CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THE DECREE OF REDEMPTION IS IN EFFECT A COVENANT: DAVID DICKSON AND THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DECREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

CAROL A. WILLIAMS

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

MAY 2005

CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

3233 Burton SE • Grand Rapids, Michigan • 49546-4387

616 957-6036 fax: 616 957-8621

This dissertation entitled

THE DECREE OF REDEMPTION IS IN EFFECT A COVENANT: DAVID DICKSON AND THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION

written by

CAROL A. WILLIAMS

and submitted in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

has been accepted by the faculty of Calvin Theological Seminary

upon the recommendation of the undersigned readers:

Richard A. Muller, Ph.D.

Lyle D. Bierma, Ph.D.

Henry Zwaanstra, Th.D.

Carl R. Trueman, Ph.D.

Henry De Moor, Th.D.
Vice President for Academic Affairs

SEPTEMBER 9, 2005
Date

Copyright © 2005 by Carol A. Williams
All rights reserved

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....vii

ABSTRACT.....viii

CHAPTER

1 INTRODUCTION.....1

1.1 Statement of the Problem.....2

1.1.1 David Dickson and the *Pactum Salutis* in Scholarly Discussion.....2

1.1.2 Dickson and Scottish Protestantism.....3

1.2 Survey of Scholarship.....10

1.2.1 Criticism of Protestant Scholasticism.....10

1.2.2 Positive Assessments of Protestant Scholasticism.....13

1.2.3 Origins of Covenant Theology.....14

1.2.4 Dogmatic Critique.....18

1.2.5 Development of the *Pactum Salutis* in Federal Theology.....23

1.2.6 Various Assessments of the *Pactum Salutis*.....28

1.2.7 Influence of Social History.....30

1.3 State of Dickson Scholarship.....34

1.3.1 Appraisals of Dickson and Scottish Theology.....34

1.3.2 Scholarship Concerning Dickson and the *Pactum Salutis*.....38

1.4 Prospectus.....44

1.4.1 Outline.....44

1.4.2 Sources.....47

2 TRAJECTORIES OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE THREE COVENANT MODEL.49

2.1 Introduction..... 49

2.1.1 Variant Approaches – One, Two, Three Covenants.....50

2.1.2 Assessments of Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Translation Issues.... 52

2.2 Seventeenth-Century Definitions of Covenant..... 55

2.3 British and Continental Predecessors of Dickson ca. 1585-1638..... 59

2.3.1 British Theologians ca. 1580s-1620.....61

2.3.2 British Works ca. 1629-1638.....77

2.3.3 Continental Predecessors and Contemporaries ca. 1590s-1630s 85

2.3.4 British Works ca. 1638-1650.....96

2.4 Contemporary Declarations of the *Pactum Salutis* 110

2.5 Conclusion.....115

3 DICKSON'S METHODOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS 119

3.1 Introduction to Seventeenth-Century Exegesis and Doctrine.....119

3.2 Dickson's Methodology 120

3.3 Dickson's Terminology and Definitions 130

3.3.1 Covenant.....130

3.3.2 Legal Language 137

3.3.3 Mediator 142

3.3.4 Surety.....145

3.3.5 Conditions.....148

3.3.6 Mercantile Language 153

3.3.7 Free will 155

3.4 Conclusion 156

4 THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION BY DICKSON 160

4.1 Dickson and the *Pactum Salutis* 160

4.1.1 Context and Issues 160

4.1.2 Dickson's Attention to Genre in Teaching on the Covenant of Redemption 161

4.2 Teaching on the Covenant of Redemption ca. 1630s-1647 163

4.2.1 Sermons 163

4.2.2 Explanation of the Epistle to the Hebrews 166

4.2.3 Speech to the General Assembly 171

4.2.4 Exposition of the Epistles 176

4.2.5 Exposition of the Evangel According to Matthew 180

4.3 Teaching on the Covenant of Redemption ca. 1649-1660s 184

4.3.1 *The Summe of Saving Knowledge* 184

4.3.2 Commentaries on the Psalms 187

4.3.3 *Therapeutica Sacra* 190

4.4 Relationship of Covenant of Redemption to the Covenants of Works and Grace 200

4.5 Particular Issues Raised in the Scholarship concerning Dickson's Theology 207

4.5.1 Full Participation of the Trinity in the Covenant of Redemption 207

4.5.2 Covenant/Contract Confusion 211

4.5.3 Election 215

4.6 Conclusion 218

5 THE *PACTUM SALUTIS* IN LATER BRITISH WORKS 222

5.1 Accounts of the *Pactum Salutis* from the 1650s 222

5.2 Conclusion 240

6 CONCLUSION 241

APPENDIX 1 253

APPENDIX 2 254

BIBLIOGRAPHY 256

Primary Sources 256

Secondary Sources 272

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have been aided in this task by librarians and their staffs who graciously answered my questions, located texts and provided information. Many thanks to theological librarians Paul Fields and Lugene Schemper, and Kathleen Struck in the interlibrary loan department of Hekman Library, Calvin College; Robert Smith, electronic resources librarian, Walther Library, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne; Diane Fisher, reference librarian, Montgomery Library, Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia campus; Irene Ferguson, archivist, Edinburgh University Library; and Pamela McNichol, archivist, Edinburgh City Archives.

My husband Larry has been steadfast in his support, providing encouragement and technical expertise, mastering computer program vagaries and crashes, and has enthusiastically spent hours on the net hunting for copies of out of print books.

ABSTRACT

While a significant amount of study has been devoted to the twofold system of the covenants of works and grace, development of the threefold covenant system in Reformed theology of the seventeenth century that includes the *pactum salutis* has not been thoroughly researched. The doctrine of the intratrinitarian covenant between the Father and the Son concerning the whole work of redemption has been characterized in some secondary literature as speculative, unbiblical, the result of faulty exegesis, crassly contractual, a deviation from the pure teaching of the Reformers, and of dubious value. However, these claims of discontinuity and questionable origin of the *pactum salutis* have not been adequately considered, nor has the early development of federal theology after the Reformers and prior to the Westminster Confession of Faith and Johannes Cocceius been sufficiently investigated. Writers of the seventeenth century whose works would support grounds for arguing either continuity or discontinuity have not been examined in depth.

This dissertation examines the works of one of the under-investigated seventeenth-century theologians whose work illustrates development of the doctrine of the *pactum salutis.* Despite the prominence of David Dickson (1583-1662) in the history of the Scottish church and his contributions to the trajectory of federal theology, his work has not been adequately explored. Although discussion of the three covenants can be found in print before Dickson, he appears to be the first to precisely formulate the doctrine in the context that became accepted as orthodoxy. He is also a significant mover in arguing that God's gracious condescension to humanity in the prelapsarian

state is evidenced by Scripture, and teaching the highly practical significance of the *pactum salutis* to healing sin-sick consciences.

To place Dickson's work in the context of ongoing dialog regarding federal theology, primary texts from the 1580s to 1695 by his near predecessors, contemporaries and successors in which divine covenants are mentioned have been considered, including catechisms, dictionaries, sermons, systems of divinity, commentaries and treatises on various subjects. This study focuses primarily on development of the *pactum salutis* in seventeenth-century British theology. However, because the development of federal theology involved the international Reformed community, a few prominent continental theologians whose works were in circulation in Britain during the seventeenth century are also included. The continental theologians are: Amandus Polanus, Jerome Zanchi, Gulielmus Bucanus, Lucas Trelcatius Jr., Johannes Wollebius, Jacob Arminius, John Cameron and Moyse Amyraut.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

If an indication of significance can be measured by the number of treatises on a subject, covenant became increasingly significant in the era of early orthodoxy (1565-1640). The attention given the concept of covenant by seventeenth-century theologians evidences a marked increase over that of sixteenth-century theologians. Reasons given for the increase of consideration vary from dogmatic, to polemical, to exegetical. An early indication of the impact, particularly among Reformed theologians, of what would be known as federal theology was already apparent at the turn of the century in the writing of Robert Rollock. "All the worde of God appertaines to some couenant: for God speaks nothing to man without the couenant: for which cause al the scripture both old and new, wherein al Gods word is contained, beares the name of Gods couenant or testament."[1]

Reformed scholastic theologians of the seventeenth century would continue to work out a thorough understanding of the relationship of God to humanity on the basis of covenants established by God, developing the precise language to discuss the topic to allow for accurate teaching and establishing of the doctrine. Among Reformed theologians of the seventeenth century, a particular significance to the work of salvation was identified in a divine covenant between God the Father and God the Son without excluding the Holy Spirit, in theological terminology, the *pactum salutis*.

[1]Robert Rollock, *A Treatise of Gods Effectual Calling* (London: Felix Kyngston, 1603), 6.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

1.1.1 David Dickson and the *Pactum Salutis* in Scholarly Discussion

This dissertation will not seek to trace the entire development of covenant theology from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century. Aspects of federal theology have been the subject of much inquiry, most frequently concerning the origin of the topic and whether movement from the idea of covenant to a covenant theology is a deviation or continuation of the Reformers' views. Numerous studies have focused on determining how many covenants there are, who the parties in the covenants are, the content of the covenants, whether the covenants are unilateral or bilateral, and what supports claims for the existence of these covenants. There are also frequent reminders in the secondary scholarship that John Calvin identified a single covenant of grace. While a significant amount of discussion involves the twofold system of the covenant of works (*foedus operum*) and grace (*foedus gratiae*) between God and humanity, the comparative absence of analysis regarding the development in Reformed theology of the seventeenth century of the threefold covenant system of the *foedus operum*, *foedus gratiae* and *pactum salutis,* and the role of the *pactum salutis* indicates the need for additional research.

The doctrine of the *pactum salutis* in federal theology has been characterized as the result of poor exegesis, contrived, unbiblical, crassly contractual, highly speculative, and deviating from the pure teaching of the Reformers. These claims in the secondary literature of discontinuity in the development of covenant theology have not been adequately documented. The claims, moreover, betray dogmatic biases. Even so, the early development after the Reformers and prior to the Westminster Assembly and

Johannes Coccieus has been under-investigated. Writers of the early seventeenth century have not been examined in depth, even though their work evidences the grounds for arguing a more continuous, exegetical, and doctrinal development.

Among the under-investigated, prominent Protestant scholastics of the seventeenth century whose works illustrate development of the doctrine of the *pactum salutis* is Scottish theologian David Dickson (1583 – 1662). Although discussion of an eternal covenant can be found before Dickson, he appears to be the first thinker on record to formulate the *pactum salutis* in the context that became accepted as orthodoxy. Additionally, he is certainly a significant mover in arguing that God's gracious condescension to humanity in the prelapsarian state is evidenced by Scripture, and in teaching the practical significance of the *pactum salutis* for healing sin-sick consciences and comforting believers. Yet his contributions to the trajectory of federal theology have not been adequately explored.

1.1.2 Dickson and Scottish Protestantism

Indications of the degree of esteem accorded Dickson occur in various histories of Scotland and the Scottish church with enthusiastic attestations to Dickson's notoriety in his own day. Several biographers remark on his integrity and record his work. "If ever a Scots biography, and the lives of our eminent ministers and Christians, be published, Mr. Dickson would shine there as a star of the first magnitude."[2] John Macleod comments that in his day "no man was held in higher esteem or carried greater weight than Dickson did in the councils of the Church, nor was there anyone that did

[2] Robert Wodrow, "A Short Account of the Life of the Rev. David Dickson," in *Select Biographies.* Edited for the Wodrow Society, chiefly from manuscripts in the library of the faculty of advocates, ed. W. K. Tweedie, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: Printed for the Wodrow Society, 1845), 5.

more useful work in spreading the Faith of his Church and giving it popular and permanent form."[3] Regarding Dickson's scholarship, William M. Taylor points out that Dickson "was as remarkable for his learning as for his fervor and simplicity in the pulpit."[4] John Livingstone, a minister well-acquainted with Dickson, names him as one of four men from whose preaching Livingstone profited greatly, men "whom I thought that of all that I read breathed most of the Spirit of God, least affected, most clear and plain, and most powerfull."[5]

Wodrow records that after receiving the Master of Arts degree from the University of Glasgow, Dickson became a regent in that college, serving as professor of philosophy for an eight year term. In 1618, at the conclusion of that term and having been declared qualified to be licensed to the holy ministry, he was, according to the practice of the time, ordained minister and served the town of Irvine for almost twenty-three years. Also in 1618, at the urging of the king and his prelates, the General Assembly agreed to five articles and imposed these on the church. The five articles listed by Wodrow are: kneeling at communion; observance of holy days including Christmas and Good Friday; confirmation by a bishop; private baptism; and private

---

[3] John Macleod, *Scottish Theology in Relation to Church History since the Reformation* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1974), 83-85. See also David Stevenson, "The Radical Party in the Kirk, 1637-45," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 25, no. 2 (April 1974): 136.

[4] William M. Taylor, *Scottish Pulpit from the Reformation to the Present Day* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1887), 102. See also 97-104, 111-112.

[5] John Livingstone, *A brief historical relation of the life of Mr. John Livingstone, minister of the gospel, containing several observations of the divine goodness manifested to him in the several occurrencies thereof, in Select Biographies,* 140. Livingstone was one of three Scots ministers Dickson employed after they had been removed from their posts in Ireland, silenced, and returned to Scotland. See Wodrow, "Short Account of Dickson," 8-9; Taylor, *Scottish Pulpit*, 104-106.

communion. After thorough consideration, Dickson concluded that the articles were sinful and publicly testified against them.[6]

Summoned before the high commission in 1622 for his opposition, Dickson explained that he could not in good conscience obey the commission's injunctions and was prepared to accept the consequences.[7]

> The first reason I have wherefore I may not obey these injunctions is, because there is noe reason why they should be commandit . . . I will draw the proposition a little straitter. Though in maters civile, which concerne temporall losse or gaine, the not seing of a reason of the commandement is not a sufficient reason to disobey it, yit in maters that concerne Christ's kirk, religion, and the worship of God, whether substance or ceremonie, whatsoever is imposed upon the flocke of Christ, universallie, solemnelie, and ordinarilie, to be done in and about the worship of God, and may not be left undone, behoveth either to have a knowne and sufficient reason for the injunction of it, or ellis, lawfullie a man may refuse to give obedience or it.[8]

Dickson's views regarding the jurisdiction of the court of the high commission having been deemed unacceptable, the commission in January 1622 subsequently removed him from his ministry at Irvine and ordered him to be confined in the village of Turriff, Aberdeenshire. Released in July 1623, Dickson was allowed to return to his ministry in Irvine until 1637.[9]

Dickson's increasing leadership of the presbyterian party may be illustrated by his involvement in addressing conflicts between the church and its hierarchy and the

---

[6] Wodrow, "Short Account of Dickson," 6. See John Howie, *Biographia Scoticana: or, a brief historical account of the lives, characters, and memorable transactions of the most eminent Scots worthies, noblemen, gentlemen, ministers, and others: from Mr. Patrick Hamilton, who was born about the year of our Lord 1503, and suffered martyrdom at St. Andrews, Feb. 1527, to Mr. James Renwick, who was executed in the grass-market of Edinburgh, Feb. 17, 1688*, 2nd ed. (Glasgow: 1781), 280.

[7] Wodrow, "Short Account of Dickson," 6-7; Howie, *Biographia Scoticana*, 280-282; David Calderwood, *The true history of the church of Scotland, from the beginning of the Reformation, unto the end of the reigne of King James VI* (n.p., 1678), 789-795.

[8] David Calderwood, *The History of the Kirk of Scotland*, ed. Thomas Thomson, vol. 7 (Edinburgh: 1845), 531-532.

[9] K. D. Holfelder, "Dickson, David (c. 1583-1662)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7614, accessed 28 May 2005]; Wodrow, "Short Account of Dickson," 7; Howie, *Biographia Scoticana*, 282-283; Calderwood, *History of the Kirk*, 790-795, 800.

king. Instrumental in organizing the protest against the prayer books at Edinburgh in 1637, Dickson played a leading role in reversing the charge by the high council to ministers to purchase and use the objectionable service book. One of several ministers engaged in a dispute in 1638 with six Arminian doctors of divinity known as "the Aberdeen doctors" and supporters of the religious policies of Charles I, he co-authored a response to those doctors' anti-covenanting pamphlet. Dickson was also involved in bringing about the king's consent to a general assembly of the church at Glasgow in 1638. Chosen moderator of the next general assembly at Edinburgh in 1639, Dickson declined a call by the city of Glasgow and returned to his ministry in Irvine.[10]

Transferred in 1641 to the University of Glasgow, Dickson served as professor of divinity, and continued to preach regularly in Glasgow, until being called to the same task at the University of Edinburgh in 1650, holding the chair until 1662. "The most part of the presbyterian ministers, at least in the west, south and east parts of Scotland, from 1640, were under his inspection."[11] Dickson also was a regular member from 1642 of the commission for the public affairs of the kirk, a standing committee of the General Assembly where he defended the use of conventicles, private gatherings for prayer, religious instruction and edification, and advocated further reform of the national church.[12]

In the 1650s Dickson was embroiled in the controversy over the return of Charles II from exile, siding with the 'resolutioners' against his former colleagues and friends, the 'protestors,' and authored pamphlets for the resolutioners' cause in the

---

[10] Holfelder, "Dickson," 2; Wodrow, "Short Account of Dickson," 8-10; Howie, *Biographica Scoticana*, 284-285.

[11] Howie, *Biographia Scoticana*, 285.

[12] Holfelder, "Dickson," 2.

debates. Despite his involvement, Dickson was discharged in 1662 for refusing the oath of supremacy demanded when the prelacy was restored by Charles II.[13] The "Act Concerning Masters of Universities, &c." declared that "no Masters, Principals, Regents, nor other Professors in Universities or Colledges within the Kingdom be admitted nor allowed to continue in the exercise of any Function within the same, but such are of Pious, Loyal and peaceable Conversation, submitting to, and owning the Government of the Church setled by Law, by Archbishops and Bishops, and who having given satisfaction therein to the Bishops of the respective Dioceses, and their Patrons, and having in their presence taken the Oath of Allegiance, shall procure the Attestation of the same."[14]

Dickson's major writings include *Truths Victory over Error*, the first commentary on the *Westminster Confession of Faith* (*WCF*);[15] a companion piece to the *WCF* and collaborative effort with James Durham, *The Summe of Saving Knowledge*; and commentaries on Psalms, Matthew, all Paul's epistles plus the epistles of James, Peter, John and Jude, and two on Hebrews. A collection of his sermons is available as *Select Practical Writings of David Dickson*, volume one: the planned succeeding volumes do not seem to have followed. Dickson's most prolonged presentation of the developing understanding of the three-covenant system within Reformed orthodoxy

---

[13] Holfelder, "Dickson," 3; Wodrow, "Short Account of Dickson,"10-12; Howie, *Biographia Scoticana*, 285-286; Alexander Grant, *Story of the University of Edinburgh during Its First Three Hundred Years* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1884), 281.

[14] *Two acts of the Parliament of Scotland. I. An act against the covenants. II. An act concerning masters of colledges, &c.* (London, 1662), 7-8.

[15] Howie, *Biographia Scoticana*, 285, gives 1650 as the publication date of *Truths Victory over Errour*, after Dickson's taking up a professorship at the University of Edinburgh and after having dictated the work in Latin to his students; Thomas Finlayson Henderson, *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 5, ed. Leslie Stephen & Sidney Lee (London: 1949-50), 947, also places publication in 1650, calling it Dickson's inaugural address later translated into English; *Select Practical Writings of David Dickson,* vol. 1 (Edinburgh, 1845).

comes in an exhaustive, practically-oriented treatise, *Therapeutica Sacra,* where he insists "the healing of the sicknesses of the conscience cometh by a right application of divine Covenants about our salvation."[16]

Therapeutica Sacra was not Dickson's earliest, nor his only significant discussion of the *pactum salutis*. In a speech before the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1638, Dickson identified not knowing the Scriptures and the power of God regarding the intratrinitarian covenant as the main error of the Arminians and suggested "since the whole Byble takes the denomination from this Covenant, it is recommended to us to studie it better."[17] Perhaps as early as 1649 in *The Summe of Saving Knowledge* Dickson clearly set forth the whole threefold covenant scheme with his accustomed brevity.[18]

Dickson is also credited with prompting other theologians to join in producing commentaries to aid the laity in their reading and meditation on the Scriptures.[19] "I have beene verie instant, vvith the Godlie-Learned of myne acquayntance, to take this matter

---

[16]David Dickson, *Therapeutica sacra; shewing briefly the method of healing the diseases of the conscience concerning regeneration* (Edinburgh, 1664), 22; *Therapeutica sacra: seu, de curandis casibus conscientiae circa regenerationem per foederum divinorum prudentem applicationem* (Edinburgh, 1656), *17*: "Quia Curatio Casuum, seu morborum Conscientiae circa Regenerationem, sit per applicationem foederum divinorum, de salvandis hominibus, cognitio aliqua istorum foederum necessario requiritur."

[17] David Dickson, Speech before the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, Dec. 3, 1638, *Records of the kirk of Scotland, containing the acts and proceedings of the General Assemblies, as authenticated by the clerks of Assembly,* ed. Alexander Peterkin (Edinburgh: John Sutherland, 1838),158-159.

[18] *National Union Catalog Pre-1956 Imprints*, vol. 143 (London: Mansell, 1971), mentions an earlier edition of *The Summe of Saving Knowledge* printed and bound in Edinburgh in 1649 with Francis Roberts' *Clavis bibliorum: the key of the Bible, unlocking the richest treasurie of the holy Scriptures. Whereby the 1 order, 2 names, 3 times, 4 penmen, 5 occasion, 6 scope, 7 principall parts, containing the subject-matter of every book of old and new testament, are familiarly and briefly opened: for the help of the weakest capacity in the understanding of the whole Bible.*

[19] Calderwood, *History of the Kirk,* 448-449, 531-542, 567-568; Robert Wodrow, *The History of the sufferings of the church of Scotland from the restoration to the revolution,* vol. 1 (Glasgow: Blackie, Fullarton & Co, 1828), 244, 376; Howie, *Biographia Scoticana,* 279-87; John Livingstone, *Memorable characters and remarkable passages of divine providence exemplified in the lives of some of the most eminent ministers and professors in the church of Scotland,* in *Select Biographies,* vol.1, 316-320; James Walker, *The Theology and Theologians of Scotland chiefly of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1888), 15-16.

in hand; and, to divyde, amongst them, the hard parts of SCRIPTVRE, at least; that this worke might bee done by the handes of manie, vvhich could not be done by one. I found their approbation of my desire, and inclinable willingnesse, to put hand to worke also."[20]

In commenting on 2 Timothy 2:9, Dickson explains Paul's directions to Timothy to "teach not the people only Sermonwise, but also Scholastically instruct the Candidates in Divinity, or those that are designed for the Ministerial function, by opening Apostolic Doctrine, and betrusting it, as it were, with faithful Depositaries, which may teach others the same Doctrine, that so the Doctrine of the Gospel may bee delivered and propagated from hand to hand."[21] Taking this to heart, Dickson became a teacher of the whole church, clergy and laity, as pastor and professor. Prefacing his exposition of the epistles of Paul and the other apostles, Dickson draws analogies between porters who open doors to visitors of noble families, and the introductions and "rudimentary Preparatives" all sciences have to fit and instruct learners for a further knowledge of things. "The explication of the Scripture should have its introduction too, and the Learned, and therefore Noble Family of Commentators, their Ostraries and Janitors. Now that I might become a Servant in this Family, and shew my officiousness to give entrance unto the Suters of the holy Ministry, whereby they may have access unto the richer Providores in God's Family, I have taken up my standing at the threshold of the house of God."[22]

---

[20]David Dickson, *A short explanation of the epistle of Pavl to the Hebrewes* (Aberdeen, 1635), ¶4-¶4v.

[21] David Dickson, *An exposition of all St. Pauls epistles, together with an explanation of those other epistles of the apostles, St. James, Peter, John & Jude: wherein the sense of every chapter and verse is analytically unfolded, and the text enlightened* (London, 1659), 172.

[22] Dickson, "To the Reader," *Exposition of Pauls Epistles,* A3v.

1.2 Survey of Scholarship

Discussions regarding continuity and discontinuity are ongoing and often overlapping in the secondary literature on Protestant scholasticism and federal theology. There is a persistent strain of scholarship that insists on making the Reformers' thinking, particularly Calvin's, the standard of Reformed orthodoxy. This tends to result in slighting or ignoring the varieties of vibrant thought flowing through Reformation theology and the developments that make up Reformed orthodoxy. Criticism of federal theology, with its identification with Protestant scholasticism, regularly goes hand in glove with objections to Protestant scholasticism.

1.2.1 Criticism of Protestant Scholasticism

Characterizations of Protestant scholasticism in general as speculative and aberrant frequently combine with a tendency to underrate the reliance of the Puritan divines on Scripture, and a failure to recognize the role of careful exegesis in the formulation of the doctrines they propounded. Arthur Cushman McGiffert contrasts the theological formulation of Protestant scholasticism with theological creativity of the Reformation. He pronounces the former "much more barren, and at the same time narrower and more oppressive" than the scholasticism of the Middle Ages and as "controlling most quarters" of Reformed and Lutheran theology until late in the seventeenth century.[23] Brian G. Armstrong characterizes Protestant scholasticism as a distinct orientation, more of "an attitude of life than a list of beliefs," distinguished by

---

[23]Arthur Cushman McGiffert, *Protestant Thought Before Kant* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1922), 141-154.

four main tendencies. The first is a reference to the theological approach asserting religious truth on the basis of deductive reasoning from given assumptions or principles, often using syllogisms, and related to medieval scholasticism. This is followed by granting reason at least an equal standing with faith, resulting in "jettisoning some authority of revelation," and the practice of deriving definitive statements from the scriptural record for use as a measure of one's orthodoxy. The fourth tendency is "the pronounced interest" in abstract, speculative thought principally regarding the doctrine of God.[24]

Jack B. Rogers and Donald K. McKim provide a summary of Reformed scholasticism where reason is given priority over faith, philosophical speculation is substituted for growth in the Christian life, and the emphasis is placed on a unified system of knowledge rather than piety.[25] James C. Livingston, similarly, classifying the seventeenth century as a period of Protestant scholasticism "not of evangelical enthusiasm, but of defining and systematizing sound doctrine," distinguishes Protestant orthodoxy as divisive, highly rationalistic in spirit and practice with theological truth arrived at by "logical deduction from certain first principles."[26] Dewey D. Wallace Jr., by contrast, comments on the conjunction in Reformed English theology of a practical piety and the use of a scholastic logical method, yet he still sums up scholastic theology by observing that "this theology was not only a function of the need to be precise and logically consistent for polemical purposes, but also continued to protect and enshrine,

---

[24]Brian G. Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 31-32, 263-269.

