical Index at http://www.calvin.edu/cgi-bin/lib/crcpi/search.pl), Hoeksema was the editor of the "Our Doctrine" column in the CRC weekly *The Banner* from September 1918 through August 1922; he wrote 174 columns during that time, many of them arguing against the doctrine of common grace.

58. The minutes indicate that what was finally approved by classis was a substitute motion by Dr. H. Meeter rather than a straightforward passing on of the Schans overture. The difference is summarized by Hoeksema: “It differed from the original ‘overture’ in that it eliminated the request for the personal examination by the synod of the Revs. H. Hoeksema and H. Danhof and proposed to request that largest gathering of the churches merely to institute an inquisition into the writings of the two pastors.” H. Hoeksema, *Protestant Reformed Churches*, 49.

59. For Hoeksema’s own account of this, see *Protestant Reformed Churches*, 53ff. Hoeksema indicates that “Foreseeing the possibility that classis might ignore its plea and decide to treat the protest of the appellants, it had instructed its delegates, that in case the classis should assume such authority, they should deliver a written protest, and leave the meeting” (53). Hoeksema describes the departure thus: “The delegates, the pastor and elder O. Van Ellen, acted as they were instructed. They calmly presented the protest of their consistory to the chairman of classis and made their departure” (54).

60. The appointment of the delegation and their return to classis with Hoeksema’s answer are seamlessly put together in one paragraph of the minutes. Obviously, the delegation did not have to travel far since classis was meeting in Eastern Avenue’s facility.

61. Hoeksema proposes another reason: “It is alleged that the change of meeting-place was motivated by fear of an uproar among the members of the Eastern Avenue Church, although there was not the slightest reason for such fear. For, although the members of the Eastern Avenue congregation manifested a keen interest in the proceedings, their conduct was not characterized by disorder whatsoever.” *Protestant Reformed Churches*, 54–55.

62. H. Hoeksema, *Protestant Reformed Churches*, 54.

63. This motion too was a substitute that had been drafted by Dr. H. Meeter. The minutes repeatedly refer to “de voorstel van Dr. Meeter.”

64. The classical record thus confirms Hoeksema’s own account; see *Protestant Reformed Churches*, 57.

65. H. Hoeksema, *Protestant Reformed Churches*, 30, 32.

66. Hanko, *For Thy Truth’s Sake*, 101. Hanko does allow that the consistory’s reasoning had some plausibility. After all, “the synod had expressed the fact that Rev. Hoeksema was Reformed in his teaching, even though he showed an inclination to one-sidedness. The protests, after all, accused Hoeksema of being un-Reformed” (p. 101, n. 3).

67. Hanko, *For Thy Truth’s Sake*, 102, n. 5.

68. Hanko, *For Thy Truth’s Sake*, 103.

69. See Bolt, “Common Grace,” 18–19; the 1924 Acts of Synod include in the “materials (*stukken*) that had to be processed by the advisory committee four distinct professionally printed [*gedrukt exemplar*] copies of protests from the three members of Eastern Avenue, Rev. J. Vander Mey, and two copies (listed separately) of J. K. Van Baalen’s petition sent to the consistories of Kalamazoo I and Eastern Avenue, concerning the doctrine of H. Hoeksema and H. Danhof. *1924 Acta der Synode*, 114–115.

70. H. Hoeksema, *Protestant Reformed Churches*, 39–40.

71. H. Hoeksema, *Protestant Reformed Churches*, 34.

72. See H. Hoeksema, *Protestant Reformed Churches*, 51–53, 214–221.

73. Hanko, *For Thy Truth’s Sake*, 106–115.

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