[25] Jack B. Rogers and Donald K. McKim, *The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible: An Historical Approach* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979), 185-188.

[26] James C. Livingston, *Modern Christian Thought*, 2nd ed. vol. 1, *The Enlightenment and the Nineteenth Century* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1988), 14-15.

however distortingly, a living and warmly personal religiosity by means of the strong outer walls of a grim fortress."[27]

Not infrequently in critiques of Protestant scholasticism, the impression is conveyed that theology can be characterized as either biblical or scholastic, overlooking the adept usage of the scholastic method employed for theological discussion and teaching by various theologians described as more biblically inclined. Examples of this division can be found in the scholarship of J. A. Dorner,[28] then later in that of Charles McCoy and J. Wayne Baker with regard to Cocceius. McCoy states that scholasticism "may be distinguished clearly by its reliance on philosophy and its characteristic method of deducing a system of thought from one or more fundamental principles" and further asserts that the biblical and federal character of Cocceius' theology are the basis of Cocceius' opposition to scholasticism.[29] Baker, also pitting Cocceius against Reformed scholasticism, charges Calvinistic scholastics with making predestination "a matter for philosophical speculation" and absolute double predestination a test of orthodoxy. He characterizes the new orthodoxy as "cold rationalism, its emphasis on the philosophical rather than the historical aspects of faith."[30] Recently Willem J. van Asselt and Brian J. Lee have demonstrated the oversimplification and inadequacy of

---

[27] Dewey D. Wallace, Jr., *Puritans and Predestination: Grace in English Protestant Theology, 1525-1695* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 55-61.

[28] J. A. Dorner, *History of Protestant Theology: Particularly in Germany Viewed according to its fundamental Movement and in Connection with the Religious, Moral and Intellectual Life,* trans. George Robson and Sophia Taylor, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1871), 31-36. See also Fred Ernst Stoeffler, *Rise of Evangelical Pietism* (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 114.

[29] Charles McCoy, "Johannes Cocceius: Federal Theologian," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 16 (1963): 365.

[30] J. Wayne Baker, *Heinrich Bullinger and the Covenant: The Other Reformed Tradition* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1980), 205-215.

such a generalization, offering Cocceius as a case in point.[31] Indeed, the scholarship as a whole has begun to reassess the theology of the seventeenth century.

1.2.2 Positive Assessments of Protestant Scholasticism

Recent scholarship has argued that the continuities and discontinuities found in the thinking of post-Reformation scholastics with their predecessors are indicative of a complex movement more varied in method than in the content of right doctrine and has located federal theology within this complex development of Reformed orthodoxy.[32] Proponents argue that Reformed theology was not static but a dynamic process whose developments in the two centuries following the Reformation reflect a living tradition, "characterized by a quest for alternative ways of doing theology, for the sake of meeting the demands of the time, while simultaneously guarding the continuity with the past."[33]

Richard A. Muller insists that an accurate definition of Protestant scholasticism should begin by asking how theologians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries understood the term *scholastic* and its association with their work. He finds the term

---

[31] Willem J. van Asselt, "Cocceius Anti-Scholasticus?" in *Reformation and Scholasticism: An Ecumenical Enterprise,* ed. Willem J. van Asselt and Eef Dekker (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 227-251; Brian J. Lee, "Biblical Exegesis, Federal Theology, and Johannes Cocceius: Developments in the Interpretation of Hebrews 7:1-10:18" (Ph.D. diss., Calvin Theological Seminary, 2003), 228-240.

[32] Lyle D. Bierma, *German Calvinism in the Confessional Age: The Covenant Theology of Caspar Olevianus* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996),162-168; R. Scott Clark, "Introduction," *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment,* ed. Carl R. Trueman and R. S. Clark (Paternoster Press: Carlisle, Cumbria, 1999), xi-xix; P. G. Ryken, "Scottish Reformed Scholasticism," in *Protestant Scholasticism,* 196-210; Lowell C. Green, "Melanchthon's Relation to Scholasticism," in *Protestant Scholasticism,* 273-288; Cornelius Augustijn, "Wittenberga contra Scholasticos," in *Reformation and Scholasticism,* 65-78; Willem van't Spijker, "Reformation and Scholasticism," in *Reformation and Scholasticism,* 79-98; Antoine Vos, "Scholasticism and Reformation," in *Reformation and Scholasticism,* 99-120; Sebastian Rehnman, "John Owen: A Reformed Scholastic at Oxford," in *Reformation and Scholasticism,* 181-204; van Asselt, "Cocceius Anti-Scholasticus?" *Reformation and Scholasticism,* 227-252; Trueman, "Puritan Theology as Historical Event: A Linguistic Approach to the Ecumenical Context," in *Reformation and Scholasticism,* 253-276; Won Taek Lim, "The Covenant Theology of Francis Roberts" (Ph.D. diss., Calvin Theological Seminary, 2000).

[33] van Asselt and Dekker, "Introduction," *Reformation and Scholasticism,* 34.

indicating to Protestant scholastics "both the setting and method for their theology with fairly careful distinction between the positive and negative connotations of the word." Positively, *scholastic* referred to their academic setting and method, classroom disputations and written works appropriate to that context, being "syntactically brief, clear and logical."[34] The requirements of theology of the schools to deal with the needs of a range of theological issues within developing Protestantism in the midst of revived Roman Catholicism and the variation of views in the Reformed community resulted in the employment and modification of traditional methods of doing theology. "To carry on an immediate struggle, one must be armed with the weapons already available. And these weapons were provided by a scholastic methodology and a set of presuppositions inherited from the late Middle Ages."[35]

1.2.3 Origins of Covenant Theology

The scholarship has offered various explanations for the origins of federal theology[36] and movement from the idea of covenant to covenant theology,[37] discussed

---

[34]Richard A. Muller, "The Problem of Protestant Scholasticism – A Review and Definition," in *Reformation and Scholasticism*, 53-54; *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, vol. 1, *The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 27-84.

[35] John W. Beardslee III, "Introduction" to *Reformed Dogmatics: J. Wollebius, G. Voetius, F. Turretin.* (New York: Oxford University, 1965), 8.

[36] Dorner, *History of Protestant Theology*, 36-44; Heinrich Heppe, *Geschichte des Pietismus und der Mystik in der Reformirten Kirche, Namentlich der Niederlande* (Leiden: Brill, 1879); George Park Fisher, *History of the Christian Doctrine* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911), 347-352; Gottlob Schrenk, *Gottesreich und Bund im älteren Protestantismus vornehmlich bei Johannes Cocceius* (Gütersloh, 1923); Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1939; reprint, Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1983), 502-505; Charles Fred Lincoln, "The Development of the Covenant Theory," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 100 (Jan. 1943) : 134-163; G. D. Henderson, "Idea of the Covenant in Scotland," *Evangelical Quarterly* 27 (1955): 2-14; Holmes Rolston III, *John Calvin versus the Westminster Confession* (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1972), 11-16; Douglas A. Stoute, "The Origin and Early Development of the Reformed Idea of the Covenant," (Ph.D. diss., Kings College, Cambridge, 1979); Andrew T. B. McGowan, "Federal Theology as a Theology of Grace," *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 2 (1984): 41-50; A. A. Woolsey, "Unity and Continuity in Covenantal Thought: A Study in the Reformed Tradition to the Westminster Assembly" (Ph.D. diss.,

University of Glasgow, 1988); Gavin John McGrath, "Puritans and the Human Will: Voluntarism within the Mid-Seventeenth Century English Puritanism as seen in the Works of Richard Baxter and John Owen" (Ph.D. diss., University of Durham, 1989), 148-176; John von Rohr, *The Covenant of Grace in Puritan Thought* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989); Donald MacLeod, "Covenant Theology," in *Dictionary of the Scottish Church History and Theology*, ed. Nigel M. de S. Cameron, et al. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), 214-218; Jan Rohls, *Reformed Confession: Theology from Zurich to Barmen*, trans. John Hoffmeyer (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1998), 23-25, 68-73, 86-90; Peter A. Lillbeck, *The Binding of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academics, 2001); Edward Vallance, "An 'Holy and Sacramental Paction': Federal Theology and the Solemn League and Covenant in England," *English Historical Review* (Feb 2001): 50-75; Willem J. van Asselt, *The Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 325-332; Sebastian Rehnman, *Divine Discourse: The Theological Methodology of John Owen* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 162-166; Felicity Heal, *Reformation in Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: University Press, 2003), 336-338.

[37] Geerhardus Vos, "The Doctrine of the Covenant in Reformed Theology," *Redemptive History and Biblical Interpretation: The Shorter Writings of Geerhardus Vos* (Phillipsburg, PA: P&R Publishing Co, 1980), 234-267; Miller, *New England Mind*, 502-505; Peter Y. De Jong, *The Covenant Idea in New England Theology 1620-1847* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1945), 15-62; John Murray, *The Covenant of Grace* (London: Tyndale Press, 1954), 1-32; F. W. Dillistone, *The Structure of Divine Society* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1951), 130-144; Everett H. Emerson, "Calvin and Covenant Theology," *Church History* 25 (1956) : 136-144; W. Adams Brown, "Covenant Theology," *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. 4, ed. James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959), 216-224; Kenneth Hagan, "From Testament to Covenant in the Early Sixteenth Century," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 3 (1972) : 1-14; Stoute, "Origin and Development," 244-249; William K. Stoever, *'A Faire and Easie Way to Heaven': Covenant Theology and Antinomianism in Early Massachusetts* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1978), 81-87; David Burke, "The Covenant in Puritan Thought," *Evangelism and the Reformed Faith* (Sydney: Christian Education Committee Presbyterian Church of Australia, 1980), 105-112; Mark W. Karlberg, "Reformed Interpretation of the Mosaic Covenant," *Westminster Theological Journal* 43, no. 1 (Fall, 1980) : 1-57; O. Palmer Robertson, *The Christ of the Covenants* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980), 4-14; Michael McGiffert, "William Tyndale's Conception of Covenant" *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 32, no.2 (April 1981) : 167-184 and "Grace and Works: The Rise and Division of Covenant Divinity in Elizabethan Puritanism," *Harvard Theological Review* 75, no. 4 (1982): 463-502; Stephen Strehle, *Calvinism, Federalism, and Scholasticism: A Study of the Reformed Doctrine of Covenant* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1988); Lyle D. Bierma, "The Role of Covenant Theology in Early Reformed Orthodoxy," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 21, no. 3 (1990) : 452-462; William Klempa, "The Concept of the Covenant in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Continental and British Reformed Theology," in *Major Themes in the Reformed Tradition*, ed. McKim (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 94-107; David N. J. Poole, *The History of the Covenant Concept from the Bible to Johannes Cloppenburg "De Foedere Dei"* (San Francisco: Mellon Research University Press, 1992);Yohahn Su, "The Contribution of Scottish Covenant Thought to the Discussions of the Westminster Assembly (1643-1648) and its Continuing Significance to the Marrow Controversy (1717-1723)" (Ph.D.diss., University of Glamorgan, 1993), 22-55; James B. Torrance, "The Concept of Federal Theology – Was Calvin a Federal Theologian?" in *Calvinus Sacrae Scripturae Professor* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 15-40; David George Mullan, *Scottish Puritanism 1590-1638* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 171-187; Gary D. Badcock, "The God of the Covenant," in *Covenant Theology: Contemporary Approaches*, ed. Mark J. Cartledge and David Mills (Carlisle, Cumbria: Paternoster Press, 2001), 67-83; Trevor Hart, "Poetry and Praxis," in *Covenant Theology: Contemporary Approaches*, 85-99; Scott A. Gilles, "Zwingli and the Origin of the Reformed Covenant," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 54, no. 1 (2001) : 21-50; Raymond A. Blacketer, "Arminius' Concept of Covenant in its Historical Context," *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis* 80, no. 2 (2000) : 193-220; Peter J. Wallace, "The Doctrine of the Covenant in the Elenctic Theology of Francis Turrentin," *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 13 (2002), 143-179.

the merits of a two-track covenant theology as either Bullinger- or Calvin-influenced, and deliberated whether the covenants should be classified as unilateral or bilateral.[38] Dillistone declares that in federal theology Puritans and Calvinists found "the necessary framework for a new theological and ecclesiastical system," naming Robert Pollock in Scotland, William Ames in England, James Ussher in Ireland, and Coccieus and Herman Witsius in Holland as writers of treatises on the covenant.[39]

Among those finding unwelcome novelty in the development of federal theology, David A. Weir points to a shift in emphasis from viewing Scripture as principally expounding grace to viewing it as declaring duty, exemplified by the contrast between the First Helvetic Confession of 1536 and the Larger Catechism approved by the Westminster Assembly. Weir attributes this shift in emphasis to federal theology, which should be understood as an explanation of the working out of the decrees of God.[40] Its most distinguishing characteristic, a prelapsarian covenant with Adam, arose, in Weir's view, from sixteenth-century predestinarian discussions, and was first proposed as a prelapsarian covenant in Eden by Ursinus in 1562. He names

---

[38] Leonard J. Trinterud, "The Origins of Puritanism," *Church History* 20 (1951) : 37-57; Jens Møller, "The Beginnings of Puritan Covenant Theology," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 14 (1963) : 46-67; McCoy, "Johannes Cocceius," 352-370 and with J. Wayne Baker, *The Fountainhead of Federalism* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 29-44; William Clebsch, *England's Earliest Protestants* 1520-1535 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), 199-203; John von Rohr, "Covenant and Assurance in Early English Puritanism," *Church History* 34 (1965) : 195-203; Richard Greaves, "The Origin and Development of English Covenant Thought," *The Historian* 21 (1968) : 21-35; J. Wayne Baker, "Heinrich Bullinger, the Covenant and the Reformed Tradition in Retrospect," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 29, no. 2 (1998) : 359-376; Richard A. Muller, "Covenant and Conscience in English Reformed Theology: Three Variations on a 17th Century Theme," *Westminster Theological Journal* 42 (Spring 1980) : 308-334; Lyle D. Bierma, "Federal Theology in the Sixteenth Century: Two Traditions?" *Westminster Theological Journal* 45 (1983): 304-321; Donald K. McKim, "William Perkins and the Theology of the Covenant," in *Studies of the Church in History,* ed. Horton Davies (Allison Park, PA: Pickwick Publications, 1983), 85-101.

[39] Dillistone, *Structure of Divine Society*, 132-138. (The text reads 'Pollock' in both chapter and bibliography.)

[40] David A. Weir, *Origins of the Federal Theology in Sixteenth-Century Reformation Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 155.

Ursinus as offering the first clear articulation by a Reformed theologian of federal theology, suggesting limited publication of the idea of the prelapsarian covenant may have accounted for its dormancy until more extensive circulation in 1584. Despite connecting Ursinus' consideration of this covenant with a reexamination of both translation and meaning of *berith,* and noting that no sixteenth-century commentary on Genesis 1-3 mentions this prelapsarian covenant until after 1590, Weir declares that federal theology seems to stem from "systematic, dogmatic thinking, not from exegetical study of Scripture."[41] Countering this view, Muller provides examples of the exegesis of Hosea by patristic and medieval commentators who did indeed find indications there of the prelapsarian covenant.[42]

Claims concerning the idea of covenant as a new doctrinal topic have also been answered. De Jong traces the line from the *Epistle to Barnabas*, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Augustine to Martin Luther and Philip Melanchthon, noting that the idea did not seem to have been developed in Lutheran theology.[43] Allowing differences between Reformed theologians and Luther, Heiko Oberman sketches a line of discussion on covenant from Augustine's thinking through theologians of the Middle Ages to Luther's thinking on the connection between covenant and grace.[44] Von Rohr also rejects claims of novelty regarding the use of the concept of covenant, particularly in Puritan thought in the later sixteenth and early half of the seventeenth centuries as a means of understanding the relationship between God and humanity. He states that

---

[41] Weir, *Origins of Federal Theology*, 1, 52-59, 155-158.

[42] Muller, *PRRD,* vol. 2, 436-441. Muller also notes the role of this exegetical tradition in the continuing work of translation and exegesis of seventeenth-century theologians in the formulation of the *foedus operum.*

[43] De Jong, *Covenant Idea*, 15-17.

[44] Heiko Oberman, *The Reformation: Roots and Ramifications,* trans. Andrew Colin Gow (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 91-114.

rather than being innovative, this recovery of the covenant theme found in both Old and New Testaments by the Swiss-German Reformed after a long period of scant usage through the Middle Ages indicates incorporation by Puritan theologians of both their ancient and more recent past.[45]

Stoeffler argues that traces of the federal idea are in Zwingli and that the development found in Cocceius is not a new thing, merely "a novel turn to theology of the covenant."[46] While granting that the Reformers held to a single covenant of grace and that their theological formulations did not include a covenant of works, and that the doctrine is not directly stated in Genesis 2, Ernst Kevan does not question the Puritan acceptance of a covenant of works, given that the doctrine arose, according to Puritan hermeneutics, as a "necessary and true inference."[47]

1.2.4 Dogmatic Critique

Detractors portray federal theology as being overwrought, rigid, a distortion of Reformed theology, departure from Scripture, and straying from Calvin's identification of a single covenant of grace. Furthermore, they claim there is confusion of the concept of covenant with contract that results in a denigration of the love of God for humanity and creates troubling characterizations of the Trinity.

M. M. Knappen refers to covenant theology as "the modification of the original high Calvinism" that stressed limitations on God's arbitrary character through divine

---

[45] von Rohr, *Covenant of Grace*, 1; Burke, "Covenant in Puritan Thought," 107-12; cf. Muller, "The Problem of Protestant Scholasticism," 61, in which the notion that covenantal topics, whether the *pactum salutis*, covenant of nature or works, or grace, are new doctrinally is rejected, arguing that they are as much the product "of exegetical considerations as out of any inner logic of system."

[46] Stoeffler, *Rise of Pietism*, 113-114.

[47] Ernst Kevan, *The Grace of Law* (London: Carey Kingsgate Press, Limited, 1963; reprint, Soli Deo Gloria, 1993), 111.

covenants or contracts whereby humanity could "establish a kind of claim on God" by maintaining the conditions of the bargains.[48] Lincoln considers the covenant theory to be a theoretical principle having "only a theoretical and not a Biblical existence."[49] Peter Toon portrays the federal theology of the Westminster Confession as contrived, the system "just a little too good to be true" and a departure from the teaching of Scripture.[50]

C. G. M'Crie declares that the federalism presented in the era of the Westminster Confession, expressly a doctrine of God's dealing with humanity specified by covenants, is "a departure from if not an advance upon all previous creeds of Christendom." He acknowledges evidence indicating acceptance of the federal scheme among well-regarded continental theologians and in treatises by some English Puritans, notably, John Preston, *Treatise on the New Covenant; or the Saint's Portion* in 1629; John Ball, *Treatise on the Covenant of Grace* published in 1645; and Edmund Fisher, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* in 1645. He finds that the greatest elaboration of federalism came after the Westminster Assembly from the Dutch, English and Scottish, naming Dutch theologians Cocceius and Witsius, and the English Stephen Charnock's *Discourse of God's being the author of Reconciliation*, and Owen's "controversial treatise," *Salus Electorum, Sanguis Jesu: or, the Death of Death in the Death of Christ.* However, M'Crie states federalism is presented in its most developed form and carried furthest in Dickson's *Sum of Saving Knowledge,* describing it as "objectionable in form and application" with "the blessedness of the mercy-seat in danger of being lost sight of

---

[48] M. M. Knappen, *Tudor Puritanism: A Chapter in the History of Idealism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), 395.

[49] Lincoln, "Development of Covenant Theory," 162-163.

[50] Peter Toon, *Puritans and Calvinism* (Swengel, PA: Reiner Publications, 1973), 59-60.

in the bargaining of the market-place," with "the simple story of salvation thrown into the crucible of the logic of the schools and it emerges in the form of a syllogism."[51]

Along similar lines M. Charles Bell states that "the entire covenantal scheme of Federal theology is itself a departure from Calvin's teaching, and leads directly to a less helpful view of the nature of grace, faith, the work of Christ and our union with him."[52] Others finding significantly unwelcome differences between Calvin and the Federalists are R. T. Kendal, Basil Hall, Joseph C. McLelland, Armstrong, Michael Jinkins, J. B. Torrance, and Cornelis Graafland.[53] Among those expressing doubt as to the sound basis for a prelapsarian covenant of works are Roger T. Beckwith, Rolston and Klempa. Beckwith declares the attempt to carry the idea of covenant to creation with the covenant of works and into eternity with a covenant within the Godhead too speculative, relegating the idea of such a covenant of works to reliance on "a doubtful interpretation of Hosea 6:7," and a covenant between God the Father and Son on "an

---

[51] C. G. M'Crie, *The Confessions of the Church of Scotland: Their Evolution in History* (Edinburgh, 1907), 66-73.

[52] M. Charles Bell, *Calvin and Scottish Theology: The Doctrine of the Assurance of Faith* (Edinburgh: Handsel Press, 1985), 8-11.

[53] R. T. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649* and "The Puritan Modification of Calvin's Theology" in *John Calvin*, ed. W. Stanford Reid (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982); Basil Hall, "Calvin Against the Calvinists," in *John Calvin*, ed. Gervase Duffield (Appleford: Sutton Courtney Press, 1966), 19-37; Joseph C. McLelland, "Covenant Theology: a re-evaluation" *Canadian Journal of Theology* 3: 3 (July 1957) : 182-188; Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy*; Michael Jinkins, "Theodore Beza: Continuity and Regression in the Reformed Tradition," *Evangelical Quarterly* 62:2 (1992) : 131-154; J. B. Torrance, "Concept of Federal Theology," 15-40; Cornelis Graafland, *Van Calvijn tot Comrie*. 3 vols. (Zoetermeer: Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, 1996). Jan van Vliet has provided a detailed analysis of Graafland's scholarship regarding the polarity of decree and covenant in the development of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Reformed orthodoxy and critique of Graafland's characterization of the development of covenant thought as "one long sad experience of theological antagonism and collision" between predestination and covenant. See "William Ames: Marrow of Theology and Piety of the Reformed Tradition" (Ph.D. diss., Westminster Theological Seminary, 2002), 109-110 and "Decretal Theology and the Development of Covenant Thought: An Assessment of Cornelis Graafland's Thesis with a Particular view to Federal Architects William Ames and Johannes Cocceius," *Westminster Theological Journal* 63 (2001) : 393-420.

equally doubtful interpretations of Luke 22:29 and Galatians 3:16f."[54] Rolston declares federal theology with its "myth of the primitive covenants with Adam has long since collapsed" and advocates abandoning federal theology to return to Calvin's grace and law.[55]

Delbert R. Hillers, while not addressing federal theology directly, finds the covenant idea to have developed far afield, concluding "to call what Jesus brought a covenant is like calling conversion circumcision, or like saying that one keeps the Passover with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. For Christians, the coming of the substance made shadows out of a rich array of Old Testament events, persons, and ideas, among them covenant."[56] He claims the covenant idea proved "especially troublesome" to interpreters of the Bible for several reasons that can be summed up as a lost sense "of how different and strange another age really can be."[57] Hillers is also critical of what he sees as further complications in Christian interpretation as the result of the Reformers dual zeal for God and reform of the church leading *ad fontes.* "The hardening of the arteries occurred quickly among the followers of the Reformers, and the seventeenth century saw among both Roman Catholics and Protestants more interest in polemics and dogmatics than in working out the implications of a humanistic, critical approach to the Bible."[58]

T. F. Torrance writes of the bifurcation in Scottish theology, placing Dickson in the federal Calvinism on the other side of the teaching of Calvin and those teaching "the

---

[54] Roger T. Beckwith, "The Unity and Diversity of God's Covenants," *Tyndale Bulletin* 38 (1987) : 99; Klempa, "Concept of the Covenant," 105.

[55] Rolston, *John Calvin*, 111, 116.

[56] Delbert R. Hillers, *Covenant: The History of a Biblical Idea* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), 188.

[57] Hillers, *Covenant*, 5-16.

[58] Hillers, *Covenant*, 17-18.

older Reformed theology" in "a more Knoxian and evangelical way." In his description of federal theology's teaching, "the place John Calvin gave to the biblical conception of the covenant was radically altered through being schematized to a framework of law and grace governed by a severely contractual notion of covenant, with a stress upon a primitive 'covenant of works,' resulting in a change in the Reformed understanding of the 'covenant of grace.'"[59] J. B. Torrance also charges federal theology with serious weaknesses, arguing that sufficient care was not taken theologically to distinguish varieties of *foedus,* which can mean both contract and covenant. He insists that the carelessness of federal theology results in a scheme where covenant is confused with contract, making God the Father a contract- rather than a covenant-God, and thereby presenting the obligations of grace as conditions of grace. Second, stating that the biblical order of law and grace are inverted in the federal scheme giving law priority over gospel, Torrance claims this yields "a logical corollary of federal Calvinism" not consistent with the New Testament that relates God as a contracting judge to all humanity by law and "only to some in grace."[60]

Other assessments challenge those views. Stoeffler offers Cocceius' federal theology as a more humanistic theology than that of Gomarus and Voetius in not "ruthlessly" emphasizing the doctrines of God's sovereignty and predestination and also claims that in Cocceius "the covenant of grace is based on God's eternal promise which finds its culmination in the work of Christ, completely undercutting the rigid legalism of

---

[59] T. F. Torrance, *Scottish Theology from John Knox to John McLeod Campbell* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), x, 63.

[60] J. B. Torrance, "The Covenant Concept in Scottish Theology and Politics and Its Legacy," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 34 (1981) : 228-240.

the older Calvinism."[61] Burke rejects characterization by some of the covenant theology found in William Perkins, Ames or the *Westminster Confession* as having a contract-like emphasis on human condition, finding instead the emphasis God-centered, unconditional in character, and not "spiritual commercialism."[62] McGowan responds to the critics and offers Thomas Boston as an example of federal theology as a theology of grace.[63] Wallace agrees that there was a focus among early English Protestants on keeping God's commands, but denies that the theology of grace was ever compromised by covenant theology.[64] Recently providing correction to the mischaracterization of federal theology as the primarily result of dogmatic exercises are Henry M. Knapp in the case of John Owen, and Lee on Cocceius.[65]

1.2.5 Development of the *Pactum Salutis* in Federal Theology

In tracing the development of federal theology in Reformed theology, although a few find at least intimations of intratrinitarian covenanting early in works by Johannes Oecolampadius, Caspar Olevianus,[66] or Calvin,[67] Cocceius and the Dutch contingent figure most prominently. Woolsey states that Oecolampadius used *foedus, pactum* and *testamentum* interchangeably throughout his writings and maintains a foreshadowing of

---

[61] Stoeffler, *Rise of Pietism*, 114.

[62] Burke, "Covenant in Puritan Thought," 108-111.

[63] McGown, "Federal Theology," 41-49.

[64] Wallace, *Puritans and Predestination*, 10, 197-198.

[65] Henry M. Knapp, "Understanding the Mind of God: John Owen and Seventeenth-Century Exegetical Methodology" (Ph.D. diss., Calvin Theological Seminary, 2002); Lee, "Biblical Exegesis, Federal Theology."

[66] Heppe, *Geschichte des Pietismus*. 210; Schrenk, *Gottesreich und Bund*, 79; Bierma, *German Calvinism*, 107-112.

[67] Lillback, *Binding of God*, 212-214.

the later idea of a *pactum salutis* is found in Oecolampadius' language of an eternal covenant between God and his people based on a "*pactum cum filio sua.*"[68]

Bierma argues that the idea of a pre-temporal *pactum salutis* is present in Olevianus' theology though lacking the fully developed terminology, and even without Olevianus explicitly identifying the *sponsio* as a *foedus,* "clear covenant overtones" in the *sponsio* concept in the significance of Christ as *sponsor*, eternal *sponsio* or *fideiussio* are evident. He calls attention to a single occasion where Olevianus does call the bilateral redemptive agreement between the Father and Son a *pactum*, noting that although the Son is usually portrayed as a submissive participant to the Father's decree to save, "the sequence is bound together by a mutual resolve, ... a perfect harmony of wills."[69]

Several, including Dorner, Fisher, and Emerson, grant the idea of the eternal covenant in theologians prior to Cocceius, but place the precise and comprehensive form of the idea with Cocceius.[70] Lincoln identifies Cocceius as the father of federal theology and the covenant theory, with Witsius responsible for reaching the idea of the covenant of grace back into eternity.[71] De Jong cites Jacob Arminius' mention of the agreement between the Father and Son in connection with Christ's priesthood and finds the idea also in Johannes Cloppenburg and Ames.[72] Bertus Loonstra places the first mention of a covenant between the Father and Son concerning the Son's priesthood in

---

[68] Woolsey, "Unity and Continuity," vol. 2, 261-262.

[69] Bierma, *German Calvinism,* 107-112. Bierma acknowledges his views differ somewhat on the subject from those of Heppe, Schrenk and Ritschl. Heppe, *Geschichte des Pietismus,* 210-211, finds Cocceius' eternal pact between the Father and Son already expounded by Olevianus.

[70] Dorner, *History of Protestant Theology*, 36-38; Fisher, *History of Christian Doctrine*, 348; Emerson, "Calvin and Covenant Theology," 137.

[71] Lincoln, "Development of the Covenant Theory," 154, 162.

[72] De Jong, *Covenant Idea*, 28-29, 31.

Arminius' writing, with three particular developments later by Cloppenburg, Cocceius and Dickson.[73]

Calling the Westminster Confession the classical expression of the system, Dillistone states that *The Sum of Saving Knowledge*, with no mention made of its authorship, is the seventeenth century's formative expression of the conception of covenant. He finds the latter text with the covenant of redemption shows more clearly than the Confession that "the Covenant of Grace was in its essence a Covenant between the Father and the Son."[74] Although he considers federal theology to have been fully developed in Britain at least by 1645 in Ball's *Treatise of the Covenant of Grace,* McLelland also attributes "the classic utterance of the new system of federal theology" to Cocceius' *Summa Doctrinae de Foedere et Testamentum Dei* in 1648 as a follow-on to the Calvinist-Arminian debate continued by John Cameron and Moyse Amyraut.[75]

Regarding the continental beginnings of covenant theology, von Rohr names Cameron as an influence on and predecessor of Amyraut, providing a "not insignificant connection between his outlook and that of British Puritanism itself," but does not make a link between Cameron and the understanding among British Puritans of the origin of the covenant of grace in "a kind of meta-history located solely in the life of God." Von Rohr's discussion of British Puritans does not include Dickson, but mentions Peter Buckeley's *Gospel-Covenant,* published in 1646, and Robert Harris' *New Covenant*, dated 1632. He observes Bulkeley's understanding of the whole Trinity involved in the work of redemption and the significance of the promises of the Father and Son in the

---

[73] Bertus Loonstra, *Verkiezing – Verzoening – Verbond: beschrijving en beoordeling van de leer het "pactum salutis" in de gereformeerde theologie* ('s- Gravenhage: Boekencentrum, 1990), 381.

[74] Dillistone, *Structure of Divine Society*, 132-138.

[75] McLelland, "Covenant Theology," 184-185.

covenant of redemption "augmented by those of the Spirit." Von Rohr notes as well that Harris dealt with the intratrinitarian covenant as the source of the covenant of grace.[76]

Strehle also comments on the connection between Cameron and Amyraut, viewing Amyraut as a faithful disciple explaining Cameron's threefold federal system without the intratrinitarian covenant. The *pactum salutis* is briefly mentioned as part of Cocceius' covenant theology without attributing its origin to Cocceius.[77] In his section on English Reformed Federalism and under the Westminster Confession Strehle also indicates that although the two-covenant system of works and grace is found among most theologians, the *pactum salutis* could be found in many, "such as Richard Baxter, Dickson, and Samuel Rutherford."[78] Toon discusses the eternal transactions and operations of the Trinity from the view of the Hyper-Calvinists, a group later than Dickson who falls into Toon's category of High Calvinism. Toon states that while some Hyper-Calvinists thought of the covenant of redemption as one with the covenant of grace, the followers of Baxter considered these to be two covenants.[79]

Poole's presentation of the development of covenant among British theologians to 1649 does not include Dickson although *Sum of Saving Knowledge* is included in an appendix as a text "probably contemporaneous" and frequently published with the Westminster Confession. He states that the origins and exact date of the work, to say

---

[76] von Rohr, *Covenant of Grace*, 196, 43-51, 84-85.

[77] Strehle, *Calvinism, Federalism and Scholasticism*, 206-207, 227-228.

[78] Strehle, *Calvinism, Federalism and Scholasticism*, 335-336.

[79] Peter Toon, *The Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism in English NonConformity 1687-1765* (London: The Olive Tree, 1967), 111-117. Toon defines High Calvinism as "the result of the hardening of Calvinism by Beza, and many Reformed theologians after him. From about the year 1600 High Calvinism was, in many cases, combined with, or even tempered by, Federal Theology." Hyper-Calvinism is "the system of theology or a system of doctrines of God, man, and grace, which was framed to exalt the honor and glory of God and did so at the expense of minimizing the moral and spiritual responsibilities of sinners to God" (ibid., 143-144).

nothing of its author, are obscure. Poole also credits Cloppenburg as having set out a succinct synopsis of the federal system prior to Cocceius.[80]

Woolsey identifies discussion of three covenants by the time the Westminster Confession was being drawn up: of works between God and Adam, of grace between God and elect sinner, and the pre-temporal covenant between God and the Son. He notes that although the Westminster divines were fully aware of the threefold view it was not expounded by Ussher, Ball, or in the Confession.[81] Stoever finds consideration of the nature of the covenant of grace in debates between sectaries during the Commonwealth and Protectorate and among less radical conformists from the early 1650s into the 1690s but locates the emergence of an intratrinitarian covenant termed "covenant of redemption" in further elaborations of the covenant-motif by the "orthodox" divines.[82]

In covenant formulations of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries where the covenant of redemption is noted, the writings of Owen, Baxter, Cocceius and Witsius are frequently given with acknowledgements of the likelihood of some earlier formulation but without mention of Dickson.[83] Witsius, in his text on the covenants

---

[80] Poole, *History of Covenant Concept*, 147-182, 269-272.

[81] Woolsey, "Unity and Continuity," 66; Lim, "Covenant Theology," 332-333.

[82] Stoever, *'Faire and Easie Way,'* 187.

[83] Heinrich Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, ed. Ernst Bizer (London, 1950), 374-390; Brown, "Covenant Theology," 216-224; C. J. Sommerville, "Conversion versus the Early Puritan Covenant of Grace," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 44 (S 1966) : 178-97; Vos, "Doctrine of the Covenant," 238-253; De Jong, *Covenant Idea,* 29; Miller, *New England Mind*, 502-505; Beardslee, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 20; Klempa, "Concept of Covenant," 94-107; von Rohr, *Covenant of Grace*, 43-45, 84-85; Rohls, *Reformed Confessions*; J. I. Packer, "Introduction: On Covenant Theology," *The Economy of the Covenants between God & Man,* by Herman Witsius, trans. William Crookshank, vol. 1 (London, 1822; reprint, Kingsburg, CA: den Dulk Christian Foundation, 1990), n.p.; Jeong Koo Jeon, *Covenant Theology: John Murray's (1898-1975) and Meredith G. Kline's (1922-) Response to the Historical Development of Federal Theology in Reformed Thought* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1999), 23-64; Badcock, "God of the Covenant," 70; Paul Ling-Ji Chang, *Thomas Goodwin (1600-1680) On the Christian Life* (Holmdel, NJ: Beautiful Gate Ministries, 2001), 91-102; Rehnman, *Divine Discourse*, 168-169.

published first in 1677, denies the idea is a new or late invention as "the doctrine of the covenant between the Father and the Son is so expressly delivered in scripture" and acknowledges prior references to it by Arminius, Amesius, Gomarus, Cloppenberg, Voetius, Essenius and Owen.[84]

1.2.6 Various Assessments of the *Pactum Salutis*

Critics of federal theology in general insist that the addition of an intratrinitarian covenant between God the Father and God the Son is another example of discontinuity and a dubious portrayal of the Trinity that seems to border on tritheism, if not be tritheistic. They protest the sense of excessive anthropomorphism with regard to trinitarian involvement comparable to a human contract as crassly mercantile, and declare that the resulting relationship between God and humanity must be dispassionately legal, mercantile and conditional.

A variety of objections to the idea of a special arrangement among the Trinity as a freely accepted and legally binding mutual obligation appears in Karl Barth's *Church Dogmatics.* Assertions include that: there is no need for such an arrangement distinguished from the being of God to establish the unity of God's mercy and righteousness to humanity; the arrangement introduces a dualism into the Godhead; and a relationship within the Godhead alone is propounded that does not adequately reflect the basis for the relationship between God and humanity in the person of the God who will be very God and very man in time.[85] Dillistone also voices criticism of what he considers the description of the Trinity in terms of contract rather than status, with the

---

[84] Witsius, *Economy of the covenants,* vol.1, 176-177.

[85] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 4.1, ed. G. W. Bromiley & T. F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), 65-66; Torrance, *Scottish Theology*, 64-66.

emphasis on a definite mutual commitment instead of mutual love in the fully developed system of covenant theology.[86]

Edward Morris allows that the covenant of redemption has warrant in Scripture, but thinks serious error exists in "attributing to this celestial transaction the technicalities of a human compact" as found in *The Sum of Saving Knowledge*.[87] Bell voices his disapproval of the third conditional covenant with "the nearly tritheistic depictions of the first and second persons of the Trinity in their discussions of the terms of the bargain of redemption" and finds the attempt to express federal theology in the prevailing commercial language unacceptable.[88]

Robertson refers to "a sense of artificiality that flavors the effort to structure" the mysteries of God's eternal counsels in covenantal terms and finds the feasibility of a covenant among the members of the Trinity unlikely, sympathies shared by Beckwith.[89] Strehle is also dubious about the value of a covenant that he considers to have emerged in the seventeenth century involving "intertrinitarian negotiations in behalf of our redemption" and questions the propriety of both the language and notion of salvation based on a deal. "A covenant should be that which reveals God's actions, not determines them."[90] Jinkins writes of the covenant of redemption as "the unsatisfactory speculative solution to the problem posed by seventeenth-century Federal theologians who would devise a pre-incarnational, intra-trinitarian contract, the so-called 'Covenant

---

[86] Dillistone, *Structure of Divine Society*, 141.
[87] Edward Morris, *Theology of the Westminster Symbols* (Columbus, OH, 1900), 358-360.
[88] Bell, *Calvin and Scottish Theology*, 104-107, 199.
[89] Robertson, *Christ in the Covenants*, 53-54; Beckwith, "Unity and Diversity," 99.
[90] Strehle, *Calvinism, Federalism and Scholasticism*, 387-388.

of Redemption,' whereby the Father and Son would come to a legal, contractual agreement that the Son would carry out the eternal decree to save the elect."[91]

A mixed defense is offered by David Wai-Sing Wong. On the one hand he argues compatibility and harmony between Calvin's theology and the covenant theology of the Puritans. On the other hand he claims that Owen, the "most mature covenant theologian" and the Puritan Wong considers the best representative of Calvin's theology, presents contractual love in the covenant of redemption in such a way that the Father's immediate and unconditional love in the covenant of grace with humanity is eclipsed, and overemphasizes both the concept of Christ as surety and the continuity of the Old and New Testaments.[92]

Unhampered by such confusion, a recent counter to the unfavorable assessment of the *pactum salutis* by J. Mark Beach addresses the secondary scholarship in his examination of Witsius' treatment of the doctrine. He argues that the doctrine is not a departure from the formulations by preceding generations of Reformed theologians of the doctrine of grace.[93]

1.2.7 Influence of Social History

Coming from the perspective of historical sociology, David Zaret's discussion of the contractual aspect of covenant theology and Puritanism is much more involved. He proposes that "organizational pressures," identified as "the social and institutional

---

[91] Jinkins, "Theodore Beza," 141. Jinkins identifies this problem as Beza's distinguishing between the role of Christ as the second person of the Trinity and as fulfillment of the decree of predestination.

[92] David Wai-Sing Wong, "The Covenant Theology of John Owen" (Ph.D. diss., Westminster Theological Seminary, 1998), 7-9, 13.

[93] J. Mark Beach, "The Doctrine of the Pactum Salutis in the Covenant Theology of Herman Witsius," *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 13 (2002) : 101-142.

setting" prompting Puritan clerics to both adopt and emend continental antecedents and biblical references in the creation of a theological system, are as important to understanding the origins and developments of Puritan covenant theology as intellectual precedents.[94] Although Dickson does not enter into Zaret's study, the sociological perspective should be addressed because this detailed argument ties into objections found in other secondary literature where the mercantile language and commercial cast of federal theology are considered unbiblical.

Zaret states that Puritan clerics first drew elaborate distinctions between the covenants of works and grace to refute heresy and meet radical challenges to their authority and doctrine by antinomian forms of lay initiatives intent on justifying religious experiences having no need of an ordained clergy. After the 1590s the markedly Puritan form of covenant theology placed the emphasis on bilateral rather than unilateral aspects of the covenant, and on pastoral writings and edification to set the framework for "types of lay initiative that did not openly flout clerical authority."[95] If "scholastic" is to be defined as "intellectually accessible to only a few," Zaret declares that the Puritan variety of covenant theology, despite having been developed by clerics as an intellectually consistent doctrine, was primarily a practical theology intended for the laity. As such, the doctrine manifested a "personal search for spiritual assurance" rather than a formal discipline. He explains the resulting theology as an exchange of duties and obligations by all believers "for God's covenanted promises of

---

[94] David Zaret, *Heavenly Contract: Ideology and Organization in Pre-Revolutionary Puritanism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 5.

[95] Zaret. *Heavenly Contract*, 140-149.

salvation" with clerical responsibility for proclaiming the conditions of the contract and individual believers responsible for satisfying the conditions.[96]

Zaret also claims that clerics were not consistent in the use of precise terminology. While covenant and contract were viewed as interchangeable and technical differences between them "glossed over," he points to an overstatement of the contrast between contracts as bilateral agreements, and wills as unilateral decrees to explain grace in the heavenly contract. Zaret proposes that the clerics taught a bilateral covenantal relationship rather than unilateral because it was more suited to "popular consumption" and offered a solution to "balancing a deterministic world view with the need for activism by individual members." He draws four similarities between the heavenly and worldly covenants: each requires mutual consent of the parties; consent to the contract must be informed; a contract stands only if its conditions are met; and there is formal equality of God and believers in the covenant of grace.[97]

Zaret quotes from Puritan sources to state the dimension of grace in the heavenly contract whereby God "qualified the principle of *quid pro quo*" by ending the requirement of obedience to the law in exchange for salvation and "accepted sincere intent and faith in place of outward obedience." Human free will and conditional salvation are tied into his characterization of clerics advising their congregations of the heavenly contract made by God in Christ that "required their consent to its condition of faith," and should they not agree to the condition of becoming God's people, they would be damned.[98]

---

[96] Zaret, *Heavenly Contract*, 141-142.
[97] Zaret, *Heavenly Contract*, 153, 168-169.
[98] Zaret, *Heavenly Contract*, 154-157.

While granting that the Old Testament does contain references to God's covenants with Abraham and Israel, and that these may be based on Hittite treaties, Zaret advances the explanation that the idea of a heavenly contract is "chiefly economic in inspiration" with "connotations of exchange and reciprocity."[99] He supposes Puritans derived their covenant theology from principles and practices of secular contracts pertaining to a market rationality, the contractarian idiom being "intellectually accessible to the Puritan laity." "Puritan clerics identified a normative structure in the worldly use of contracts which they urged their followers to apply to their spiritual life," and within this context "God became less remote and unknowable" as a heavenly contractor.[100]

There are a series of deficiencies in Zaret's interesting arguments. The supposed shift from the earlier concept of covenant as a unilateral heavenly testament that did not resemble a commercial contractual transaction to the contractarian idiom borrowed from economic life that Zaret proposes cannot be so documented and slights the importance of coming to an understanding of both divine and human dimensions of the covenant of grace. While conflicts of authority and organization in the British church over the roles of the monarch and bishops that made for serious social, political and ecclesiastical turmoil are not to be discounted,[101] and Dickson's participation in these

---

[99] Zaret, *Heavenly Contract*, 4.

[100] Zaret, *Heavenly Contract*, 163-167.

[101] See Walter H. Makey, *The Church of the Covenant 1637-1651: Revolution and Social Change in Scotland* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers LTD, 1979); Stevenson, "Radical Party in the Kirk," 135-165; John Morrill, ed., *The Scottish National Covenant in its British Context* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 1990); Margaret Steele, "The 'Politick Christian': The Theological Background to the National Covenant," *Scottish National Covenant in its British Context*, 31-67; Su, "Contributions of Scottish Covenant Thought," 44-57, 68-135; Heal, *Reformation in Britain*, 334-349; Nathan Holsteen, Popularization of Federal Theology: Conscience and Covenant in the Theology of David Dickson (1583-1663) and James Durham (1622-1658" (Ph.D. diss., University of Aberdeen, 1996), 71-82.

matters for the Scottish church was both notable and documented,[102] Zaret focuses overmuch on human agendas. Additionally, the on-going concern over Arminianism among seventeenth-century Puritans is not factored in. Scholasticism is mischaracterized, missing the significance of scholastic theology as the academic version of a theology that consistently (even in the academy) argued its practical nature. Usefulness of language that is readily identifiable with the culture is not to be denied, but Zaret's focusing strictly on the social origins of the contractarian language seriously underestimates the significance of Scripture as the foundation of both the concept and language of covenant theology. In general, he misunderstands the covenant theology of the seventeenth century, and fails to indicate awareness of the *pactum salutis* or its role in covenant theology.

1.3 State of Dickson Scholarship

1.3.1 Appraisals of Dickson and Scottish Theology

Dickson's contemporaries were well aware of his thinking and work on federal theology. Among Rutherford's correspondence are two letters to Dickson in which Rutherford makes reference to some unspecified work by Dickson on the covenant. The first letter, number twenty-one, is undated, appearing in a sequence of letters dated

---

[102] Makey, *Church of the Covenant*, 16-27; Calderwood, *History of Kirk*, 530-542; Holsteen, "Popularization of Federal Theology," 90-94, 102-104, concerning Dickson's opposition to subscription to the Articles of Perth as commanded by the king in 1622. See also the exchange of opinions, the first dated July 1638, between Dickson, Alexander Henderson and Andrew Cant, and some ministers and professors of divinity in Aberdeen followed by a second, more detailed correspondence by Dickson and Henderson to the same group. *Generall demands concerning the late covenant; propounded by the ministers and professors of divinity in Aberdene: to some reverend brethren, who came hither to recommend the late covenant to them, and to those who are committed to their charge: together with the answeres of those reverend brethren to the said demands: as also the replyes of the foresaid ministers & professors to their answeres* (reprint, Aberdene, 1638). *The answeres of some brethren of the ministerie, to the replyes of the ministers and professors of divinitie in Aberdene; concerning the late covenant* (Aberdene, 1638).

1637. Rutherford writes, "I have gone through yours upon the *Covenant*, it hath edified my soul and refreshed an hungry man, I judge it sharp, sweet, quick and profound: take me at my word, I fear it get no lodging in Scotland."[103] The second letter, number ninety-two, is dated March 7, 1637, from Aberdeen. "I shall goe through yours upon the *Covenant* at leisure, & write to you my minde thereanet; & anent the *Arminian Contract betwixt the father & the son.* I beseech you set to, to goe through scripture: yours on the Hebrews is in great request with all who would be acquaint with Christ's Testament."[104]

Robert Baillie, at the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland with Dickson in 1638, conveys a strong sense of his own concern for the errors before the church, naming Arminianism as one such error, "a deep, large and intricate subject." In his entry of December third Baillie records, "At the entrie Mr. D. Dick made a long harangue of Arminianisme. I admired the witt of the man, and his dexterous expression: he refuted all these errors in a new way of his own, as some years agoe he had conceaved it in a number of sermons on the new covenant."[105]

References to Dickson's work appear in several treatises, among them: *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* by Fisher, published in 1645; John Arrowsmith's *Armilla Catechetica* in 1659; and John Broun's from 1695. In his letter to the reader, Fisher acknowledges his indebtedness to others. "I have gathered much of it out of godly and approved Authors, and yet have therein wronged no man, for I have given each man [his] own againe in the margent; some part of it I have gathered out of Manuscripts

---

[103] Samuel Rutherford, *Joshua Redivivus, or Mr. Rutherford's Letters, Divided in two Parts* (1644), 53. (n.b. The use of italics in all quotations in this paper is in keeping with the practice of the authors of those texts.)

[104] Rutherford, *Joshua Redivivus*, 189.

[105] Robert Baillie, *The Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie, A.M.*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: 1841), 149-150.

which [had] by me," citing Dickson's Hebrews commentary four times.[106] Arrowsmith writes of the covenant of redemption in connection with election and the eternal decree and directs the reader to Dickson's commentary on Titus 1.2.[107] Broun arrays arguments for and against universal redemption in *The Life of Justification Opened: Or, A Treatise grounded upon Gal. 2.11* and states that what he provides with brevity on the intratrinitarian covenantal relationship is fully explicated and confirmed by Dickson in *Therapeutica Sacra* and Rutherford's text on the covenant.[108]

Lecturing on the theology and theologians of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Scotland, Walker states that Dickson's contemporaries always spoke of him with high respect, whether as a minister at Irvine where his labors were "very largely blessed," professor, or author. However, "the true glory of Dickson was his devotion to biblical studies. He set his heart on a Scotch commentary of the Scripture."[109] Having noted Dickson's English commentaries on *Matthew* and *Hebrews*, and the circulation of his commentary on *Psalms* at the end of the nineteenth century, Walker commends the exegetical tact evident in Dickson's brief annotations in Latin on all the epistles.

> "Nor are Dickson and his fellow-interpreters to be despised. They want the scholarship of the present day, though they were scholars. But if they wanted our scholarship, they were more than our equals in theology. Some think that a disadvantage; I must disagree with them. If there be a theology in the Bible, — and the fact that theologies have always risen out of it, when men have been its earnest students, is sufficient proof of that, — it must be against all the laws of scientific

---

[106] Edward Fisher, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* (London, 1645), 31, 44, 49, 66. Fisher's clearest presentation of the "mutuall agreement made betwixt God and Christ" cites Hooker on Isa 53:10 and Ames's *Medulla*, Psa. 89:19, Goodwyn, Ainsworth, Psa. 40, Heb. 7:22 and Isa. 49:8.

[107] John Arrowsmith, *Armilla Catechetica* (Cambridge: John Field, 1659), 283-284.

[108] John Broun, *The life of justification opened, or a treatise grounded upon Gal. 2.11 wherein the orthodox doctrine of justification by faith, and imputation of Christ's righteousness, is clearly expounded, solidly confirmed, & learnedly vindicated from the various objections of its adversaries. Whereunto are subjoined some arguments against universal redemption* (n.p., 1695), 530-531.

[109] Walker, *Theology and Theologians*, 15-16.

> progress, not to say common sense, that you should go to its interpretation without the aid of the best thought that has been already bestowed on it."[110]

Typically those giving consideration to Dickson's work provide only brief treatment. John T. McNeill places Dickson among the good men "of sound scholarship and excellent preaching talent," describing him in a biographical sketch as "one of the finest spirits of the Scottish Church," minister of Irvine where "his spiritual counsel was sought by many distressed souls," and author of commentaries and treatises, among them *Therapeutica Sacra*, "the product of his experience in dealing with cases of conscience."[111] MacLeod names Cocceius and Witsius as representatives of covenant theology in its fully developed form, noting the widespread acceptance of covenant theology in Scotland is illustrated by *Sum of Saving Knowledge*, and Dickson's emphasis of the covenant of redemption in *Therapeutica Sacra.*[112] Steele places Dickson in the trajectory of federal theology in her primary discussion of the National Covenant.[113]

Karlberg includes Dickson in addressing the Reformed interpretation of the Mosaic covenant, stating that Dickson may be the first of "the English federalists to give full expression to the so-called misinterpretation view of the Mosaic Covenant" wherein "carnal Israelites perverted the law by turning it into a means of works-salvation."[114] Strehle names Dickson in a footnote among those adding a compact

---

[110]Walker, *Theology and Theologians*, 15-16.

[111] John T. McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1954), 307-308.

[112] MacLeod, "Covenant Theology," 214-215.

[113] Steele, "'Politick Christian'," 48.

[114]Karlberg, "Reformed Interpretation," 29-30.

between the Father and Son, as does Armstrong in his discussion of Amyraut's theology with a reference to Dickson's 1638 address to the General Assembly.[115]

Mention of Dickson also occurs briefly in Nicholas Tyacke's study of the response of the Scottish church to the rise of English Arminianism, and by Stevenson's article on the radical party in the Scottish church with Dickson and Rutherford named as "perhaps, the best known ministers of their day, both being revered for their learning and their long histories of opposition to the bishops."[116] While Dickson's role in church history is considered by both authors, his federal theology is not an issue for either.

1.3.2 Scholarship Concerning Dickson and the *Pactum Salutis*

Dickson's theology draws fire from those who find federal theology aberrant as well as those with an appreciation for the theology of the Reformed scholastics. Objections are made but not limited to what is perceived as overt scholasticism, variance from the teaching of Scripture, distortion of Reformed theology, inappropriate reliance on commercial language and contractual relationships, indiscriminate use of contract and covenant, the preeminence of law, and the denigration of God's grace. In addition to the transgressions noted already, there is the matter of limited atonement in Dickson's teaching.

While not recoiling from the concept of the *pactum salutis* as an illustrative mode and allowing that there is some warrant in Scripture for presenting the truth of the joint concern and scheme of the Father and Son from eternity for the salvation of

---

[115]Strehle, *Calvinism, Federalism and Scholasticism*, 336; Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy*, 141-142.

[116] Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism c. 1590-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 230-236; Stevenson, "Radical Party in the Kirk," 135-165.

humanity under the form of a mutual covenant, Morris finds serious error in attempting to analyze the divine transaction with undo specificity and attributing human technicalities to it. He calls attention to *The Sum of Saving Knowledge,* Head II, and identifies as a problem the agreement "becoming a legal or commercial contract, transacted as between two independent parties." The second error identified by Morris occurs when the contracting members of agreement are limited to the first and second persons of the Trinity, ignoring the involvement of the Holy Spirit, although this criticism is not charged to *The Sum of Saving of Knowledge.*[117]

M'Crie refers to "detailed descriptions of redemption as a bargain entered into by the First and Second Persons of the Trinity, in which conditions were laid down, promises held out, and pledges given." This tends to result in reducing "salvation to a mercantile arrangement between God and the sinner" and the gospel to a legal compact between "two independent parties, and so far as right or status is concerned, two equal parties."[118]

Even as Macleod calls *Therapeutica Sacra* Dickson's most important work, he thinks Dickson's commentaries on books of Scripture may have been his most valuable work to the church. He remarks that Dickson's handling of federal theology shows "the vogue it has already attained to as a systematic way of setting forth the leading teachings of the Word of God in regard to sin and salvation." Citing the exposition on the covenant scheme given by Dickson at the General Assembly in 1638, Macleod declares that "it was his method before the star of Cocceius has risen above the

---

[117] Morris, *Theology of Westminster Symbols*, 358-61. See also Brown, "Covenant Theology," 221, who finds in *Sum of Saving Knowledge* the language of bargain and sale "in its baldest form."

[118] M'Crie, *Confessions of the Church*, 72-73.

horizon," and that Scottish covenant theology could never be considered as Cocceianism.[119]

Henderson places Dickson in the trajectory of the intratrinitarian covenant as one of the authors that Fisher acknowledged drawing from for his treatise, recognizing as well the distinction made between the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace in the Dickson-Durham work that often accompanied the Westminster Confession in print, *The Sum of Saving Knowledge*. Henderson names three who earlier distinguished between the two contracts, Musculus, Budaeus, and William Cowper, and states that Dickson discussed three covenants, redemption, works and grace, in *Therapeutica Sacra*.[120]

T. F. Torrance comments on "an element of abstraction" that comes with making distinction between the covenants of redemption and grace, and explains that in *Sum of Saving Knowledge* the "dynamic content of the Gospel was fused with the contractual means of putting into effect the eternal decrees held to issue from the Council of the Trinity."[121]

---

[119]Macleod, *Scottish Theology*, 83-85. He further notes Spurgeon's high praise of Dickson in his *Commenting and Commentaries*. Macleod gives 1648 as the publication date for the Latin edition of *Therapeutica Sacra*, noting publication of Cocceius' *Summa* in the same year.

[120] Henderson, "Idea of Covenant in Scotland," 10. See also G. D. Henderson, *The Burning Bush*, (Edinburgh: St. Andrew Press, 1957), 70, and *Religious Life in Seventeenth Century Scotland* (Cambridge: University Press, 1937), 94. Henderson mentions Dickson dealing with three covenants in *Therapeutica Sacra* in 1637 though it was not published until 1656. Rutherford's letters might provide a time frame for the existence of a manuscript, but it seems a bit of a stretch without additional information to clarify what text Rutherford was referring to. Also giving the date of 1648 are Bell, *Calvin and Scottish Theology*, 92, noting Macleod's date without additional comment; and Loonstra, *Verkiezing – Verzoening – Verbond*, 99. Publication date of 1656 is given by: Henderson, *Dictionary of National Biography*, 947; MacLeod, "Covenant Theology," 214; Grant, *Story of the University*, 281. Date of publication is not given by Howie or Wodrow, "*Short Account of Dickson*," 11-12. The first English edition of *Therapeutica Sacra* is commonly given as 1664.

[121] T. F. Torrance, *School of Faith: the catechisms of the Reformed Church* (London: J. Clarke, 1959), lxiii-lxv, lxxviii-lxxix and *Scottish Theology*, 111-112.

Bell faults Dickson for holding to a double decree of election and reprobation that limits the gift of saving faith to the elect, and for using the common mercantile terminology of the day that "led people, quite naturally, to conceive of God's covenants in terms of their own bilateral, conditional, social contracts, thereby distorting the nature of grace, which is free and unconditional, and of faith, which is God's gift and not man's work or condition in the bargain." Bell also reads the covenant of grace in Dickson's use as a bilateral agreement made by God with those who consent to the condition of the covenant.[122]

Loonstra distinguishes three types of the *pactum salutis,* identifies Dickson with one type, and places him solidly in the trajectory of the formulation of the doctrine. Dating publication of *Therapeutica Sacra* to the same year as Cocceius' *Summa,* he declares the doctrine to have been particularly developed by Dickson and Cocceius and comments on the notable difference he finds in the doctrine presented by these two. As described by Loonstra, Cocceius' *foedus redemptionis* includes election, incarnation and redemption in the decree, while the scope of Dickson's *pactum salutis*, "a purchase and a sale," is more limited and held to be characteristic of the Scottish type of *pactum salutis.*[123]

Loonstra claims that Dickson places distance between the decrees of incarnation and mediatorship and the covenant of redemption (*pactum salutis*), and that Dickson does so without supplying justification or further explanation for this distance. Loonstra argues that the parties making the determination of the purchase of the elect are the triune God and the God to be incarnate (*Deus incarnadus*), such that there is distance

---

[122] Bell, *Calvin and Scottish Theology*, 10, 92-94, 104-107, 199.

[123] Loonstra, *Verkiezing –Verzoening –Verbond*, 99-100. Loonstra asserts the third type stems from Cloppenburg.

between incarnation and the work of mediatorship and atonement (plaatsbekleding), and supposes that for Dickson the *pactum salutis* refers to the elect, not the whole work of redemption or to the decree itself.[124] This is a curious notion as the language of the *pactum salutis* actually makes little sense unless it parallels the eternal decree as a covenantal explanation of the same divine willing: the *pactum salutis* is the testamentary covenant whose inheritors are the elect.[125]

Graafland includes Dickson in a section on the Westminster Confession and the covenant of the mediator, acknowledges his collaboration with Durham on *Sum of Saving Knowledge* in which the covenant of redemption is distinguished from the covenant of grace, and in a later section on the *pactum salutis* notes the similarity of Dickson's three covenant system to that of Coccieus.[126]

Holsteen precedes examination of *Therapeutica Sacra* with a more detailed look at Dickson that includes a biographical sketch and summaries of his extant published works and theology. Commenting that for some Dickson's "real genius is in his relatively early exposition of a fully developed federal theology," Holsteen credits Dickson, in company with Durham, with being two of the most influential divines engaged in taking federal theology from academia to the pews.[127] Appraising Dickson's theology as "indisputably federal in nature" with emphasis on God's justice rather than any other attribute, he concludes that the covenant of redemption is the focus of Dickson's covenant system with the intratrinitarian covenant establishing the

---

[124] Loonstra, *Verkiezing – Verzoening – Verbond*, 100-101.

[125] See Willem J. van Asselt, "*Expromissio or Fideiussio*? A Seventeenth-Century Theological Debate Between Voetians and Cocceians about the Nature of Christ's Suretyship in Salvation History," *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 14 (2003): 39-45; Beach, "Doctrine of the *Pactum Salutis*," 125-130.

[126] Graafland, *Van Calvijn Tot Comrie*, vol. 4, 251-252, 276; *Van Calvijn Tot Comrie*, vol. 6, 284.

[127] Holsteen, "Popularization of Federal Theology," 101, 88.

mechanism and providing the means of bringing salvation to the elect only. Law is determined to be the dominant principle of Dickson's federal scheme and a defining characteristic of this scheme is that "the blessing of salvation flows not primarily from God's grace, but from contractual obligation." All aspects of the believer's relationship with Christ are based on a "purely judicial footing" because of the nature of the covenant system.[128] Holsteen grants little space for the love of God in this agreement wherein the Father acts as the seller of the elect to the buyer, Christ, for the price of the blood of God. Allowing that the grace of God is behind salvation, Holsteen finds it "hidden behind the impenetrable mystery of the divine decree of election," making the face of God that humanity sees "of the law."

Mullan takes account of Dickson in his discussion of the developing covenant theology in Scotland, citing Dickson's work in the 1630s in which reference to the covenant of redemption occurs prior to his lengthy treatment of the subject in *Therapeutica Sacra*.[129] In his presentation of covenant and covenant theology, Mullan counters several prominent critics. Of J. B. Torrance's "theologically tendentious argument" regarding the attempted clarification of the concept of covenant as distinguished from contract and its role in Scottish theology, Mullan argues both the concept of covenant itself and its treatment by Scottish theologians are more complex than Torrance allows.[130] He also challenges the accuracy of viewing federal theology in Scotland's pulpits as falling from the purity of Calvin's thinking. "It may be that in time federal theology would encourage a formulation of theology which might have become rather legalistic, but to attribute such to Rutherford and others in the 1630s simply will

---

[128] Holsteen, "Popularization of Federal Theology," 140-143, 186-189.
[129] Mullan, *Scottish Puritanism*, 199.
[130] Mullan, *Scottish Puritanism*, 174-176.

not do. What one finds in Scotland is similar to that which has been found in English and New England expressions of the same religious impulse…an experiential religion focused upon Christ *pro me* and the responses of the heart."[131]

Marc A. Clauson includes Dickson in his study of Scottish hermeneutical method, noting that Dickson was a covenant theologian and considered one of the preeminent biblical scholars in Scotland during the period of Protestant Scholasticism. Clauson explains Dickson's method by looking at his commentary on Psalms, observing that Dickson's method is "thoroughly pre-critical" and reflects his belief that Scripture is a sufficient commentary on itself.[132] Although acknowledging that Dickson teaches covenant theology and utilizes it as one of his hermeneutical presuppositions, Clauson does not examine the specifics of Dickson's federal theology.

1.4 Prospectus

1.4.1 Outline

The previous scholarship, albeit not vast, has, in general, correctly positioned Dickson among the writers of his time and noticed his importance to Scottish theology. While acknowledging his influence in the counsel of the Scottish church and his long service, and in some cases even expressing appreciation for his commentaries, sermons and other major works, it has often misinterpreted his theology. This misinterpretation, as found in Bell, Morris and Loonstra, has been guided by twentieth-century dogmatic critiques of seventeenth-century thought—either from the perspective of neo-orthodox

---

[131] Mullan, *Scottish Puritanism,* 195, contra J. B. Torrance, Marshall, Stevenson, von Rohr, Emerson, Møller, Miller, Rosalind Mitchison.

[132] Marc A. Clauson, *A Study of Scottish Hermeneutical Method from John Knox to the Early Twentieth Century from Christian to Secular* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2004), 106-116.

distaste for covenant as a form of legalism or from the perspective of the "Calvin against the Calvinists" critiques of predestination and limited atonement. Although the large-scale work of reappraisal of seventeenth-century Reformed theology and Protestant scholasticism has been undertaken,[133] there is need to extend this correction to Dickson.

The trajectory of the development of covenant theology in its early Reformation formulations having already been well scrutinized, there is no need to dwell further on those matters or the accompanying scholarship in this study. However, there are issues that do call for attention. There is the perception that federal theology has deviated from orthodoxy by exchanging the love of God in salvation history for a conditional contract. The terminology and definitions of federal theology offered by seventeenth-century authors have not been compared for similarities and differences. While there is some recognition of Dickson's writings on the *pactum salutis* and accompanying critiques, the scholarship has not adequately considered his contributions to the development of federal theology nor located him in the trajectory within the context of his near antecedents and contemporaries. Additionally, the range of Dickson's teaching on the *pactum salutis* has not been taken into consideration nor have his significant contributions to the practical use of the doctrine been detailed. This dissertation will attend to these deficiencies and demonstrate that Dickson's federal theology is within the boundaries of the developing orthodoxy of international Reformed theology.

Accordingly, this study will trace the trajectory of the formulation of the *pactum salutis* in federal theology, primarily among seventeenth-century British theologians as

---

[133] See the collections of articles in *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment; Reformation and Scholasticism: An Ecumenical Enterprise;* cf. Richard A. Muller, *After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

found in primary texts in which divine covenants are considered, including catechisms, dictionaries, sermons, systems of divinity, commentaries and treatises on various subjects. It will distinguish between mention and formulation of the *pactum salutis,* the basis of the doctrine, and what Scriptures are cited to provoke the advance of or to support the doctrine. As the doctrine of federal theology was in the process of development, the terminology, definitions, and nature of the covenants, and related aspects of justification and righteousness will be explored by surveying works by Dickson's near predecessors, primarily British and some continental.

Chapter 2 will identify various approaches to the topic of divine covenants, the role of translation issues in the development of the doctrine of the *pactum salutis*, and trace the process of establishing stable definitions from the late sixteenth century through the seventeenth. Relevant documents will be examined for discussions of *berith* and *diatheke,* definitions of covenant, how divine covenants were understood and their number and terminology, and the employment of legal language, particularly with regard to the relationships between covenant and the doctrine of justification. Chapter 3 will focus on the methodology, terminology and definitions of Dickson's federal theology. Chapter 4 will detail Dickson's teaching on the topic circa 1630s to 1660s as found in his collected writings, from the brief mention in his early sermons and a concise public presentation of his formulation in 1638, to his fullest explanation. Particular issues raised in the secondary scholarship regarding Dickson's work will also be addressed. Works pertaining to the *pactum salutis* by other British writers from the 1650s to the end of the seventeenth century will be discussed in chapter 5 to place Dickson's teaching in the context of the continuation of the developing doctrine and

note his influence. The final chapter will draw together the findings of this study and assess Dickson's role in the development and establishment of the doctrine of the *pactum salutis*.

1.4.2 Sources

To Dickson's thinking, a sound understanding of God's covenants is foundational for the well-being of the church, right teaching and refuting errors. Since some of Dickson's works appeared first in Latin for the classroom with translations into English by himself or others to make those texts more accessible to the laity, his terminology in Latin and English will be examined to determine the consistency of his teaching of the federal theology and its significance. In eliciting his contributions to the development of federal theology, particularly his formulation of the *pactum salutis*, the following works by Dickson will be examined: *Select Practical Writings of David Dickson;* Speech before the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, 1638; *Expositio analytica omnium apostolicarvm epistolarvm: seu brevis introductio ad pleniores commentarios, in vsum studiosorum theologiae*, 1645 and the English translation, *An exposition of all st. Pauls epistles, together with an explanation of those other epistles of the apostles, st. James, Peter, John & Jude: wherein the sense of every chapter and verse is analytically unfolded and the text enlightened,* 1659; *A brief exposition of the evangel of Jesus Christ according to Matthew*, 1647; *The summe of saving knowledge: with practical use thereof,* 1650; *Truths victory over error*, ca. 1650; *A brief explication of the other fifty psalmes, from ps. 50 to ps. 100,* 1653; *A brief explication of the first fifty psalms*, 1655; and *Therapeutica sacra, seu, de curandis casibus conscientiae circa*

regenerationem per foederum divinorum prudentem applicationem, 1656 and *Therapeutica sacra; shewing briefly the method of healing the diseases of the conscience, concerning regeneration,* 1664.

Works by Dickson's near predecessors, contemporaries and successors both continental and British, from the 1580s to1695 in which divine covenants are discussed will also be considered in placing his work in the trajectory of the development of federal theology. These documents will include catechisms, confessions, dictionaries, sermons, systems of divinity, commentaries and treatises.

CHAPTER 2
TRAJECTORIES OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE THREE COVENANT MODEL

2.1 Introduction

Discussions of divine covenants and their significance can readily be found in various genres of theological works including *loci communes*, *medullae*, treatises, sermons, dictionaries and commentaries in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, showing that the development of Reformed doctrine did not occur in isolation, but as a collaborative effort working out the covenant concept and language in different contexts. Also, as the number of works focusing on the topic of the divine covenants increased, it was not uncharacteristic for consideration of covenants in British circles both in Britain and New England to be set within the context of other practical issues, often related to matters of the conscience, justification, or the roles of law and gospel.[1]

Publication of an increasing number of detailed works in the seventeenth century treating of divine covenants in Reformed communities suggests a rising perception of the value and necessity of coming to a more standard understanding of specific divine covenants. Accordingly, as this study will show, no small amount of time, thought, or ink went into working through Scripture to understand the nature of these divine covenants, distinguishing the covenants of grace and works, providing suitable definitions, and developing technical terminology adequate for purposes of scholastic discussion, teaching and preaching. From such exegesis another divine covenant was identified, resulting in the formulation of the doctrine of the *pactum salutis* and its relationship to the covenants of works and grace.

---

[1]Vos, "Doctrine of the Covenant," 234-267; Kevan, *Grace of Law*, 34-40; von Rohr, *Covenant of Grace*; Wallace. *Puritans and Predestination*; Packer, *Among God's Giants*, 64-104; Mullan, *Scottish Puritanism*, 171-207; cf. Muller, "Covenant and Conscience," 308-334.

2.1.1 Variant Approaches – One, Two, Three Covenants

Categorizations of authors in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries as espousing either a one, two or three covenant system arising from the subject matter of a particular work can be overly simplistic and misleading for several reasons, not the least of which is determining the identity of the covenants or collection of covenants in any system from a theological community that had not as yet come to agreement on standards of language or definition. Regarding the process to define the covenant of works that brought several possibilities into consideration, McGiffert suggests an early stage in which the covenant of works was identified as a post-lapsarian covenant made at Sinai.[2] Closer to the beginnings of the development of federal theology not only was the terminology fluid, but a writer like Olevianus could suggest as many as seven distinct covenants.[3] Therefore, determination of the covenants constituting discussions of covenant systems must include identifying the technical terms used by each author for the particular covenants and their definitions.

One can not assume that a three-covenant system entails a *pactum salutis* in tandem with the covenants of works and grace. A variety of systems having three covenants was offered in the seventeenth century, with combinations that referred to the covenants of works, Old Testament and New Testament; creation, works and grace; and three between God and humanity identified by Lucas Trelcatius Jr. and Nicholas Byfield as the general covenant made with all creatures concerning their preservation from the universal deluge, the covenant of works or old covenant "made with all

---

[2] Michael McGiffert, "The Perkinsian Moment of Federal Theology," *Calvin Theological Journal* 29, no. 1 (1994) : 120-125.

[3] Bierma, *German Calvinism*, 107-140.

mankind in Paradise" and the covenant of grace made by means of the mediator.[4] Cameron mentioned the pactions of the sort God made with Noah after the flood and identified three hypothetical covenants with promises and stipulations as the covenant of nature, the old or subservient covenant and the covenant of grace.[5] In the last quarter of the seventeenth century Francis Turretin, in *Institutio Theologiae Elencticae,* named Amyraut as having similarly expounded a *foedus naturale*, *foedus legale* and *foedus gratiae* and noted differences between Amyraut's view and the common opinion of the orthodox.[6]

Nor should the stated intention of an author to expound a certain covenant or covenants be taken as an utterly definitive indication of the extent of that writer's view of the number or interrelationship of various divine covenants. An author stating his intention to focus on a single covenant between God and humanity might only have addressed the covenant established with sinners, not rejected the possibility of a prior covenant made with Adam in the state of innocency or the concept of an eternal intratrinitarian covenant. Having recognized that not all of God's covenants with humanity touch on matters of eternal salvation, writers like Trelcatius and Byfield

---

[4] Nicholas Byfield, *The patterne of wholesome words; or a collection of such truths as are of necessity to be believed unto salvation, separated out of the body of all theologie, made euident by infallible and plaine proofs of scripture. And withal, the seuerall vses such principles are put to, are abundantly shewed* (London, 1618), 197-198.

[5] John Cameron, *Certain theses or, positions of the learned John Cameron, concerning the three-fold covenant of God with man,* 353-356, 365-366. Cameron's *Tractates* was translated by Samuel Bolton and published annexed to Bolton's work, *The trve bovnds of Christian freedome: or a treatise wherein the rights of the law are vindicated, the liberties of grace maintained, and the severall late opinions against the law are examined and confuted* (London, 1645).

[6] Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, vol. 2, trans. George Musgrave Giger (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1994), 262. Turretin denied that the Sinaitic legal covenant made by Moses with the people of Israel constituted a third distinct covenant from the covenants of works and grace. With regard to the threefold covenant, Turretin stated that although Cameron was the first to introduce an opinion of this scheme, Amyraut embraced and labored to prove it in "*Theses theologicae de tribus foederibus divinis*" published in 1664.

mentioned God's covenant with Noah as pertaining to temporal matters and then directed attention to covenants that do have eternal significance.

2.1.2 Assessments of Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Translation Issues

Investigations into the development and use of federal theology's technical terminology have yielded diverse assessments and conclusions in the secondary literature. Murray sketches the use of *diatheke* by writers of the early Reformation and development of covenant theology, and argues that the occasional use of *diatheke* as testament with the effective operation of a last will can not be reconciled with the concept of covenant as a mutual contract.[7] Clebsch comments on Tyndale's reliance on Greek and Hebrew texts rather than the Vulgate for his English translations. He observes Tyndale's change in translation of Genesis from 1530 to 1534, noting in the latter *berith* was rendered *covenant* with the 1530 alternatives of *appointment*, *testament* and *bond* discarded.[8] Weir, looking at lexical evidence of the sixteenth century, finds *berith* in the Old Testament translated *pactum* or *foedus* with little attention given to *testamentum* as a viable option and observes that most lexicographers indicated that a covenant with God involves law and precepts acting as conditions, citing Jeremiah 31.31-34. He, nonetheless, rightly states that while *berith* did not include any sense of testament or last will, *diatheke* did.[9] In tracing the development of covenant terminology regarding the precise significance of *berith* and *diatheke* through the exegesis of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the impact of the return *ad fontes* on exegetical work and theological debate, Lee finds growing agreement of

---

[7] Murray, *Covenant of Grace*, 4-7, 30.
[8] Clebsch, *England's Earliest Protestants*, 183, 201.
[9] Weir, *Origins of Federal Theology*, 50-56.

diatheke for conveying the sense using both *foedus* and *testamentum,* grounded in part on Theodore Beza's philological work on the New Testament. Lacking evidence of Beza's careful distinction of *foedus* as the technical term of God's eternal evangelical covenant in sixteenth-century English covenant discourse, Lee suggests this may indicate the loss of technical precision resulting from movement of the discussion to the English language.[10]

Translation issues are also related to the increased interest in covenant as its own doctrinal *locus*. Muller argues that the exegetical method pioneered by Melanchthon and Martin Bucer where topics were generated by exegesis combined with a series of subtle shifts that occurred in the exegesis of the New Testament in the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries. He demonstrates that it is not surprising that in the shift from exegesis based principally on the Vulgate to exegesis from Greek texts of the New Testament, translation issues of *berith, foedus, pactum*, and *diatheke* arose that provoked consideration of the implications of such texts as Luke 22:29 and Galatians 3:16-17. Of interest was the relationship of the *diatheke* given to Abraham and his seed, identified as Christ, and a covenant that had been previously confirmed in eternity in Christ.[11]

Muller points to the significance of Beza's exegesis of Luke 22:29 regarding *diatheke* and testament where in the Vulgate *diatithemi* was translated as *dispono*, conveying no covenantal implications as Christ, speaking to his disciples, tells them that he appoints them to a kingdom as he had been appointed by his Father. He states that

---

[10] Lee, "Biblical Exegesis, Federal Theology," 52, 60. The full discussion is found from 15-85. See also Brian J. Lee, "The Covenant Terminology of Johannes Cocceius: The Use of *Foedus, Pactum*, and *Testamentum* in a Mature Federal Theologian," *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 14 (2003) : 11-36.

[11] Richard A. Muller, "Toward the *Pactum Salutis*: Locating the Origins of a Concept," (paper presented at Johannes Cocceius 400th Anniversary Symposium, Utrecht University, June 4, 2003), 7-14.

Beza, deeming this a flawed translation, rendered *diatithemi* instead as *paciscor*, "to make a covenant," so that Christ makes a covenant in the present, as his Father had made a covenant with him in the past. Although mentioning that Beza was specifically addressing the discussion of the ministerial functions and rank by the Apostles in the text, Muller notes the translation brings together *diatheke* and the testamentary relationship whereby Christ's followers become heirs to his kingdom through his death.[12]

As examples of the acceptance of this translation shift, Muller provides the reflections of Piscator and Diodati on the text of Luke 22:29. He also points to the impact of the text based on Beza's philology, known as the Geneva New Testament, regarding Galatians 3 and the covenant, and comments on discussion of Galatians 3:16-17 by Perkins, Rollock, Diodati and Dickson.[13]

In addition, as noted in the preceding chapter, the terminology and concepts of federal theology have been deemed unsatisfactory or unbiblical by various writers because of what has been charged as the carelessness of seventeenth-century writers to distinguish covenant from contract.[14] However, there are others within the scholarly

---

[12] Muller, "Toward the *Pactum Salutis,*" 8-9.

[13] Muller, "Toward the *Pactum Salutis*," 9-13.

[14] Dillistone, *Structure of Divine Society*, 134, 136-137. Dillistone acknowledges the Westminster divines and *The Sum of Saving Knowledge* found no real distinction between covenant and contract, but chooses to define covenant as "to promise oneself without explicit conditions" and contract as "to promise a gift upon explicit conditions"; J.B. Torrance, "Covenant Concept," 228-229, 239-240. Although allowing that in Scots law covenant and contract mean the same, Torrance defines covenant and foedus as "a promise binding two people or two parties to love one another unconditionally" with a contract as "a legal relationship in which two people or two parties bind themselves together on mutual conditions to effect some future result"; Poole, *History of the Covenant Concept*, 25-27, 45-47, 254. Poole charges a mistranslation of *berith* as *syntheke*, which carries the sense of an agreement or bilateral covenant, along with *foedus* and *pactum* rather than *diatheke,* has resulted in the confusion that allows covenant to be viewed as mutually obligating. He insists that *berith* is always unilateral, whether as promise, oath or command and can not be transformed into a contract. Poole considers the legal language of contract and conditions not synonymous with a true bilateral covenant. See also Zaret, *Heavenly Contract*, 168-169.

community who do not concur with the sweeping generalization that federal theology can be characterized by a disregard for careful use of language.[15]

2.2 Seventeenth-Century Definitions of Covenant

Entries in one late sixteenth-century dictionary and a few dictionaries from the seventeenth century provide a sample of the efforts to define covenant and may aid in determining what connections were understood then between covenant and contract. John Baret's quadruple dictionary published in 1580 of English, Latin, Greek and French terms shows considerable linkage of the terminology. Under *bargain* is found: "to indent or make couenaunt," *pacisor, ceris, pactus,* συντίθεμαι (agree or arrange); a couenant: a bargayne: an agreement, *pactum*, and συνθήκη. The entry cross-references *covenant* and *contract*, and under *contract* instructs one to see covenant or bargain; the entry *couenant* gives *paciscor* (to make a bargain), *depaciscor* (to agree or come to terms on) and διαλογιζομαι (to discuss) as to make a covenant, noting as synonyms bargain or contract, *conuentio* (agreement or compact), *pactum* and *pactio*.[16] Baret does not include *testament* as an entry.

Early in the seventeenth century Robert Cawdry's *Table Alphabeticall*, intended to promote understanding of words borrowed from other languages that might be troublesome when encountered in Scripture or sermons, does not have entries for

---

[15] Murray, *Covenant of Grace*, 5-8; Beach, "Doctrine of the *Pactum Salutis*," 121-126; Mullan, *Scottish Puritanism*, 171-207; McKim, "Perkins and Theology," 85-96. McKim points out that Zwingli's argument that the Biblical terms *testamentum, pactum, foedus* were used interchangeably; notes Bullinger's stress of the use of *testamentum* as *pactum* or covenant (*foedus*) in Genesis 15 & 17; and Perkins' view of covenant as compact.

[16] John Baret, *An alvearie, or quadruple dictionarie, containing foure sundrie tongues: namelie English, Latine, Greeke, and French* (1580), entries 163-164, 1195, 1355-1360.

bargain or covenant, but defines *contract* as "a bargaine, or couenant," *paction* as a covenanting or bargaining, and *testament* as last will.[17]

Thomas Wilson, in his dictionary of words found in Scripture, provides greater detail, giving under *covenant* both *berith,* as the word is called in Hebrew having "the signification of friendly parting, and of explayning the conditions of agreement," and *diatheke,* called by the apostles in Greek, "a testamental Couenant, or disposing of things by will at ones death." Further explanation includes: the aspect of covenant as a league or agreement made by God with man for eternal salvation; identification of the covenant of works as a league made with angels and Adam before their fall; the covenant of grace as an agreement concerning salvation in "diuers respects and circumstances, being one in substance"; the old covenant given to Moses and the Jews; and the new covenant made with Christian people and published clearly by Christ. His second definition of *counsel* gives "an action of the whole and holy Trinity, deliberating and determining before the world, of all things which should bee, or not be; especially of the saluation of Angels and men, Eph. 1.11. *He worketh all things after the counsell of his owne will.* This counsel dependeth vpon Gods will, as the supreame and onely moouing cause, and not vpon foreseene faith or workes. Rom. 9:11,18. Also a worke decreed in Gods counsel. Esay. 5.19."[18]

---

[17] Robert Cawdry, A *table alphabeticall, containing and teaching the true writing and vnderstanding of hard vsuall English wordes, borrowed from the Hebrew, Greeke, Latine, or French, etc. with the interpretation thereof by plaine English words, gathered for the benefit and help of all vnskilled persons. whereby they may the more easily and better understand many hard English words, which they shall heare or read in scriptures, sermons, or elsewhere, and also be made able to vse the same aptly themselues* (London, 1609), fol. C2, C3, G4, I4.

[18] Thomas Wilson, *A christian dictionary. Opening the signification of the chiefe words dispersed generally through holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, tending to increase christian knowledge. Wherein is annexed, a particular dictionary for the revelation of S. Iohn, for the canticles or song of Solomon, for the epistle to the Hebrewes,* 2nd ed. (London, 1616), 91-93, 94.

Wilson also defines *testament* as: what is commonly known as man's will; "an appointment of agreement between God and Man, touching free saluation by faith in Christ. Mat. 26.28"; and the book or tables in which the testament is written, 2 Corinthians 3:14. The third includes explanation of Two Testaments, representing "the two Couenants of grace and works."[19] Included in this dictionary are three other particular dictionaries, one for the book of Hebrews in which the term *couenant of saluation* appears under the entry, Blood of Testament.[20]

Edward Leigh's delineations of divine covenants come in a variety of genres, including commentaries, treatise, and *loci communes*. Published in 1639, his *Critica Sacra* offers philological and theological observations on Greek words in the New Testament, identifies *diatheke* with *berith,* stating that it signifies both covenant and testament depending on the context, and directs the reader to his earlier treatise on divine promises with definitions of both civil and sacred covenants. In this earlier treatise *covenant* had been described as: a solemn contract between at least two parties who bind themselves to each other in certain articles for mutual peace and comfort; a league or agreement that God makes with humanity regarding salvation; and a pact.[21]

A philological commentary published in 1652 by Leigh declares that as the three chief faculties are "Law, Phisick and Divinity," every Englishman should strive

---

[19] Wilson, *Christian Dictionary*, 596-597. "*Two testaments. Two types, and figures to shadow foorth in some sort, and to represent the two couenants of grace and works. Gal.4.24.*"

[20] Wilson, *Dictionary of the epistle vnto the Hebrevves*, 855.

[21] Edward Leigh, *Critica sacra: or, philologicall and theologicall observations, upon all the Greek words of the New Testament, in order alphabeticall: wherein usually the etymon of the word is given, its force and emphasis observed, and the severall acceptions of it in Scripture, and versions by exposition are set down* (London, 1639),143, and *A treatise of the divine promises. In five books. In the first, a general description of their nature, excellency, right, use, properties, and the persons to whom they belong. In the foure last, a declaration of the covenant itself, the bundle and body of all the promises, and the special promises likewise, or others, both temporall, spirituall and eternall*, 2nd ed. (London, 1641),111-117.

for competency of knowledge in each, for one "may be a bad Christian notwithstanding this knowledge; but he can not be a good Christian without it." *Contract* is defined as a bargain or covenant between two parties with *covenant* as an agreement between two parties made by deed, written and sealed.[22]

Definitions that accord with regularly appearing usage of imputation and justification can also be found in depth in some dictionaries listed above. Among those providing substantive treatments, Wilson's definitions for the following also include presentation and refutation of erroneous opinions: *imputation*, "an action of God, freely accounting the righteousnesse of Christ to be his righteousnes who beleeues in Christ, Rom. 4.3,4"; *justifie*, "to absolue and acquit a sinner which belieues, from the guilt and punishment of all his sinnes, and to pronounce him righteous before the tribunal seate of God, through the imputation of Christs righteousnesse to his faith. In this sense we are saide to be Iustified by Faith, and not by workes, Ro. 3.28." The first citation for *justification*, Romans 5:16, 18 informs, "Heere iustification is verie strictly vsed." It refers to "an action of God, freely, of his owne mercy and fauour, absolving a beleeuing sinner from the whole curse of his sins, and accounting him perfectly Iust in his sight, vnto eternal life in heauen." Lest there be any confusion Wilson adds, "It is not knowne in all Scripture, to be vsed for the infusion of the habite of justice into the soule of the elect, at their first conuersion, of vniust to make them habitually iust."[23]

In his system of doctrine, Byfield devotes twenty-one pages to justification, "one of the degrees of grace in this life" and specifies that his focus is on being justified

---

[22]Edward Leigh, *A philologicall commentary, or, an illustration of the most obvious and usefull words in the law. With their distinctions and diverse acceptations, as they are found as well in reports ancient and modern, as in records, and memorials never printed: usefull for all young students of the law* (London, 1652), 45, 48-49.

[23] Wilson, *Christian Dictionary*, 292-293, 310-312, 313-315.

before God, "for by workes wee may bee iustified before men, of which iustification the Apostle James speakes in his second Chapter, &c." However, "the righteousness that makes vs iust, is in Jesus Christ, being made ours by imputation."[24]

2.3 British and Continental Predecessors of Dickson ca. 1585-1638

Discourses on the divine covenants becoming known as the covenants of works and grace, stating redemption as the work of the Trinity and sometimes delineating the roles of each person but without language to designate an intratrinitarian covenant, occur in a variety of works circulating in British theological circles and published in Britain in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Continuations of both the extended nature of the Reformed theologians' community and the practice of theology in concert with one another, as evidenced by the awareness and exchange of scholarship and scholars from the Continent to Britain, have been well documented.[25] Bierma and Henderson have shown how the influence of Olevianus' view of covenants was transmitted to Scottish theology through Robert Howie, who played a leading role in introducing covenant theology to Scotland having studied under Olevianus, to Rollock

---

[24]Byfield, *Patterne of Wholesome Words*, 364-382.

[25]Vos, "Doctrine of the Covenant," 236-239; Henderson, *Religious Life* ,71-75; Knappen, *Tudor Puritanism,* 4-5; Lincoln, "Development of the Covenant," 34-163; Dillistone, *Structure of Divine Society*, 130-144; Møller, "Beginnings of Puritan Covenant," 46-67; Beardslee, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 3-11; Hall, "Calvin Against," 19-37; Kevan, *Grace of Law*, 38-40; John H. Leith, *Assembly at Westminster: Reformed Theology in the Making* (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1973), 37; Gordon Donaldson, *The Scottish Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), 29, 76; Robert Letham, "Foedus Operum: Some Factors Accounting for its Development" *Sixteenth Century Journal* 21, no. 3 (1983) : 457-467; Stoeffler, *Rise of Evangelical Pietism,* 9-13; Karlberg, "Reformed Interpretation," 20-29; Torrance, "Concept of Federal Theology," 23-26; Stoever, "*Faire and Easie Way"* 15-16; Stoute, "Origin and Early Development," 244-248; Keith L. Sprunger, *Dutch Puritanism: A History of the English and Scottish Churches of the Netherlands in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 1982), 3-12; Wallace, *Puritans and Predestination,* 1-8; McGiffert, "Grace and Works,"463-475; McKim, "William Perkins," 85-96; Zaret, *Heavenly Contract*, 128-162; Steele, "'Politick Christian'," 47-48; McCoy & Baker, *Fountainhead of Federalism*, 29-44; Klempa, "Concept of the Covenant," 94-107; Ryken, "Scottish Reformed Scholasticism," 196-210; Rehnman, "John Owen," 181-203; Trueman, "Puritan Theology," 253-275; Heal, *Reformation in Britain*, 334-349;cf. Muller, *PRRD*, vol. 1, 27-84.

through his friendship with Howie.[26] Among theologians on the Continent whose works contributed to the developing understanding of divine covenants and who preceded Dickson were Amandus Polanus,[27] Jerome Zanchi, Gulielmus Bucanus, Lucas Trelcatius Jr., Johannes Wollebius, Jacob Arminius,[28] John Cameron and Moyse Amyraut.[29] For convenience the British predecessors will be discussed first, followed by continental predecessors.

---

[26] Bierma, *German Calvinism*, 175-176; Henderson, "Idea of the Covenant," 7-9. Henderson also names Piscator, also at Herborn with Olevianus, as another influence on Scottish covenant thought through his *Analysis Epistolae Pauli ad Galatas* in 1591and also on *Romans*.

[27] Robert Letham, "Amandus Polanus: A Neglected Theologian?" *Sixteenth Century Journal* 21, no. 3 (1990) : 463-476.

[28] John Owen, *Display of Arminianism: being the discovery of the old pelagian idol free-will, with the new goddess contingency, advancing themselves into the throne of the God of heaven, to the prejudice of his grace, providence, and supreme dominion over the children of men; wherein their main errors by which they are fallen off from the received doctrine of all the reformed churches, with their opposition in diverse particulars to the doctrine established in the church of England, are discovered and laid open out of their own writings and confessions, and confuted by the word of God, Works of John Owen,* vol. 10 (n.p., Johnstone & Hunter, 1850-53; reprint, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1993). Published in 1642, Owen proclaimed the menace posed to the church by Arminianism's teachings of freewill and denial of original sin. See Owen's prefacing letters, 5-9, 11-14; Fisher, *History of Christian Doctrine*, 337-342; Henderson, *Religious Life,* 72-73; Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinist*, 228-236; Strehle, *Calvinism, Federalism and Scholasticism*, 190-198, mentions Arminius' treatment of covenants as being generally within the parameters of orthodoxy but ranging into heterodoxy with some particular notions as viewing the penalty for Adam's sin as only the loss of original righteousness; Blacketer, "Arminius' Concept of Covenant," 193-220; cf. Richard A. Muller, "The Federal Motif in Seventeenth Century Arminian Theology," *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis* 62, no. 1 (1982) : 102-122 and "Grace, Election, and Contingent Choice: Arminius's Gambit and the Reformed Response," *The Grace of God, the Bondage of the Will*, ed. Thomas R. Schreiner and Bruce A. Ware, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995), 251-274.

[29] John Owen, *Salus electorum, sanguis; or, the death of death in the death of Christ; a treatise of the redemption and reconciliation that is in the blood of Christ; with the merit thereof, and the satisfaction wrought thereby: wherein the proper end of the death of Christ is asserted; the immediate effects and fruits thereof assigned, with their extent in respect of its object; and the whole controversy about universal redemption fully discussed* (London, 1647; reprint, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1967). Concerning the assertion of universal redemption, Owen charges Cameron and Amyraut with "making a general conditionate decree of redemption to be antecedaneous to election; which they assert to be the first discriminating purpose concerning the sons of men, and to depend on the alone good pleasure of God" (ibid., 149, 222); Heppe, *Geschichte Des Pietismus*, 217; Fisher, *History of Christian Doctrine*, 342-346; A. Craig Troxel, "Amyraut 'At' The Assembly: The Westminster Confession of Faith and the Extent of the Atonement," *Presbyterion* 22, no. 1 (1996): 43-55; Armstrong, *Calvinism And Amyraut Heresy*, 43-58, 140-147, 263-269, describes Amyraut as "Cameron's most illustrious pupil" with insight Amyraut revealed "he owed, as he acknowledged, to Cameron" (ibid., 265); Strehle, *Calvinism, Federalism and Scholasticism*, 198-210, also considers Amyraut as Cameron's disciple (ibid., 206-207); Wallace, "Doctrine of the Covenant," 143-179.

2.3.1 British Theologians ca. 1580s-1620

Although some of the participants in the ongoing dialog have frequently been recognized for their significant contributions to British covenant theology, among them William Tyndale, Dudley Fenner, Rollock, Perkins, Ames, Preston, Ball, and Owen,[30] interest and involvement in the discussion were much wider and became increasingly more varied than might be supposed. Tyndale is named as a pioneer in the doctrine of covenant, with Clebsch noting Tyndale's understanding of covenant as contract.[31] While Fenner is widely credited with the introduction of *foedus operum* in *Sacra Theologia,* and the first to expound covenant theology in England, Rollock is often recognized for the first mature treatment of the system of two divine covenants (works and grace) in Scotland.

McGiffert suggests Fenner's idea of the *foedus operum* was disseminated by Cartwright, Josias Nichols and, in particular, Perkins, who set the law and gospel

---

[30]Vos, "Doctrine of the Covenant," 239-41; Miller, *New England Mind*, 502-504; M'Crie, *Confessions of the Church*, 68-72; Trinterud, "Origins of Puritanism," 37-57; McNeill, *History and Character*, 307; Henderson, *Burning Bush,* 67-71; McLelland, "Covenant Theology," 182-188; Brown, "Covenant Theology," 220-222; Sommerville, "Conversion Versus Early Puritan," 178-197; John D. Eusden, "Introduction," *The Marrow of Theology, William Ames 1576-1633* (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1968), 1-66; Greaves, "Origins and Early Development," 21-35; Stoeffler, *Rise of Pietism*, 55; Stoever, *'Faire and Easie Way,'* 84-86; Stoute, "Original & Early Development"; Baker, *Heinrich Bullinger,* 205-210; Karlberg, "Reformed Interpretation," 20-23; Burke, "Covenant in Puritan Thought," 106-112; McGrath, "Puritans and the Human Will," 158-159; McGiffert, "Grace and Works," 463-502 and "Perkinsian Moment," 117-148; Letham, "*Foedus Operum*," 457; J. B. Torrance, "Calvinism and Puritanism," 265, and "Concept of Federal Theology," 23-36; McCoy and Baker, *Fountainhead of Federalism*, 32-41; Klempa, "Concept of Covenant," 99-100; von Rohr, *Covenant of Grace,* 35-51; Woolsey, "Unity and Continuity," 255-258; Strehle, *Calvinism, Federalism, and Scholasticism*, 323-349; McGrath, "Puritans and the Human Will"; Morrill, *Scottish National Covenant*, 47; McCoy & Baker, *Fountainhead of Federalism*, 32-44; Poole, *History of the Covenant Concept,* 147-182; Su, "Contribution of Scottish Covenant," 42-51; T. F. Torrance, *Scottish Theology,* 61; Bierma, *German Calvinism*, 175-181; Rohls, *Reformed Confessions*, 25-27; Young Jae Timothy Song, *Theology and Piety in the Reformed Federal Thought of William Perkins and John Preston* (Lewistown: Edwin Mellen Press, 1998); Wong, "Covenant Theology," 91-104; Lim, "Covenant Theology"; Sebastian Rehnman, "Is the Narrative of Redemptive History Trichotomous or Dichotomous: A Problem for Federal Theology," *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis* 80, no. 3 (2000) : 296-308; Mullan, *Scottish Puritanism*, 186-189; Vallance, "Holy and Sacramental Pact," 57-58.

[31] Møller, "Beginnings of Puritan Covenant," 50-54; Clebsch, *England's Earliest Puritans*, 181-204; McGiffert, "Tyndale's Conception of Covenant," 167-184.

covenantally at odds with the Adamic covenant and disturbed the balance of the Calvinist system. Perkinsian federalism is portrayed by McGiffert as a throwback to the radicalism of the Reformation by slighting the Old Testament, identifying the Mosaic covenant with the curse of eternal death and the Old Testament covenant with the *foedus operum*.[32] Jeon states that the distinctions made between law and gospel by the Reformers grew into distinctions between the covenants of works and grace in Rollock's treatise on effectual calling.[33] Heal connects discussions of the doctrines of the visible church with spiritual regeneration and observes indications of federal theology in the Scots Confession of 1560. She argues that the "full ecclesiastical and political consequences of the doctrine of two covenants" began for the Scots in 1596 with Rollock leading the General Assembly to renew the covenant with God that linked church and state in "a promise of moral renewal."[34]

The diverse framework of early texts having covenant as the main subject or as a component in another matter includes catechisms, commentaries, lectures, sermons, and treatises in works by John Craig, Fenner, John Fotherby, Rollock, Perkins, John Downame, Samuel Hieron, Edward Elton, Henry Finch, Cartwright, Thomas Taylor, Byfield, William Attersoll and John Forbes. The sermons that will be examined correspond to exegesis of passages of Scripture where Dickson found cause to teach the covenant of redemption. One would not expect to find the full expression of anyone's thinking on a particular topic in a sermon, nor should it be supposed that the content of a sermon or collection of sermons reflects the extent of anyone's deliberations. However, the practice from this time of delivering sermons with serious doctrinal

---

[32]McGiffert, "Perkinsian Moment," 117-118, 123-125.
[33] Jeon, *Covenant Theology*, 37.
[34] Heal, *Reformation in Britain*, 335-338.

content that bore witness to the quality of theology proclaimed from the pulpits for the church has been recognized and noted elsewhere.[35] Therefore, the observations in this study regarding these sermons pertain only to what is or is not contained in them and taught at the time with regard to divine covenants rather than serve as statements that these men never offered further thinking on the topic.

Addressed to "the Professors of Christs Gospel at new Aberdine," the third part of Craig's summary of the catechism, "Of Mans restitution againe," provides a very brief glimpse of "the couenant of Jesus Christ." Citing Genesis 3:15, Craig contends that the substance of faith and true religion differs from the Fathers to us "in certaine circumstances." The second fruit of faith is being made partakers of Christ's graces and merits, "and our sinnes are imputed to him, and abolished from us," with justification standing "in remission of sinnes, and imputation of justice."[36]

Fenner, placing the twofold covenant of God in the same locus with Christ and his office, declares that the covenant of God is double and consists of a covenant of works, *operum foedus*, under the condition of perfect obedience and of grace, *gratuitae promissionis foedus.*[37]

Fotherby writes that since the fall "the whole course of mans life is wicked and wretched" as "the child of wrath, a stranger from the couenant of promise, without hope, and without GOD in the worlde." This covenant is "vsually repeated in the old

---

[35] Packer, *Among God's Giants*, 374-375: "Puritan preachers were not afraid to bring the profoundest theology into the pulpit if it bore on their hearers' salvation, nor demand that men and women apply themselves to mastering it, nor to diagnose unwillingness to do so as a sign of insincerity." See also Ryken, "Scottish Reformed Scholasticism," 204-208; Mullan, *Scottish Puritanism*, 195.

[36] John Craig, *A short svm of the whole catechisme, wherein the qvestion is propovnded and answered in fewe words, for the greater ease of the common people and children* (London, 1581), A2, 5, 18-19. The first fruit of faith is that "wee are made one with Christ our head."

[37] Dudley Fenner, *Sacra theologia, sive veritas quae est secundum pietatem, ad unicae & versae methodi leges descripta, & in decem libros per Dvdleivm Fennervm digesta* (London, 1586), 88.

and new testament, and very often in these wordes. I will be your God, and ye shall be my people." Set down in Genesis 3 with the promise the blessed seed, it is given more plainly later in chapter 17 between God and Abraham and renewed in Exodus 19. In the covenant "there are as it were indentures drawen between God and man, conditions on both sides agreed vpon, & so a new couenant made between God & man." Fotherby lists as these Abraham's requirement of obedience, its renewal with Israelites, and continuing as a solemn promise of obedience to all God's commandments for those who would enter into the covenant with God. However, no one being able to keep the commands "as he ought to do, but he daily offendeth," Christ "fulfilled the law for vs. Ro. 8.2.3.4.&10. imputing his obedience to vs that beleeue that hereafter we should not be condemned againe."[38]

Translation of *foedus* by *covenant* is usual, not exclusive, in the eleventh division of Rollock's summary of theology where he addresses the effectual calling "by the promulgation of the couenant of grace, or preaching of the Gospell" to those known by God from eternity and predestinated to life.[39] Placing God's word or "couenant" as the second of the common places, he defines the covenant of God "generally as a promise, vnder some one certaine condition. And it is twofold: the first is the couenant of works; the second is the couenant of grace."[40] This passage also contains one of the

---

[38] John Fotherby, *The couenant between God and man, plainly declared in laying open the first and smallest pointe of christian religion* (London, 1596), 6, 23-26.

[39] Robert Rollock, *Tractatvs de vocatione efficaci, qvae inter locos theologiae communissimos recensetur, deq; locis specialioribus, qui sub vocatione comprehenduntur* (Edinburgh, 1597),1; *Treatise of effectval calling*, I.1.

[40] Rollock, *Treatise of effectval calling*, II. 6; *Tractatvs*, II.8: "Quare nunc de verbo sive foedere Dei erit dicendum, si primum de hoc admonuerimus, quod totum verbum Dei ad foedus aliquod pertineat: nihil emin loquitur Deus homini extra foedus: Vnde à foedere sive testamento Dei vtraque Scriptura & vetus & nova, qua continetur vniversum verbum Dei, appellationem suam est sortita."

infrequent translations of *paction* by *covenant*, the reference being to Galatians 4 and the two covenants "shadowed by" Hagar and Sarah.[41]

Rollock does not shy away from legal language or content, for "the same iustice of God is vnchangeable: and the law of God is the very image of diuine iustice: wherefore the law of God must abide for euer, albeit it haue not euer the same vse, nor be not always the rule of the same works."[42] He explains the dual foundation of the covenant of works as both in nature created pure and holy, and in the law of God engraved on the heart of man created pure and holy. This covenant may also be called a legal or natural covenant made by God with man, "as one friend doth make with another." Eternal life, not righteousness, was promised the just and perfect humanity under the condition of holy and good works proceeding from the law written on the human heart. Rollock writes of the possibility of a second justice, resulting from the first man having lived a just and godly life according to God's law, of Adam being declared by God just again by "the iustice of works."[43] However, the good works spoken of in the gospel and required of those in Christ do not proceed from human nature or freewill but only from the grace of regeneration as duties, not merit: the holy obedience and good works testify to the thankfulness of the elect.[44]

The covenant of grace is similarly double-grounded: first, by the blood of the mediator, Christ Jesus; and second, by the grace or free mercy of God obtained by the

---

[41] Rollock, *Treatise of effectval calling*, II. 6; *Tractatvs*, II.8: "Foedus Dei in genere est promissio sub certa aliqua conditione. Est autem duplex, primum: foedus operum; secundum, foedus gratiae: Paul. Gal.4.24. duarum pactionum disertè meminit, quae in veteri Testamento adumbratae sunt per duas foeminas tanquam typos, nempe, Hagaram ancillam & Saram liberam, Nam hae, inquit, sunt duae illae pactiones."

[42] Rollock, *Treatise of effectval calling*, II. 10.

[43] Rollock, *Treatise of effectval calling*, II. 7-8.

[44] Rollock, *Treatise of effectval calling*, II.9-10, III.18-19.

blood of the mediator.[45] Consistent with his definition of covenants of God, Rollock insists that while this covenant excludes the condition of the covenant of works, "the condition of the strength of nature, and of works naturally iust and good," it does not exclude all condition. The condition of the covenant of grace is not faith only, but faith with Christ or "the faith that shall apprehend Christ," which is God's free gift by grace.[46]

Distinguishing three kinds of promises found in the gospel, Rollock identifies their legal context or propriety. The promise of the covenant of works is "merely legall, and requires the condition of works done only by the strength of nature, commanded in the lawe, and to be done according to the strict rule of Gods law"; that of the covenant of grace is "not legall, but merely Euangelicall, for the condition here is not of any worke morall and naturall, but of faith in Christ." The third kind of promises, "those particular and special" pertaining to the covenant of grace, are found throughout the gospel and "made under the condition of the works of grace and regeneration." The last are classified as both partly evangelical and legal, "for the condition of workes which proceed from grace and regeneration, and therefore of such works as in regard of their originall, may truly be called Euangelicall works: but because the law morall is the rule of them, in this respect they may also be called legall works."[47]

Various sermons on Colossians 1:19 and 20 attribute the work of Christ as mediator and his threefold office to the decree of God without connecting these to covenanting within the Godhead. Rollock, in his lecture on Colossians 1:19-20, states the excellency of Christ's person and his worthiness as mediator come not by chance,

---

[45] Rollock, *Treatise of effectval calling*, III.11-2.
[46] Rollock, *Treatise of effectval calling*, III.13-14.
[47] Rollock, *Treatise of effectval calling*, III.15-16.

but by a "decree as old as God himselfe, euen from the eternall good will and pleasure of God from his eternall decree . . . In a word, neuer a thing fell to him, but by a counsaile and plat from all eternitie." It had pleased the Father to enter into a new friendship with elect men and women of fallen humanity, in his own time sending his son into the world for the fulfilling of the decree of reconciliation past in heaven from all eternity.[48]

Perkins addresses divine covenants in his commentary on Galatians and in *A Golden Chaine* under the order of the causes of salvation and damnation. In Galatians 3:13-14 the first reason for Christ being made a curse is "because he was set apart in the eternall counsel of the Father, Sonne, and holy Ghost, to be our redeemer," sealed by the Father, "preordained before all worlds," and "giuen according to the counsel and foreknowledge of God."[49] Verses 15-17 feature details of God's promises to Abraham and his seed, Christ, as a confirmed covenant or testament, and how this covenant has both the form of a compact with a mutual obligation and a will. Comparison of man-made covenants or testaments with God's emphasizes the greater stability of a divine testament which Perkins affirms with a syllogism. "The Testament of God confirmed, cannot be abrogated: The promises made to Abraham and his seede, which is Christ, are his Testament confirmed: Therefore they cannot be abrogated."[50]

Sections of Perkins' Galatians commentary have been used to make the case for his having set the law and gospel covenantally at odds. Some suggest a difference in

---

[48] Robert Rollock, *Lectvres vpon the epistle of Pavl to the Colossians* (London, 1603), 62-63, 70-71.

[49] William Perkins, *Commentarie or exposition, upon the fiue first chapters of the epistle to the Galatians* (London, 1604), 198, 206-215: "The testament of man after it is confirmed, may not be abrogated: much lesse the testament of God."

[50] Perkins, *Commentarie on Galatians*, 207.

Perkins' portrayal of the relationship between the Old and New Testaments in the commentary from that found in *A Golden Chaine*.[51] Continuing the discussion of justification, in Galatians 3:10 Perkins addresses the opinion that "sundrie holy men" had fulfilled the law and distinguishes between fulfilling the law in the legal or evangelical manner. He states that only two ever fulfilled the law in and by themselves, "Christ, and Adam before his fall."[52] On Galatians 3:11-12 Perkins explains at length that the distinction between the law and gospel must be maintained with respect to the way of justification, but contrary to Rome, "the law written in our hearts, is still the law of Moses."[53] The purposes of the law follow, expressing his view of the law's unity in such a way as to make the suggestion of Perkins's identification of the law of Moses with the covenant of works questionable. "The Lord since mans fall, repeates the law in his old tenour, not to mocke men, but for other waightie causes. The first is, to teach vs that the law is of a constant, and vnchangeable nature. The second is, to aduertise vs, of our weaknes, and to shew vs, what we cannot doe. The third is, to put vs in minde, that we must still humble our selues vnder the hand of God, after we haue begunne by grace

---

[51] McGiffert, "Perkinsian Moment," 121-124. McGiffert repeats the charge that in Galatians 4:24 Perkins equated the covenant of works with the moral law, the covenant of grace with the gospel, and used the duality to refute the Roman Catholic position of the law of Moses and the gospel being one law in substance. He does allow that Perkins "usually resisted temptation to make the covenant of works emblematic for the Old Testament, nor did he deny the grace of the Law." While McGiffert states that Perkins' views stood as strong antidotes to heterodoxy, "the federal twist exemplified by his gloss on Galatians could give Puritanism a radical, even antinomian, turn" and fostered among his followers an Adamic-Mosaic/Gospel covenant duality. McGiffert's interpretation of the *foedus operum* as the Adamic-Mosaic covenant identified with the Old Testament does not allow for the covenant of works in Perkins' thought as prelapsarian. Further, he presents Perkins's view of the covenant of works in opposition to the prelapsarian view of Rollock and Cameron (ibid., 145-147). See also von Rohr, *Covenant of Grace*, 39. Von Rohr states that Perkins' placement of the covenant of works is not historically prelapsarian but systematically before the covenant of grace.

[52] Perkins, *Commentarie on Galatians*, 189.

[53] Perkins, *Commentarie on Galatians*, 195-196.

to obey the law; because euen then we come so farre short in doing the things which the law requires at our hands."[54]

In *A Golden Chaine,* Perkins states that the works of God are those he does out of himself and common to the Trinity with the peculiar manner of work referring to the persons. Here the work of the Godhead in salvation is explained without language to indicate thinking on an intratrinitarian covenant, listing among the references Ephesians 1:4-6, Isaiah 43:12 and 1 Corinthians 8:6.[55] The outward means of executing the decree of election are "Gods couenant and the seales thereof. Gods couenant is his contract with man concerning the obtaining of life eternall vpon a certen condition." The Latin text uses *foedus* for the covenants of God, works and grace, and *pactum* for bargain and contract with covenant described as having two parts: God's promise to man, and man's promise to God.[56] The covenant of works is described as "Gods couenant made with condition of perfect obedience, and is expressed in the morall law" which has two parts, the edict commanding obedience and the condition binding obedience. The Decalogue is "the abridgment of the whole lawe, and the couenant of workes."[57] Having worked through the Ten Commandments and the uses of the law for the unregenerate and regenerate, Perkins presents the covenant of grace whereby "God freely promising Christ, and his benefits, exacteth againe of man, that hee would by faith receiue Christ,

---

[54] Perkins, *Commentaire on Galatians,* 196.

[55] William Perkins, *A golden chaine: or, the description of theologie: containing the order of the causes of saluation and damnation, according to Gods word* (London, 1608), VI.15-16, XV.2. "Armilla avrea, id est; theologiae descriptio mirandam feriem causarum & salutis & damnationis juxta verbum Dei proponens: eius synopsis content annexa tabula," XV.44-47.

[56] Perkins, *Golden Chaine,* XIX. 32; *Armilla Avrea,* XIX. 72: "Media sunt foedus Dei, & sigillum foederis. Foedus Dei est, eius pactum cum honime de vita aeterna, certa condicione, obtinenda. Foederis partes duae sunt: Sponsio Dei, & hominis Restipulatio." See chapter XVIII.71 for *pactum* rendered bargain: "Inter hos excellunt: Athei, qui ex corde Deum apertè negant, Psal14.1. Magi, qui pactum cum Diabolo faciunt, vt res optatas consequantur, 1 Sam. 28.6, Psal. 8.6."

[57] Perkins, *Golden Chaine,* XIX.32; *Armilla Avrea,* XIX.72-73.

and repent of his sinnes." He also notes this covenant is called a testament with the nature and properties of a will, and despite being distinguished as old, where Christ is prefigured in types and shadows, and new, declaring Christ come in the flesh, is one covenant in substance.[58]

Early in the seventeenth century Downame's early treatise on Christian warfare and Satan's attacks might seem to provide a sounder basis for those claiming a Ramist influence, the formulation of a duality of covenants occurring for the sake of balancing the covenants. However, Downame's view is more reminiscent of Olevianus' *foedus cum diabolo*. Downame writes of some whose carnal securities have "so lulleth them asleepe in the cradle of worldly vanities" that they are unable to discern spiritual battles. Their supposed peace with God and their consciences is a false sense of reality because their peace is with Satan in "a covenant of death and arrangement with hell."[59] Chapter two contains a scattering of teachings on the covenant of works, identified as "the covenant made with the Fathers" and the covenant of grace. There are three references to 2 Timothy 1:9, one noting the whole work of salvation is ascribed to God's grace and good will but without language suggesting a covenant.[60]

Statements on the framing of the work of salvation in eternity without talk of covenanting within the Godhead are found in a variety of sermons on Colossians 1:19-20. Printed in 1609, Hieron's fourth sermon refers to a plot laid in heaven. In the fifth sermon, defining covenant generally as having articles of an agreement between God

---

[58] Perkins, *Golden Chaine*, XXXI.70-71; *Armilla Avrea*, XXXI.208-211.

[59] John Downame. *The christian warfare, wherein is first generally shewed the malice, power and politike stratagems of the spirituall enemies of our saluation, Sathan and his assistants the world and the flesh; with the meanes also whereby the Christian may vvithstand and defeate them* (London, 1604), 5. See Bierma, *German Calvinism*, 120-122.

[60] Downame, *Christian Warfare*, 148-157. Dickson would later determine 2 Tim. 1:9 to be indicative of the covenant of redemption.

and humanity concerning life eternal, he speaks of two covenants that are really one, works and grace, with Christ the sum of both.[61] Elton notes the rule *Opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa* and Christ as redeemer by way of the eternal decree of the Father.[62] In his commentary, Cartwright affirms the reconciliation by Christ is not only to the Father, but also to himself and the Holy Ghost.[63]

Published in 1612, the commentary on Titus by Taylor does not address covenanting within the Godhead in the discussion of the promises of God in 1:2, but the gloss indicates the difference between επαγγελια and διαθηκη will be discussed. The explanation does include: the stability of the promise; the contrast between free and absolute Evangelical promises and legal promises, the latter such compacts and bargains have conditions; and God having decreed to promise before the world began and in due time manifesting the promise in the preached word. Among the references cited are 2 Timothy 1:9 and Ephesians 1:4.[64] Taylor's emphasis is that eternal life is by the promise of God.

In 1612 Cowper's treatise on the baptism of Christ leads to discussion of Christ's baptism by way of explaining how Adam foolishly aspired to be like God, fell short of that and also lost the good he had before, "the folly of his presumption is checked and fore rebuked by the blessed Trinitie." Under why Christ is baptized, Cowper describes the covenant of grace as having two parts: God promising remission

---

[61] Samuel Hieron, *The abridgement of the gospell: or the order and covrse of mans saluation, as it is set foorth by Zacharie the father of Iohn Baptist, Luke .67 etc and further opened in ten sermons thereupon* (London, 1609), 36, 53-56.

[62] Edward Elton, *An exposition of the epistle of saint Pavl to the Colossians, delivered in sundry sermons* (London, 1620), 100, 135.

[63] Thomas Cartwright, *A commentary vpon the epistle of saint Paule written to the Colossians* (London, 1612), 70.

[64] Thomas Taylor, *A commentarie vpon the epistle of s. Paul written to Titvs* (Cantrell Legge, 1612), 30-31.

of sins and renovation of human nature, comprised in the words, "*I will bee your God*"; and the human side, "Our part againe containes promises made to God by vs of faith and obedience, comprised in this one word, *We shall be his people*." Baptism being the seal of the covenant of grace, Christ accepts the seal of God's promise, becoming obliged "in our name, as our head, to fulfill that which wee promised, but first behoued to be performed for vs by himselfe, and at last shall in vs all, by his grace, also be perfected."[65]

Cowper shows the baptism testifying to itself as the work of the Trinity as the heavens open and the Holy Spirit descends upon Christ anointing him spiritually, "not vvith any materiall oyle, but with the oyle of gladness." He comments that in this "action of designation, albeit, the three persons of the blessed Trinities concurre, and so Iesus be both the designer, and the person designed: yet because the father is first in order, this action is ascribed to him, *for him hath the father sealed.*"[66] Cowper states that the audible voice from heaven gives additional reason for comfort in considering "how the three of the blessed Trinitie concurre together, to worke the great worke of our redemption: for here is the father designing, ordaining, proclaiming: here is the Sonne accepting, and the holy Ghost anointing."[67]

Cowper scatters mention of the covenant of works through a later text, *Heaven Opened*. There he describes the covenant of works as broken and dissolved in Paradise

---

[65] William Cowper, *Three heavenly treatises, concerning Christ: 1 his genealogie. 2 his baptisme. 3 his combat with Sathan. Together vvith deuout meditations, for christian consolation and instruction* (London, 1612), 59, 64-66.

[66] Cowper, *Baptisme of Christ*, 76-81.

[67] Cowper, *Baptisme of Christ*, 89. Henderson, "Idea of Covenant," 10, marks this as an appearance of the notion of distinction being made between the covenant of redemption between the Father and Son and the covenant of grace between God and man prior to that found in *Sum of Saving Knowledge* by Dickson & Durham. Although Cowper does compare this act of concurring with that of creation and uses the term *Contractum Euangelium*, p 97, as containing the sum of the gospel and Christ's person and office, he does not provide further elaboration of the Godhead covenanting here.

and summed up by "*Doe and liue*"; in contrast the covenant of grace is summed up as "*Beleeue and liue.*"[68]

Specification of two divine covenants and the role of the members of the Trinity without talk of covenanting can also be found briefly in the *loci communes* of Finch, published in 1613 and in the larger treatise on the Old Testament accompanying it. In his system of divinity, emphasizing righteousness, the "conforming of all our actions with that whole strength unto his will," and setting out a spare yet detailed report of its "seuerall parts and branches," the Ten Commandments, Finch brings in the covenant of works and the law as other names for righteousness.[69] He writes of Christ's appointment by the Father to the office of mediator, called the covenant of grace; the publishing of the Old Testament, "the Promise," and "the Gospel" of the New; and justification as "Gods accounting of vs holy and righteous in him, by his resurrection," with sanctification "the making of us holy and righteous in our selues againe."[70] Christ's office of mediation is in two parts, the priesthood which he "performeth to Godwards" and the kingdom "as he gouerneth all the worde according to their owne nature." The prophetic office is "that which Scripture properly termeth the kingdome of heaven," and "whereby he bestoweth vpon the outward Church his word and the fruits thereof." [71]

---

[68] William Cowper, *Heaven opened: vvherein the counsaile of God, concerning mans saluation, is yet more cleerely manifested; so that they that haue eyes may come and see the Christian possessed and crowned in the heauenly kingdome. VVhich is the greatest and last benefit we haue by Christ Iesvs our Lord* (London, 1619), 190-191.

[69] Henry Finch, *The sacred doctrine of divinitie, gathered out of the word of God, and comprehended in two volumes. Whereof this first volvme, containeth a description of all that holy doctrine according to the rules of art: with a treatise concerning the Olde Testament, or the promise. The second is to containe a larger explication of the former doctrines: With a discouerie of the most principall heresies and errours contrary thereunto* (London, 1613), I.v.4, I.xvi.9. Treatment of the Ten Commandments is found in I.vi-xv.

[70] Finch, *Sacred Doctrine of Divinitie*, II.i.12, II.xii.18.

[71] Finch, *Sacred Doctrine of Divinitie*, II.ii.13, II.v.14, II.vi.14-15.

In the treatise on the Old Testament Finch discusses further the appointment of Christ to the office of mediator, indicating this is according to both natures and in a manner that emphasizes the Father's appointing. Regarding the office, Christ "thrust not himself into, nor took it to him at his pleasure, but was set vp of God his Father, and furnished with all the graces needful for it." The importance of the aspect of testament with regard to this covenant "of pardon and remission of sins" sealed by the blood of Christ is noted as set forth in Jeremiah 31 and repeated in Hebrews 8:20 and 11:12.[72]

Byfield's 1615 commentary on Colossians describes the covenants of works and grace in the dedicatory to the epistle and touches on aspects of the covenant of grace.[73] Three years later Byfield's system of theology identified three covenants made by God and mentioned in Scripture. Discussed under the topic of Christ's mediatorship, the covenants are: "one generall, and terrene with all creatures about their preseruation from the vniuersall deluge"; "the couenant of workes made with all mankinde in Paradise" identified as the old covenant, the law, known in measure by nature; a third, "the agreement made with man by meanes of the *mediator*," the covenant of grace and a mystery unknown by nature. The third is named "the promise" from the fall to Abraham, beginning with Genesis 3:15; "the couenant" from Abraham to Moses beginning with Genesis 17; "the Testament" from Moses to Christ.[74]

Byfield focuses on the person and office of Christ and identifies as the basis of the agreement or covenant Christ's willingness to undertake payment of all debts,

---

[72] Finch, *Old Testament or Promise*, 3-5.

[73] Nicholas Byfield, *An exposition vpon the epistle to the Colossians. Wherein not onely the text is methodically analysed, and the sense of the words, by the help of vvriters, both ancient and moderne is explained: but also, by doctrine and use, the intent of the holy Ghost is in euery place more fully vnfolded and vrged* (London, 1615), 4-5, 129-132.

[74] Byfield, *Pattern of Wholesome Words*, XVII.197-198, 200-201.

satisfy God's justice, and purchase God's favor and kingdom by his obedience as part of the covenant of grace with no separate covenant being presupposed. He does, however, state that Christ was given "for a couenant of the people, Isai. 49.8," referring to an act giving Christ as propitiation and for the covenant "in the counsell of God from everlasting." The godly are to know that Christ will keep every one committed to him by the covenant and that by virtue of the covenant Christ is commissioned to assure his people of God's mercy in all their afflictions.[75] Stating that the whole office of Christ is to be a mediator according to his two natures, the cause of Christ being the sole mediator between God and humanity is the grace of God and Christ. With respect to God's decree, Christ was given as mediator "before all eternity," but with respect to the efficacy of his mediatorship, he was given according to the need from the beginning of the world, "by which mediation a new agreement or contract was made with God." In support of his view, Byfield cites Jeremiah 31:33, Hebrews 8:13, Romans 3:23-24 and Galatians 3:21-22.[76] When propounding election, Byfield gives two passages used later by Dickson for presenting the intratrinitarian covenant, Ephesians 1:4 and 2 Timothy 1:9, but Byfield's reflections do not indicate clear thinking of the idea of a *pactum salutis*.[77]

Treatment of a similar nature with regard to a single covenant between God and fallen humanity may be found in Attersoll's treatise on the sacraments of the new covenant and in Forbes' treatise on justification. Attersoll writes of the covenant and compact, defines the articles of agreement, and identifies with respect to God and humanity "what things each part interchangeably couenanteth and contracteth each

---

[75] Byfield, *Pattern of Wholesome Words*, XVII.212-213, 216.
[76] Byfield, *Pattern of Wholesome Words*, XVII.191-196.
[77] Byfield, *Pattern of Wholesome Words*, XI.136-139.

toward other." "This mutual compact and couenant, that it might bee made firme and authenticall, is sealed by the outward badges and tokens of baptisme and the Lords Supper, which are sacred signes testifying Gods good will toward vs and confirming our duty toward him."[78]

Forbes' focus is on justification as part of the single covenant God enters into with humanity, discussing those to whom God makes his promise and the promise itself. Referencing Jeremiah 31 and Galatians 3:16, he states that Abraham and his seed only are specified as those to whom the promise is made. Forbes affirms salvation as the work of the whole Trinity without indicating intratrinitarian covenanting, with every work of grace a work of all three persons, and all saving graces coming mediately through Christ. God's own will in himself is the cause moving God to the decree of predestination. Christ is the means, not the cause, appointed by God whereby the elect are ordained to adoption.[79]

Published three years after his commentary on Colossians, Cartwright's body of divinity identifies the parts of God's word as "the doctrine or Covenant of Workes, called the Law" which is either general or special, and "Grace, called the Gospel." Devoting several chapters to each covenant, he includes in discussion of the covenant of works the three uses of the law and the Decalogue, and explains the covenant of grace as beginning immediately after the fall, one covenant in substance but of two sorts.[80]

---

[78] William Attersoll, *The new covenant, or a treatise of the sacraments. Whereby the last testament of our Lord and Sauiour Iesus Christ, through the shedding of his pure and precious blood, is ratified and applied unto the conscience of euery true beleeuer*, 2nd ed. (London, 1614), A8r, 96-104.

[79] John Forbes, *A treatise tending to cleare the doctrine of ivstification* (Middlebvrgh, 1616), 8-11, 28-34, 42.

[80] Thomas Cartwright, *A treatise of christian religion or, the whole bodie and substance of divinity* (London, 1616), XIII.80. Covenant of works runs from chapters 13 -25; Covenant of grace begins with 27. Christ as mediator according to both natures is discussed in XXIX.177.

Cartwright gives two parts to Christ's mediation, the first includes his prophetical office and priesthood, the second his kingdom.[81]

Published in 1620, sixteen years after his earlier work, Downame's *Summe of Sacred Diuinitie* clearly acknowledges grace in the covenant of works, shown by the "exceeding bountie & goodnesse of God" who not only promises to reward the perfect keeping of his law, but contracts and covenants to bind himself to the first covenant with humanity. Reward for this "Covenant of Life, to the Doers; of Death, vnto the Transgressors" comes from God's free and undeserved goodness, "for what can the Creature deserue at the Creatours' hands, doing nothing but that which the Law of his Creation bindeth him vnto?" Legal language figures prominently in his explanation of the covenant of grace which is "vttered in the forme of a Law," "registered and inrolled in the Records of the Court of Heaven," and sealed "with the greate Seale of the Bloud of his onely Sonne: A Seale that hee neuer set vpon anyother Letters Patents."[82]

2.3.2 British Works ca. 1629-1638

The New Covenant, a collection of sermons by John Preston and published in 1629, belongs to the discussion distinguishing the covenants of works and grace and identifies the differences and similarities of the covenant of grace as given in the Old and New Testaments. However, in speaking of Christ as Mediator and high priest of a better covenant, there is passing mention only of Christ having reconciled the disagreeing parties by having undertaken for both God's and humanity's sides "by the

---

[81] Cartwright, *Treatise of christian religion*, XXX.179-XXXII.191.

[82] John Downame, *The summe of sacred diuinitie first briefly & methodically propounded: and then more largely & cleerly handled and explaned* (London, 1620), I.xv.222-224, II.i.309. The statement that the "whole Christ" is mediator comes in I.i.281.

interuention of a certaine Compact, of certaine articles of agreement."[83] Preston's fourteenth sermon, on the advantages of the covenant of grace as revealed in the New Testament, also indicates no divide between covenant and contract.[84]

From his study of *The Marrow of Sacred Divinity* van Vliet finds Ames explicitly teaching an intratrinitarian covenant of redemption with the application of redemption dependent upon the Father's decree and his donation of Christ, Christ's intention to make satisfaction for the elect, and the Father's acceptance of Christ's satisfaction. Pointing out Ames' teaching on the covenant, van Vliet makes note of this treatment of the covenant of redemption and the comparison between the covenants of works and grace in chapter twenty-four.[85]

Under the application of Christ, Ames mentions an agreement (*haec transactio*) between God and Christ that was "a kind of advance application of our redemption and deliverance of us to our surety and our surety to us." Intended by the Father and Son, the application is attributed to the Holy Spirit with both Father and Son declaring to send the Holy Spirit to perform such. The way of this application is a new covenant, also called the gospel. "It is called a covenant because it is a firme promise, for in the Scripture every firme purpose, although it be of things without life, is called a covenant. *Ierem.* 33.20.25." Ames also mentions that this covenant or firm promise "consists of a free donation, and is confirmed by the death of the giver," making it properly a testament rather than a covenant.[86]

---

[83] John Preston, *The new covenant or the saints portion,* 2nd ed. (London, 1629), 330.
[84] Preston, *New Covenant*, 458.
[85] van Vliet, "William Ames," 46-47 and "Decretal Theology," 405.
[86] William Ames, *The marrow of sacred divinity, drawne ovt of the holy Scriptures, and the interpreters thereof, and brought into method* (London, n.d.), I.24.100, and *Medvlla, s.s. theologiae, ex sacris literis, earumque interpretibus, extracta, & methodice disposita per Gvilelmvm Amesivm* (London, 1630), I.xxiiii.118-20.

Ames contrasts this new covenant with the covenant of friendship where God and the creature were the two parties. In the new, the manner of contracting is different because "man being now dead in sinne, had no ability to contract a spiritual covenant with God." God only is the party "assuming and constituting, but man the party assumed." Further, the new covenant is everlasting, "both in respect of the countenance it hath in itselfe, because it admits no end, or change, touching the substance, and also in respect of those to whom it is communicated, because the grace of the covenant doth continue for ever with them, who are once truly in covenant."[87] While presenting the transaction between Father and Son as having components of a covenant, it does not seem that Ames distinguishes a *pactum salutis* from the new covenant; at least, his language does not clearly indicate such.

In this section *covenant* is the translation for a various occurrences of *foedus*, whether *foedus novum, foedus vita, foedus amicitiae* or *reconciliationis, spirituale foedus*, except when noted as *testamentum*.[88] In considering the office of Christ and writing of the purpose of God and Christ in obtaining salvation for humanity, Ames uses *pactum* for that which God initiated, expressed in Isaiah 53:10, and his appointment of the Son to the threefold office. *Foedus* is used when the reference is to Christ as the Angel of the Covenant (*Angelus foederis*) in Malachi 3:1.[89] *Pactum* again appears in the context of Christ's satisfaction in terms of the remunerating covenant (*ex*

[87] Ames, *Marrow of Sacred Divinity*, I.24.100-103.
[88] Ames, *Marrow of Sacred Divinity*, I.24.99-103; *Medvlla*, I.xxiiii.118-23.
[89] Ames, *Marrow of Sacred Divinity*, I.19.75; *Medvlla* I.xix.89-91.

pacto remunerante), Ames citing John 3:16, Romans 3:24, and 5:15, yet without direct reference to covenanting within the Godhead.[90]

However, Ames is very clear about the deliberative nature of the decree of predestination "that contains a definite sentence to be executed by certaine counsel. In the same sense also it is called a purpose, and counsel, because it propounds an end to be attained unto, as it were with an advised deliberation." In the first act of election Christ the redeemer was "the effect and subordinate means, but in the third act of election he is to be considered the cause."[91]

Edward Reynoldes' commentary on Psalm 110 contains a number of fine points not readily found in discussions of divine covenants early in this decade. In verse four in the context of the priesthood of Christ, Reynoldes names two covenants of God; in both covenants righteousness is satisfying the demands of the whole law. In the first, the covenant of works, "we were to doe in our owne persons"; in the second, the covenant of grace, "Christ is appointed and allowed to doe it for us."[92] A detailed exposition of imputed justification is given, including distinguishing the double relation of Christ's obedience: "*ratio legalis justitie,* the relation of a legall righteousness; as it beares exact

---

[90] Ames, *Marrow of Sacred Divinity*, I.20.80; *Medvlla*, I.xx.97. John D. Eusden, Introduction to *The Marrow of Theology: William Ames 1576-1633,* trans. J. D. Eusden (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1968), 53, states that Ames presents God and Christ "in a contractual relationship advancing a juridical concept of atonement," citing I.20.4 ff. Ames declares this in I.20.2, speaking of Christ's humiliation being "his subjection to the justice of God in order to perform those things necessary for the redemption of man." Although Ames writes of Christ's status as servant in taking on human nature, he does not link this to a covenant or suggest a relationship by which Christ refers to the Father as his God, nor does he find the intratrinitarian covenant revealed in Christ's baptism, I.21.

[91] Ames, *Marrow of Sacred Divinity*, I.25.203-204, 106-108. Ames gives three acts to election: God wills the glory of his grace in the salvation of some; some are appointed to be made partakers of salvation; the purpose of preparing the means by which the elect are certainly led through to the completion of salvation. He insists that "these meanses are properly redemption, and application of redemption, *Iohn* 6.37, 2 *Thess.* 2.13."

[92] Edward Reynoldes, *An explication of the hvndreth and tenth psalme: wherein the severall heads of christian religion therein contained; touching the exaltation of Christ, the scepter of his kingdome, the character of his subjects, his priesthood, victories, sufferings, and resurrection, are largely explained and applied* (London, 1631), 395-397.

and compleat comformities to the Law, will and decree of the Father"; and "*ratio superlegalis mersts*, the relation of merit over and beyond the Law; for though it were *nostrum debitum*, that which we did necessarily owe, yet it was *suum indebitum*, that which of himselfe he was not bound unto, but by voluntary susception, and covenant with his Father, for it was the bloud and obedience of God himselfe."[93]

Reynoldes writes that Philippians 2:7 gives the consent of the whole Trinity to Christ's priesthood, specifying the Father's in the act of ordination; the Son's "voluntary susception and vadimonie for mankinde"; and the Holy Ghost's anointing, and coming along with Christ, forming him in the Virgin's womb and descending upon Christ in "his solemne susception of this office in *Johns* Baptisme, by which Spirit he was consecrated, warranted and enabled unto this great function, *Esay*. 61.1.42.1. *Matth*. 3.16, 17. *Heb*. 1.9."[94] Calling it a covenant between God and Christ in which Christ would "undertake an office of service and obedience for men, to offer himself as a sacrifice for sin," and becoming incarnate and under the Law, Reynolds gives the following Scriptures: Isaiah 53:8, 10-12; Psalm 2:7-8; Philippians 2:7, 9; John 17:2, 4-5; Hebrews 2:8-9, 12:2.[95]

The significance of Christ's voluntary submission to the command of the Father is in his equality with the Father. "He could not be by him commanded, ordained, or overruled to any service, with a voluntary concurring to the same decree; emptying himselfe, and taking on him the forme of a servant, making himselfe lesse than his

---

[93] Reynoldes, *Explication of Hvndred and Tenth Psalme*, 438.

[94] Reynoldes, *Explication of Hvndred and Tenth Psalme*, 388.

[95] Reynoldes, *Explication of Hvndred and Tenth Psalme*, 388. Most of these references will play prominently in Dickson's later teachings on the covenant of redemption, but are not used in his 1638 address. In his own commentary on Psalms, published in 1655, Dickson did not include the covenant of redemption in connection with Christ's priesthood in verse 4. Whether or not Dickson knew of Reynoldes' thinking on the subject will have to be the subject of later inquiry.

Father, and in some sort for a while lower than the Angels, that so he might be commanded."[96] However, Reynoldes does not identify this clearly intratrinitarian covenant as separate from the second covenant, the immutability of which along with Christ's priesthood depend upon both the promise of God that "putteth a right in the creature which he had not before, and that Promise determineth the Will of God to the being" and the oath of God "that pawnes his owne Being, Life, Power, Truth, Holiness, to make good that which he hath so ratified."[97]

George Downame identifies those with whom God made the covenant as the main difference between the covenants of works and grace, the first covenant with all humanity and the second with Abraham and his seed, the heirs of the promise. He specifies how each member of the Trinity redeemed God's people and brings up the covenant of grace in connection with perseverance.[98] Phineas Fletcher mentions the covenants of works and grace in passing as evidence of God's faithfulness in his treatise on consolations for afflicted spirits and in the context of assurance of God's gracious purpose to justify and glorify Christians.[99]

The explanations of 2 Timothy 1:9 given by John Barlow and Paul Bayne are more directed to the saving and calling according to the purpose of God. Barlow talks of the trinitarian nature of the work of redemption and its being the purpose of God from eternity, but seemingly without the linkage to a covenant.[100] Bayne's mention of the

---

[96] Reynoldes, *Explication of Hvndred and Tenth Psalme*, 391.

[97] Reynoldes, *Explication of Hvndred and Tenth Psalme*, 399.

[98] George Downame, *The covenant of grace or an exposition vpon Lvke 1.73, 74-75* (Dublin, 1631), 28-29, 424-6, 192-196, and *A treatise of the certainty of perseverance: maintaining the trveth of the 38th article of the National Synode holden at Dublin in the yeare 1615* (Dvblin, 1631), 304, 351, 399.

[99] Phineas Fletcher, *Joy in tribulation. Or, consolation for afflicted spirits* (London, 1632), 238-250.

[100] John Barlow, *An exposition of the first and second chapters of the latter epistle of the apostle Paul to Timothie. Wherein the text is logically resolved: the words also plainly explicated; with an easie*

covenant in the context of being saved and called seems to indicate the covenant of grace with the elect. Referring to calling as "the gate of salvation," he observes that "God saveth none but whom He calleth. For He saveth none who doe not embrace the Covenant on which He promiseth, which is beleeving."[101]

However, reflecting on Colossians 1:19, Bayne, citing Augustine as to Christ being "the Sampler of God's free Predestination," does use language of an intratrinitarian covenant, marking as well that the whole Trinity was offended and would be reconciled in 1:20.

> Yea, I doubt not, but as *God* did predestinate him of grace to this honour of being *God* in fellowship of Person, and of being the Prince of our salvation: So *God* in the Covenant He did make with Him of laying downe His life, did strike it, and fulfill it of grace, nor requiring any thing He imposed on His *Sonne* more than duties of free obedience, which should of grace have that acceptance, and the glorious fruit which followed upon them, and therefore the Scripture, yea, Christ Himselfe referres all those benefits to God's grace, which upon the death of Christ are given us.[102]

Ezekiel 11 is the text for the treatise on the covenant of grace in which Harris explains that the parties in this covenant are God and those who will be given "all spiritual and saving grace," referring to them as "his Israel," and "a people to himselfe." He observes that what God does for their souls is the spiritual part of the double good that God has contracted to give to his people, having also undertaken for their temporal

---

metaphrase annexed: thence doctrines arising are deduced: and by Scripture, examples, and reason confirmed (London, 1632), 122-39. As sections of pages of this text are blurred and unable to be read, language regarding covenants being in the obscured portions cannot be completely ruled out. However, the flow of the explanation does not suggest movement in that direction.

[101] Paul Bayne, *A commentarie vpon the first and second chapters of saint Paul to the Colossians. Wherein, the text is cleerly opened, observations thence perspicuously deducted. Vses and applications succinctly and briefly inferred; sundry holy and spirituall mediations out of his more ample discourses extracted. Together with divers places of Scripture briefly explained* (London, 1635), 261.

[102] Bayne, *Commentarie to the Colossians,* 105, 113.

good as in multiplying the fruit of their trees and the increase of their fields.[103] This single covenant of grace is the same in substance with the whole church, from the patriarchs and the people of Israel to those after the incarnation. While focusing on the covenant of grace, Harris declares that the covenant with Adam in his state of innocency was a covenant of works not grace, but still a favor to Adam as God took the first man into fellowship and communion with himself.[104]

To promote greater understanding of and encourage cheerful and joyful passing into the present covenant, Harris offers what looks increasingly like the standard definition of a covenant as a solemn contract passing between parties who bind themselves to each other in certain articles for mutual peace and comfort. The matter of a covenant "stands in the articles of agreement, in such promises as are given and accepted to and fro, if the covenant bee kept, together with a certaine sanction and forfeiture if they keep it not." This covenant of grace and peace entails that one "bee content to accept of anothers obedience, and lay hold of the righteousness of Christ for justification," not "performe legall obedience" to be saved. To those fearing that they may falter in the covenant, Harris exhorts them to say, "I have Gods hand, Gods seale, Gods oath, that hee will be my God; why should I not take hearte and comfort? He willingly made this covenant with me, and advisedly he did it, therefore he will surely make it good to me."[105]

Under the last clause of the new covenant Harris states the doctrine pertains to God making his people fit to strike a contract with them, and then contracting with

---

[103] Robert Harris, *A treatise of the covenant of grace*, in *Workes of Robert Harris* (London, 1635), 483, 493-495.

[104] Harris, *Treatise of the Covenant*, 577-580.

[105] Harris, *Treatise of the Covenant*, 581-584.

them, giving Abraham, "the Father of the Church," as an example. "God calls him out of his owne countrey, bestowes his grace upon him, calls for the exercise of it, *Walke before mee, and be upright*, and then smites a covenant with him." The ground of all this is Jesus Christ: God "deputes Christ to the office of a Mediator, & sends to his people this Angel of the covenant." Harris states the order of this is that God, having covenanted with Christ, covenants with all Christian men and women, explaining that from eternity God gave the Son a people to redeem and Christ came in the fullness of time to perform this work.[106]

2.3.3 Continental Predecessors and Contemporaries ca. 1590s-1630s

As early as 1591 Polanus propounded a two-covenant system, defining God's covenant as "a bargaine which God hath made with men, in which God promiseth to men some good, & requireth of them again, that they performe those things which he commandeth," and those covenants either temporal or eternal. The eternal covenant in which God promises humanity eternal life is twofold, either the covenant of works or grace. F*oedus,* whether *divinum* or *aeternum, operum* or *gratiae,* is translated *covenant*, with the covenant of grace also called *testamentum* and *pactum,* also rendered *bargain.*[107] Although stating repetition of the covenant of works by God in Exodus

---

[106] Harris, *Treatise of the Covenant*, 577-578. Von Rohr, *Covenant of Grace*, 84, states that this language indicates the *pactum salutis* as the basis of the covenant of grace and the two covenants are not coalesced. Although Harris teaches a contract from eternity, it does not seem that Harris makes clear such distinction between the two covenants.

[107] Amandus Polanus, *The substance of christian religion, sovndly set forth in two books, by definitions and partitions, framed according to the rules of naturall method by Amandus Polanus professor of diuinitie,* trans. E. W. (London, 1595) I.87-91, I.93-94, and *Partitiones theologicae ivxta naturalis methodi leges conformatae duobus libris, quorum primus est de fide: alter de bonis operibus.* (London, 1591), I.53-57. He declares election "is made no les, by the sone and by the holy ghost than by the father, because he is as the fountaine of the Godheade, so the beginning of euerie action in the deitie." See also *A treatise concerning Gods eternall predestination. Wherein both this excellent doctrine is*

19:5, Polanus does not place the Old Testament faithful under the conditions of that covenant for salvation. By the circumstance not substance is the covenant of grace called an old or new testament with justification "a benefit of God, by which we being receiued by him into fauour are accounted iust." The covenant consists of two parts, forgiveness of sins and imputation of Christ's righteousness "whereby God vouchsafeth to account Christs obedience, by which he sustained for vs the punishments of sin, to be ours, euen as though we ourselves had sustained those punishments for sins."[108]

Polanus addresses the issue of the two natures of Christ and how those natures concern the office of Christ "to bestow on the elect all things which are required to eternal saluation." He asserts that the office belongs jointly to both natures in the person of Christ, divine and human, as also the duties and works of the office are attributed to both natures. Polanus explains that while some operations of the work belong to one nature or the other, the operations concur as each is the work the mediator who is one person. "And as the natures, and properties of the same remaine distinct: so also the actions, and operations of the natures, so that either of them doth seuerally worke that which is proper to it, namely the word working that which belongeth to the word: & the flesh accomplishing that which belongeth to the flesh."[109]

---

briefly and syncerely deliuered, and many hard places of Scripture are opened and maintained against the corrupt expositions of Bellarmine and other adversaries (1599), 5, 11-12. The proper cause of election is "onely God the father, the sonne, and the holy ghost."

[108] Polanus, *Substance of Christian Religion*, I.88. Repetition of the covenant of works was God's means to "stirre vp men to performe obedience" so that "euery mouth might be stopped, and all the world might be made subiect to the condemnation of God for not performing perfect obedience." It also served to manifest "mans sinne, and naughtiness" such that "he might thrust vs forward to seeke to be restored in the couenant of grace."

[109] Polanus, *Substance of Christian Religion*, I.78-79. He explains the three offices of Christ as "his Prophecie, Priesthood, and Kingdome. Psal. 110. Heb.7.2.3. and 13.20" (ibid., 80).

Jerome Zanchi's confession of the Christian religion is light on covenantal language in his sections on the fall, free will, the promise of redemption and the law.[110] He writes of the promise of redemption, made "immediatlie after the transgression, even from the beginning of the worlde, and afterwards oft times mentioned to the holy fathers, declared, yea and confirmed and sealed by diuerse and sundrie meanes, signes, and sacraments: that not only wee which were to bee borne after the comming of the Messias, but also all other, which from the first creation should beleeue in this promise, and in true faith should imbrace the Saviour which was to come."[111] In his discussion of the law, Zanchi writes that the law delivered by Moses came between the promise of redemption by Christ "made first vnto Adam, & after more manifestly to others, as most especially to Abraham" and "established by an euerlasting couenant," and the accomplishment of the same promise.[112]

Having explained the law and with no further mention of the covenant, Zanchi moves to a chapter on Christ the redeemer, confessing Christ as mediator according to both natures, the union of his natures so great that whatever Christ is or does according to his divine nature, the same may be said to be or done by the whole Christ. "Yea, Christ the mediatour, according to his humanitie neuer did or doeth anie thing, wherin his diuinity did not or doth not work together: and he neuer performed anie thing according to his diuinitie, whereunto his humanitie was not assisting or consenting: that

---

[110] John L. Farthing, "*Foedus Evangelicum*: Jerome Zanchi on the Covenant," *Calvin Theological Journal* 29 (1994): 151, notes that Zanchi's major systematic treatises do not include a chapter on covenant, but that Zanchi does address issues raised in covenant theology in his commentaries.

[111] Jerome Zanchi, *His confession of christian religion. Which nouue at length being 70. yeares of age, he causea to bee published in the name of himselfe & his family. Englished in sense agreeable, and in words as answerable to his ouune latine copse, as in so graue a mans worke is requisite: for the profite of all the unlearneder sort, of English Christians, that desire to know his iudgement in matters of faith* (London, 1599), IX.i.44-45.

[112] Zanchi, *His Confession*, X.i.46.

the Fathers verie fitlie called all the works of Christ the Mediatour θεανθρωπως, that is performed both by God and man."[113]

Bucanus engages in making distinctions between *berith, diatheke* and s*untheke,* and the number of covenants God made with humanity in his chapter on the differences of the Old and New Testaments. Testament as the disposing of one's goods after death is *diatheke*, whereas *suntheke* and *berith* pertain to a covenant between the living, with the reference to Hebrews 7:22. Testament "according to the vse of Scripture is vnderstood to be a couenant or agreement betwixt God and men, who before were at variance, in which couenant God doth promise to man those benefits which he himself hath, namely saluation and eternall life and man on the other part doth relie vpon God by confidence in his promises, and doth confirme his faith, & nourish it by the testimonie of the couenant." However, while *diatheke* generally also signifies *suntheke*, each denoting covenant or agreement on a bargain, Bucanus states that the covenant God made with humanity and confirmed by the death of Christ properly calls for *diatheke,* given its added signification of a testament.[114]

In answer to the question as to how many covenants God has made with humanity, Bucanus states that since the fall, "there is one perpetuall couenant or testament of God, whereby God bindeth himselfe to giue saluation to all those who beleeve in Christ." Mention of two covenants in Scripture, Old and New Testament, pertains to the dispensation of the same covenant, the old having been the shadow of the new. "The old Couenant, is vnderstood and called two waies: sometimes in respect

---

[113] Zanchi, *His Confession,* XI.xi.65-66.

[114] William Bucanus. *Institvtions of christian religion, framed out of Gods word, and the writings of the best divines, methodically handled by questions and answers, fit for all such as desire to know, or practice the will of God.* (London, 1606), XXII. 213-214.

onely of *Moses* his lawgiuing, and it is called the couenant *of the law*, the sanction and establishing whereof is described, *Exod.* 24. and sometimes to signifie the couenant of grace or free couenant, in what manner it was made with *Abraham* and his posterities, *Gen.* 17.7. But by the appellation of the new couenant, is vnderstood no more than the free couenant. Of both of these *Ierem* 31.31.32 speaketh thus." The single, free covenant was made "with our first parents straight after the fall, and was confirmed to *Abraham*, of which the law of *Moses* was an helpe, and at length it was reneued in Christ. *Dan.* 9.27."[115] Bucanus later indicates a prior covenant, referring to the law of Moses considered in itself as "a *Legall and anntient Couenant*, because it was the law of creation. Whereby God tooke of vs assurance and full couenant of our perfect obedience to be performed by our owne strength."[116]

Affirming that the work of salvation according to the eternal decree of the Father and the works of the Trinity *ad extra* are undivided, Bucanus, writing of the threefold office of Christ, states that in the prophetical office Christ reveals the gospel, "that is, the secret counsel of the Father concerning the redemption of mankind."[117] Language clearly suggestive of a particular agreement deliberately covenantal is found under the causes of Christ's passion where Bucanus explains that "the antecedent or inward cause" was "the unspeakable loue of God the father, towards his creature, as it is said in Ioh. 3.16." Stating that a "fellow cause" of redemption was the Son, "working voluntarily and with election, and obeying the father," he cites Philippians 2:7.[118]

---

[115] Bucanus, *Institvtions of Christian Religion*, XXII.215-216.
[116] Bucanus, *Institvtions of Christian Religion*, XXII.220.
[117] Bucanus, *Institvtions of Christian Religion*, II.18, 24; III.34.
[118] Bucanus, *Institvtions of Christian Religion*, XXIII.225.

Trelcatius begins his *loci communes* by stating his intention to "lay open in a briefe and Schoole Method a Theologicall institution" that will both teach the truth and reprove falsehood and premising two things: the nature and truth of divinity, and setting out the order and method of instruction. Regarding giving attention to the principal arguments of various adversaries, he singles out "especially Bellarmines."[119]

Exposition of the covenant between God and fallen humanity under the chapter "Of the Covenant God" does not limit Trelcatius to recognizing a single divine covenant, but merely excludes from the current discourse both a general earthly, temporary covenant made by God with all created things and "that speciall couenant, which hee entered into, with our first Parents in that state of integrity." Providing greater detail for "the covenant of God," Trelcatius states that a covenant is a mutual binding of parties according to certain conditions and presents the covenant in three stages (from Adam to Abraham, Abraham to Moses, and Moses to Christ). Considering covenant and testament equivocal, he calls the covenant between God and humanity both a bargain and a compact.[120]

In the locus on the person of Christ, Trelcatius states that both natures are "indivisibly necessary for the redemption of mankind, or the dispensation of the office of a Mediator." Designating further a section for "the necessity of the Divine Nature in the worke of the Mediator-shippe, against Bellarmine," he notes that it is "one thing to speake of the Godhead of Christ in himselfe, according to his own nature a parte; and another thing as hee is in the Subject. Now Christ is a Priest, not as hee is God by

---

[119] Lucas Trelcatius Jr., *A briefe institvtion of the common places of sacred divinitie. Wherein the truth of every place is proved, and the sophismes of Bellarmine are reproved* (London, 1610), B, B3v-B4v. Trelcatius explains that he will incorporate both methods of teaching, analytic and synthetic.

[120] Trelcatius, *Briefe Institvtion*, II.10.276-288.

nature, but as hee is God-man, by the dispensation of (his) will."[121] Teaching on the office of Christ, Trelcatius asserts that "the office of Christ is defined to be an office of mediation committed to the Sonne by the Father, and of the Sonne, both voluntarily receaved, and in both natures perfectly fulfilled; that hee might vnite, and reconcile vs to God, and God to vs for ever." The matter of the office of mediator must be considered two ways: subjectively, with both natures of Christ "not severally, but joyntly together," regarding the parts of the mediatorship that concern God and those that concern humanity; and effectually, of the actions that Christ performed indivisibly as mediator, both divine as God and human as man. The actions are called "Divine-humane, because as there is but one Worker of the Workes of both Natures: so is there but one absolute ending: for the working is of the person; but the beginnings of the workings, are of the Natures."[122]

Describing two orders of testimonies in Scripture concerning justification, Trelcatius explains that testimonies of "Legall Iustice, do teach what manner of iustice standeth before the Tribunall of God," while evangelical testimonies "of the iustice of faith" may pertain to the causes or outward signs of justification or to the person justified. Justification, "a judicall Act" as made before God, "is never taken for the effect of infused grace," and imputation of the righteousness of Christ does not make for the perfection of the faithful in this world.[123]

Wollebius, a follower and successor of Polanus, published his *Compendium theologiae christianae* in 1626 with an English translation appearing in 1650. Stating that although "Creation, Redemption and Sanctification are essential works of the whole

---

[121] Trelcatius, *Briefe Institvtion*, II.6.146-147, 166-169
[122] Trelcatius, *Briefe Institvtion*, II.7.180-182.
[123] Trelcatius, *Briefe Institvtion*, II.9.240-241, 260-265.

Trinity, yet in another respect they are called personal," with Christ being mediator after both his natures, having undertaken the office "by gratious dispensation."[124] He observes that denial of the whole Christ as mediator is held by "the Samosatenians and Pontificians, who teach that Christ was Mediator onely according to his humanity."[125]

Insisting that God's covenant with humanity was a double one, "the one of works, the other of Grace; that before, this after the fall," Wollebius uses the terms *foedus operum* and *foedus gratiae*.[126] While the efficient cause of the covenant of grace is "commonly the Holy Trinitie; but particularly brist, God and man, that Angel of the covenant," the subject of the covenant are the elect only, with the Old and New Testament agreeing in substance, differing in administration.[127]

Regarding justification, Wollebius distinguishes between the justice of the person as either legal as required by the law or evangelical, as shown in Christ by the gospel. In the case of the elect who are declared righteous by God's free act, to justify "is not to punish, nor to infuse inherent righteousnesse, as the Pontificians will have it: but in the sense it is taken in the Courts of Justice, it is to absolve from sin, and to pronounce one just."[128]

Arminius' views on divine covenants come less as a system, more as a piecing together, leaving an impression of what he may have had in mind. He presents the

---

[124] Johannes Wollebius, *The abridgment of christian divinitie: so exactly and methodically compiled, that it leads us, as it were, by the hand to the reading of holy Scriptures. Ordering of common-places. Understanding of controversies.Cleering of some cases of conscience* (London, 1650), I.iii.26-31; I.xvii.104-107.

[125] Wollebius, *Abridgment of Christian Divinitie*, I.17.105.

[126] Wollebius, *Abridgment of Christian Divinitie*, I.viii.68-70, I.xxi.136-140.

[127] Wollebius, *Abridgment of Christian Divinitie*, I.xxi.136-140. "They are deceived then who make Parallel distinctions of the Old and New Testament; of the Covenant of Works, and of Grace; of the Law and Gospel: for in both, the Testament of Covenant is the Covenant of Grace; in both, the Law and Gospel are urged" (ibid., 138).

[128] Wollebius, *Abridgment of Christian Divinitie*, I.xxx. 202

covenants between God and humanity as having mutual correspondences, such that every covenant concluded between God and humanity consists of God's preceding promise and self-obligation to some duty and relevant acts, and the duty required of humanity. His Oration IV was identified by Witsius as containing an early reference to the *pactum salutis*.[129]

Included in this 1603 address is mention of the conflict between Justice, demanding punishment due from sinful creatures, and Mercy, "like a pious mother," moving to avert that punishment with Wisdom, serving as the arbiter, appeasing Justice and giving Mercy what she desired. The proposed plan of priesthood and sacrifice was assented to and made a decree. Arminius states that the appointment to priesthood rests with God. Christ undertook the office of priesthood according to a covenant entered into by God and Jesus Christ, and confirmed by an oath. The two parts of the covenant consisted of God's demand of the action to be performed and the promise of remuneration, and Christ as High Priest accepting the promise and voluntarily consenting to perform the action.[130] The covenants with humanity here are spoken of as the first covenant made void through sin, and another contract, not of works and law but of faith and grace. The other contract is not old but new, not because it came later than the first but because it would never be abrogated or repealed.[131]

In Disputation XIII, comparing law and gospel, and distinguishing *Lex, Promissio*, and *Evangelion*, Arminius seems to put forth a three-covenant system in conjunction with the law. He writes of the law as it was originally delivered to Adam in

---

[129] Witsius, *Economy of the covenants between God & man*, 176.

[130] James Arminius, Oration IV, *Works of James Arminius*, trans. James Nichols and William Nichols, vol. 1(Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), 406, 412-417.

[131] Arminius, *Works*, vol. 1, 423-424.

the state of innocence, and then in a twofold respect: in the Old Testament or covenant having been given to Moses and imposed on sinners, and in the New Testament as the gospel. The law first delivered to Adam and given by Moses was delivered by God as a legislator while the gospel is promulgated by the Father of mercy and God of all grace. God instituted the old covenant as "One who was angry at the sins which remained without expiation under the preceding covenant" with Moses serving as both the servant delivering the law and mediator of the law. The new covenant was instituted by God being reconciled or about to accomplish reconciliation by Christ, the revealed Lord and mediator, in the new covenant.[132] Despite significant differences, Arminius states that the fathers living under the law in the Old Testament were not devoid of grace. The promises made to Adam concerning "the Seed of woman" and to "the seed" of Abraham in whom all people on earth were to be blessed were in existence during the time of the fathers and they received those promises in faith. This covenant, or covenants of promise, is/are comprehended under the Old Testament and placed in contrast to the New Testament and gospel, but both include the promise of the inheritance of eternal life through the imputation of righteousness. Neither the old nor new covenant "was to be abolished, but the former was to be fulfilled by the latter."[133]

Cameron distinguishes divine covenants as either the absolute promise of God without any "restipulations" or the free promise of God with "the restipulation of our duty." The first type is called a *paction*, dependant upon the primary love of God and

---

[132] Arminius, *Works*, vol. 2, 203-206. The law given to Adam in his innocency is compared with the gospel, but excludes the law given by Moses, in that both were inscribed on the hearts and allow for the ability of fulfilling the condition. However a significant difference is that although the law as first given is in the exercise of benevolence, without Christ as mediator Arminius considers it a strict justice requiring obedience with the promise of rewards or punishment, while in the gospel justice is tempered with mercy with respect to Christ.

[133] Arminius, *Works*, vol. 2, 207-210.

includes the covenants made with Noah after the flood, God promising never to destroy the earth by water, and God's promise to give his elect faith and perseverance. The second type, described as "that Covenant to which a restipulation is annexed, God doeth fulfill what he hath promised, because the creature hath rendered what is required," is not one simple covenant but threefold: covenant of nature, covenant of grace as covenant promised and covenant promulgated, and the old or subservient covenant.[134]

Agreements and differences between the three covenants are detailed. The covenant made with just man at creation and the Old covenant are similar in having "doe this and live" stipulations and the promise of blessed temporal lives, whether in Paradise or the land of Canaan. The Old Covenant is identified as the Old Testament, promulgated at Mount Sinai with the Israelites only by a God who reproves sin, and designed to be succeeded by a better covenant promulgated at Pentecost with a God who remits sin.[135] Cameron states that differences between the subservient covenant and the covenant of grace include restraining sin in the former covenant by coaction, while in the covenant of grace sin is restrained "by a spontaneous and voluntarie inclination of the mindes of men."[136] Language of the Godhead covenanting comes in discussing Moses and Christ as mediators, how Christ is mediator and "as God the other party covenanting," but without Cameron indicating any intratrinitarian covenanting.[137]

---

[134] Cameron, *Certain Theses*, 353-356, 365-366. The Latin terms are *foedus naturae, foedus gratiae* and *foedus gratiae subserviens.*

[135] Cameron, *Certain Theses*, 379, 392-393, 400-401.

[136] Cameron, *Certain Theses*, 393. Cameron defines *coaction* as "not that whereby the *members* of man are *hurried* on impetuously to the doing of those things, which by no meanes *willingly* they would doe, but such a kinde of Coaction [to] which there doth *concure* some *consent* of will, indeed that consent not be absolute, and perfect, neither yet such as is *compelled*, for as much as to assent, and yet to be *compelled*, are repugnant" (ibid., 390).

[137] Cameron, *Certain Theses,* 396-397. See Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy*, 47. Armstrong insists that Cameron and Amyraut never spoke of a covenant of redemption as an eternal pact between the Father and Son. Cameron's three covenants are a development in time.

Amyraut's pronouncements regarding three distinct covenants, *foedus naturale*, *foedus legale* and *foedus evangelium*, were viewed as alarming and not only within the French church and on the Continent. Turretin rejected Amyraut's system of covenants, asserting as the common orthodox opinion the two mutually distinct covenants of works and grace. Canon XXV of the Formula Consensus Helvetica of 1675 also contains a strong statement disapproving the doctrine of three entirely separate covenants regarding the justification of humanity.[138]

2.3.4 British Works ca. 1638-1650

With the work on the particulars of the covenants of works and grace and terminology continuing to show similarity but not yet standardization, language indicating acknowledgment and acceptance of some kind of intratrinitarian covenant can be found in British theological texts from this period with some authors acknowledging in print their indebtedness to Dickson. In addition, two variations of a three covenant system published in English in the 1640s were propounded by Cameron and David Dunbar, but both refer to covenants made by God with humanity, not a *pactum salutis*.

---

[138] Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, vol. 2, 262-269; *Formula consensus ecclesiarum Helvetica reformatarum, circa doctrinam de gratia universali et connexa alique nonnulla capita, Collectio Confessionum in Ecclesiis Reformatis Publicatarum*, ed. Hermann A. Niemeyer, canon XXV (Leipzig, 1840), lxxxi, 738. "Improbamus igitur eorum doctrinam, qui tria nobis Foedera, tota natura et medulla disparata, Naturale, videlicet, Legale et Evangelium cudunt, atque in iisdem explicandis, eorumque differentiis assignandis adeo quidem intricate versantur, ut solidae veritatis et pietatis nucleum non parum involvant sive affligant: quique de notitiae Christi et fidei in eundem eiusque satisfactionem totamque sacro-sanctam τριαδα necessitate sub Vet. Testamenti oeconomia, aequo quam par est, laxius, neque sine periculo θεολογειν nulli dubitant." See also Fisher, *History of Christian Doctrine*, 342; Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, vol. 1, 477-489, notes that Amyraut's doctrine of three essentially different covenants was disapproved by the Helvetic Consensus Formula of 1675; Lincoln, "Development of Covenant," 146.

The second edition of Leigh's treatise on divine promises, published in 1641, identifies the covenant of amity made by God with the first parents in their state of innocency and containing the law known to them by nature as *Foedus naturale* and *Foedus Legale*, "the *Covenant* of workes because works were the condition of it." *Foedus Evangelicum*, its other terms including *Covenant of the Gospell*, *New Covenant*, *Covenant of grace*, was made immediately after the fall, revealed and delivered to Adam and Eve by God, and "continued and renewed with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." Although stating that the same author, God, is "the principall efficient cause" of the old and new covenant, Leigh names God the Father, not Christ, as the author of the old covenant "made then mediately and not Incarnate." Christ is the author of the new, made "immediately and from his owne mouth."[139] The term *Covenant of Redemption* occurs here in the context of confirming the covenant of grace by means of the death of the testator, and in a later text published in 1654 in the section on Christ's offices. In neither case does the term refer to a separate covenant.[140]

Two authors featuring sustained discussions of the law/gospel issue that include treatment of the covenants of works and grace were George Walker and Anthony Burgess. Walker's terminology for the covenants of works and grace differs somewhat in two of his works, but he maintains Christ's work as part of the covenant of grace with nothing to suggest covenanting within the Godhead. Presenting the chief principles of the faith, Walker employs the term *covenant of life* for both the covenant made with

---

[139] Leigh, *Treatise of Divine Promises*, 115-122, 133. EEBO lists a 1633 edition, but the text was not accessible. The title page of the 1641 informs readers that the second impression has been corrected and enlarged by the author.

[140] Leigh, *Treatise of Divine Promises*, 126-127. "The Covenant of grace, is called in regard of the convention and agreement betweene GOD and man, a Covenant; in regard of the manner of confirming it, a Testament." Ball echoes this explanation in his treatise on the covenant.

Adam in innocency and with the all elect after the fall. "Through Christ promised, God did shed his Spirit on the Fathers of old, as hee now doth on us through Christ given and exhibited, and by the Spirit united them to him in one spirituall body."[141] In his more detailed examination of the covenants, he refers to the first covenant made with Adam as the covenant of natural life and blessings or the covenant of workes. Covenant of grace is his standard term for the covenant made after the fall "with man in Christ," also designated as the covenant of peace and *foedus gratuitum*.[142] Although stating that the two parts of the covenant of grace are the same in substance and the promise of salvation in Christ, the first is "a mixt Covenant" composed of aspects of both the covenants of works and grace.

In explaining this "mixt Covenant," Walker includes a discussion of the uses of the law, and how God renewed the old covenant of works at Sinai because of Israel's pride and presumption in thinking they could fulfill their duty to God. Through this the people were to recognize their insufficiency that they might be humbled and brought down from vain confidence in their own works. The law was to serve as a schoolmaster driving them to Christ, as well as driving home to them and the rest of God's people, the impossibility of sinful flesh to fulfill the Law that is still in force. Israel's fear in hearing the law spoken immediately by God drove them towards a mediator and into the

---

[141] George Walker, *The key of saving knowledge, opening out of the holy Scriptures, the right way, and straight passage to eternall life. Or, a dialogue wherein the chiefe principles of christian religion are unfolded for the enabling of christian people, to understand the word of God and to atteine to the true sense and meaning thereof* (London, 1641), 31, 38, 61-62.

[142] George Walker, *The manifold wisedome of God: in the divers dispensation of grace by Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament, New Testament. In the covenant of faith. of workes. Their agreement and difference* (London, 1640), 51, 56-57.

obscure revelation of Christ by "divers figures of Christ, as Sacrifices, Rites, Ceremonies, the Tabernacle, the Arke of the Covenant, and the Mercy Seat."[143]

Walker compares *berith*, *diatheke*, and *covenant*, stating that covenant "in our English tongue, signifies, as we all know, a mutuall promise, bargaine and Obligation betweene two parties."[144] He also distinguishes sin against the law from sin against the gospel, observing that not knowing the difference between law and gospel could move one to think "that men are justified and saved by their workes, and may merit heaven by good deeds."[145]

Burgess' lectures feature a vindication of the law and covenants against the views of Papists, Arminians, Socinians and particularly the Antinomians. Using the terms *Covenant of Nature* and *Covenant of Grace* or *Reconciliation*, he fails to accept the great divide often presented between the covenants, arguing that God enters into covenants with humanity by way of merciful condescension. In giving Adam a law, God not only dealt with Adam by way of a covenant but entered into one of grace. "A Law, and a Covenant, arise from different grounds: The Law is from God as supreme, and having absolute power, and so requiring subjection; the other ariseth from the love and goodnesse of God, whereby he doth sweeten and mollifie that power of his, and ingageth himselfe to reward that obedience, which were otherwise due, though God should never recompense it."[146] Further, even if the covenant with Adam is accepted as a covenant of works, "it cannot be said to be of merit. Adam, though in innocency,

---

[143] Walker, *Manifold Wisedome*, 66-72, 83.
[144] Walker, *Manifold Wisedome*, 39.
[145] Walker, *Manifold Wisedome*, 5-9.
[146] Anthony Burgess, *Vindiciae legis: or, a vindication of the morall law and the covenants, from the errours of Papists, Arminians, Socinians, and more especially, Antinomians.* (London, 1646), 119-123.

could not merit that happinesse which God would bestow upon him: first, because the enjoying of God, in which Adam's happinesse did consist, was such a good as did farre exceed the power and ability of man. It's an infinite good, and all that is done by us is finite."[147]

In *Christ Set Forth*, published in 1642, Thomas Goodwin writes of Christ's covenant with his Father as a complot, a transaction, and emphasizes Christ becoming surety, from everlasting having "struck hands with God, to do all for us that God could require." Goodwin does not consider this covenant between God and Christ a separate covenant, but "God making the Covenant of Grace primarily with him, and with him as for us, thereby his single Bond alone was taken for us all, that so God might be sure of satisfaction."[148]

The preface to Ball's *Treatise on the Covenant of Grace,* written by Simeon Ash, speaks of a covenant transacted between God and Christ and his spiritual seed as "the first and most firm foundation of a Christians comfort," the "Covenant of Promise,"[149] referring to the covenant of grace with God's people. Ball begins with a discourse on the significance of the word *covenant*, its relation to *berith*, *diatheke,* and *suntheke*. He observes that although a covenant may refer to two parties mutually agreeing and promising between themselves or to a promise one makes as a

---

[147] Burgess, *Vindiciae Legis*, 125-126. Similarly, Burgess did not oppose law and gospel, "*the difference is not essential, or substantial, but accidentall*: so that the division of the Testament, or Covenant into the Old, and New, is not a division of the *Genus* into its opposite *Species*; but of the subject, according to its severall accidentall administrations, both on Gods part, and on mans," 241.

[148] Thomas Goodwin, *Christ set forth in his death, resurrection, ascension, sitting at Gods right hand, intercession as the cause of Iustification. Object of justifying faith. Upon Rom.8.vers.34* (London, 1642), 57, 72-77.

[149] Simeon Ash, Preface to *A treatise of the covenant of grace: wherein the graduall breakings out of gospel-grace from Adam to Christ are clearly discovered, the differences betwixt the Old and New Testaments are laid open, divers errours of Arminianism and others are confuted; the nature of uprightnesse, and the way of Christ in bringing the soul into communion with himself; together with many other points, both doctrinally and practically profitable, are solidly handled* by John Ball (London, 1645), A3v.

testamentary disposition, in the Old Testament *berith* is never read as testamentary disposition. Ball explains that while Greek interpreters almost always translate *testament* by *diatheke*, *berith* is itself general. Regarding the translation of Hebrews 9.16, Ball states that this is not a matter of "the simple signification of the word" for covenant, but the circumstances of the covenant itself. [150]

As used in Scripture, covenant, Ball points out, may indicate either God's absolute promise without any stipulations, as with Noah and Phineas, or his free promise to the creature under stipulations of duty. "But yet in all ages of the Church past, and so to the end of the world, God hath ever, and ever will make expressions outward of this his Covenant with mankinde. The Covenant is one thing, the name of the Covenant another. For the Covenant includes the whole reason of the Covenant with the circumstances: but the name sometimes is attributed to some circumstances. So the Covenant may be said to be the same and not the same, that which is the same in substance, varieth in manner and circumstances."[151]

Although observing that Scripture does not provide the term covenant for the relationship between God and humanity existing since creation and before the fall, "we have in Scripture what may amount to as much." In treating the covenant made with Adam in his innocency, Ball describes covenant as "a mutuall compact or agreement betwixt God and man, whereby God promiseth all good things, specially eternall happinesse unto man, upon just, equall and favourable conditions, and man doth promise to walk before God in acceptable, free and willing obedience, expecting all good from God, and happinesse in God, according to his Promise, for the praise and

---

[150] Ball, *Covenant of Grace*, 1-3.
[151] Ball, *Covenant of Grace*, 3-5.

glory of his great Name." There being no equality in the parties, God is the author of the covenant and enters into the covenant as sovereign with man bound to accept "what the Lord is well-pleased to offer and command." [152]

Ball gives three causes for why God chose to deal with his reasonable creatures by way of covenant: the creature in what ever state might know what to expect from the Creator; the creature might recognize and acknowledge what to return; and this best suits dealing with a reasonable creature and his/her subordination to God. While assenting to the term covenant of works, Ball insists that this covenant of justice is also a covenant of grace. "Although in some Covenant the good covenanted be promised in justice, and given in justice for our workes: yet it was of grace that God was pleased to bind himselfe to his creature, and about the desert of the creature: and though the reward be of justice, it is also of favor."[153]

The covenant of grace and mercy is "that free and gracious Covenant which God, of his mere mercy in Jesus Christ, made with man a miserable and wretched sinner, promising him pardon of sinne and eternall happinesse, if he will return from his iniquity, embrace mercy reached forth, by faith unfained, and walke before God in sincere, faithfull and willing obedience." A covenant in respect to the manner of agreement, it is a testament in its manner of confirmation. This covenant is divided into the "Covenant of Promise," promised to the Fathers, to Adam as a believer and not as the common parent of humanity, to his posterity, to the Patriarchs and all Israel in Christ who was not yet incarnate; and the "New Covenant," promulgated and

---

[152] Ball, *Covenant of Grace*, 6-7.
[153] Ball, *Covenant of Grace*, 6-8.

established, after Christ's coming in the fullness of time.[154] Ball further identifies this as the "Lord's Covenant" with God both the author and "one partie confederate." Christ as mediator is both the foundation and author, "appointed of the Father Lord and King," giving Jeremiah 31-33, Zechariah 9:11, and Hebrews 9:16.[155]

New England Puritan John Cotton contrasts the covenant of works or old covenant with that of grace, identifying the covenant of grace as the everlasting covenant spoken of in Jeremiah 32:40, 31:33-34 and Romans 4:16. The covenant of grace is given (Galatians 3:16) to Christ "and in Christ to every godly man, Gen. 17.7, and in every godly man to his seed." Cotton gives three means for conveying the covenant to God's people and does not assume a separate intratrinitarian covenant. The means are: "the Lord Jesus Christ, this Covenant was made with him from all eternity, Ephes. 1.3"; the Father sealing the covenant in and by Christ by his holy Spirit; delivery of the covenant by his Gospel.[156]

In his treatise on Christian liberty, Bolton addresses divine covenants, vindicating the law, and rejecting numerous reasons for considering the law a covenant of works. Including a summary and explanation of the variety of divine covenants in circulation, naming *foedus naturae*, *foedus promissi* or grace, *foedus operis*, "a mixt Covenant consisting of Nature and Grace," and Cameron's *foedus naturae, gratiae* and *subserviens,* he argues for two covenants between God and humanity.[157] Bolton refutes views that the law was set up as a covenant of works, either in opposition or contrary to

---

[154] Ball, *Covenant of Grace*, 14-15, 27-28.

[155] Ball, *Covenant of Grace*, 196-199, 202.

[156] John Cotton, *The covenant of Gods free grace, most sweetly unfolded, and comfortably applied to a disquieted soul, from that the text of 2 Sam. 23. Ver.5. Also a doctrinall conclusion, that there is in all such who are effectually called, in-dwelling spirituall gifts and graces, wrought and created in them by the Holy Ghost* (London, 1645), 11-12, 14-15.

[157] Bolton, *Trve Bovnds*, 108-163.

the promise of God, or as an ingredient in the promise of salvation by grace. Although preferring the term *covenant of nature* for the covenant made with Adam in innocency, he notes his agreement with Ames' distinction between the covenant of works as a covenant of friendship and the covenant of grace as one of reconciliation.[158] In exploring how the law may be considered a covenant or not, the reference is to *a* covenant rather than *the* covenant of works, for Bolton is convinced that while Scripture teaches the law as an abiding rule and freedom from the law as a covenant, it does not grant it status as a covenant from which one could expect life.[159] Bolton explains that the law is not in opposition but subservient to the gospel, concluding that "there was no end or use for which the Law was given, but might consist with Grace, and be serviceable to the advancement of the Covenant of Grace."[160]

Fisher's dialogue between a minister of the gospel, a legalist, an antinomian, and a young Christian provides the framework for what he hopes will be a corrective to erroneous views that have generated contention in the theological community and an aid for reconciling the community. In addition to treating the law/gospel issue, the text serves as a catalog of participants in the covenant discussion. He admits in his letter to the reader of *The Marrow of Modern Divinity* having gathered material for his dialogue from "known and approved authors," with acknowledgments in the margins to many, including Dickson.[161] Early in his text, Fisher draws from Musculus' *Common Places*

---

[158] Bolton, *Trve Bovnds*, 127-136. The gloss regarding Ames on page 134 reads, "Lege Ames. de applicatione Christi. Foedus operis est foedus amicitiae, foedus gratiae est foedus reconciliationis,--- Ames."

[159] Bolton, *Trve Bovnds*, 21-28.

[160] Bolton, *Trve Bovnds*, 156-163.

[161] Fisher, "To the Reader," *Marrow of Modern Divinity*, A7v, A8r: "I have gathered much of it out of godly and approved Authors, and yet have therein wronged no man, for I have given each man [his] own againe in the margent; some part of it I have gathered out of Manuscripts which [had] by me."

and Ames' *Medulla* for explanation of the covenant of works, and links covenant with bargain.[162]

In answering how the Lord purposed from all eternity to "helpe and deliver fallen mankind," Fisher offers that "the learned frame a kind of conflict in God's holy Attributes" between justice, truth, mercy and peace "whereupon the Wisedome and Counsell of the blessed Trinity consulted, and after consultation concluded, that before there could be Reconciliation, there must be two things effected: First, a satisfaction of Gods justice; Secondly, a reparation of mans nature." This could be done by none other than "one of the same blessed Trinity," Jesus Christ. "Therefore he, by his Fathers ordination, his own voluntary susception and the holy Spirits sanctification, was fitted for the business; so he put upon him his person, and took upon him his name to enter in his stead in obeying his Father to yield in our flesh the price of satisfaction of the just judgement of God, and in the same flesh suffer the punishment that man has deserved. And thus was Justice satisfied, and Mercy magnified by the Lord Jesus Christ: whereupon there was a special Covenant, or mutuall agreement made betwixt God and Christ, as expressed *Isa. 53*.10."[163]

Fisher cites Thomas Hooker's *Soules Justification* and the English edition of Ames' *Medulla*, published in 1638, regarding the calling of Christ to his threefold office as "an action of God, especially the Father, whereby a speciall covenant being made, he

---

Four acknowledgments of Dickson on pages 31, 44, 48, 66 pertain to his commentary of Hebrews, although neither the edition nor the page numbers are specified.

[162] Fisher, *Marrow of Modern Divinity*, 6: "The law of Works is as much to say as the covenant of Works, for it is manifest (saith *Musculus*) that the word for Covenant or Bargain, is put for law, the which covenant or bargain the Lord made with all mankind in *Adam* before his fall, the summe whereof was, *Do this, and thou shalt live, and if thou do it not, thou shalt die the death.*" English editions of both Musculus' *Common Place,* 118, and Ames' *Medulla*, 48, are given.

[163] Fisher, *Marrow of Modern Divinity*, 34-36, citing Reynoldes on Psalm 110, Hooker's *The soules justification, and* Calvin's *Institutes*.

ordained his Son to this office."[164] Fisher also refers to Tho. Goodwyn, Ainsworth, and Pareus, and to Psalm 40:7-8, Isaiah 49:8 and Hebrews 7:22 regarding statements of the existence of the mutual agreement between God and Christ.[165] Dickson is not mentioned in this part of the dialogue on the *pactum salutis*, but is brought into the discussion of the eternal intratrinitarian covenant with respect to the promise of the seed of woman given to Adam, turned into a covenant with Abraham. "*Melchisedec* should in these particulars resemble the person and office of Jesus Christ the Son of God and so by Gods own appointment be a type of him to *Abraham*, to ratifie and confirm the promise made to him and his seed in respect of the eternal Covenant, to wit, that they should be so blessed in Christ, as *Melchisedec* had blessed him."[166]

David Dunbar proposes three formal covenants made by God with humanity, each part of the execution of the decree of predestination and established "upon the immediate command of the word of every severall seventh daies rest." The explanation in the introduction defines "the command of the seventh day of the Law of righteousness" as pertaining to the whole worship of God in which the whole law is necessarily fulfilled according to the particulars of each covenant.[167] God first covenants with Adam as "head, root and originall of all men naturally" promising the

---

[164] Fisher, *Marrow of Modern Divinity*, 36; Thomas Hooker, *The soules justification*, in *The sovles exhaltation. A treatise containing the soules vnion with Christ on 1 Cor. 6.17. The soules benefit from vnion with Christ, on 1 Cor. 1.30. The soules justification, on 2 Cor. 5.21* (London, 1638) 178, 170. Hooker writes of justice being satisfied and mercy magnified, though earlier in his text he explained the mutual decree and purpose of the Father and Christ for souls to be saved and their having made a mutual agreement and compact. Ames, *Marrow of Sacred Divinity*, 74.

[165] Fisher, *Marrow of Modern Divinity*, 36-37.

[166] Fisher, *Marrow of Modern Divinity*, 44.

[167] David Dunbar, "The Introduction leading the judicious Reader to the understanding of this Tractate," *The theologicall key of the first three covenants, made by God with man, in the severall state of man; obliging man to his law, after a severall formall manner, for the beginning, according to his sacred decree of predestination, fundamentally declared, according to his sacred word and truth* (London, 1646), A2, 32.

eternal condition of Adam's created estate and condition by Adam's obedience, "his perfect worship of God upon the first seventh day of the Law."[168]

After the fall, the second or old covenant, presupposing the redemption of all humanity from the actual curse of the law, God binds and obliges himself to the promise of the blessed seed. Humanity is bound and obliged "both upon the eternal blessing of the word of the second seventh dayes of rest of the Law of righteousness of faith [to believe the promise]" and "the eternall merciless curse of the law of faith." By the decree of God, Adam and all men redeemed in Adam "were shut up and concluded in temporall spiritual darkness called unbelief and sin, till they be regenerate."[169] The third or new covenant, obliging all humanity to believe the fulfillment of the promise of the blessed seed by Christ and the third seventh day's rest, was made by God with all nations of the world upon the day of Christ's resurrection.[170]

Although discussion of three divine covenants had clearly been public knowledge prior to the time the divines met at Westminster to draw up a confession of faith, the confession promulgates two covenants between God and humanity, using the terms *covenant of works* and *covenant of grace*. The latter, administered differently in the Old and New Testaments, was the same in substance.[171] The accompanying Larger

---

[168] Dunbar, *Theologicall Key*, 24-26.

[169] Dunbar, *Theologicall Key*, 54-57. Dunbar insists that the actual curse of the Law, eternal damnation, for Adam's sin "was never, neither shall it be ever actually inflicted upon Adam, or any man naturally to descend of Adam...Therefore all the punishments inflicted by God by his censure upon our first parents for the transgression of the Law, were all temporal in this life... For God can shew no mercy to man condemned to the curse of the Law, without a Mediator to intervene between the condemnation of man by the Law, and the actual inflicting of the curse." Therefore redemption must be declared before the arraignment of and censure of God upon the first parents and the second covenant (ibid., 55).

[170] Dunbar, *Theologicall Key*, 56-57. The full discourse runs from 149, the summation beginning on 231.

[171] *The confession of faith, together with the larger and lesser catechismes.* Composed by the reverend assembly of divines, sitting at Westminster, presented to both Houses of Parliament, chapter VII (Glasgow, 1675), 22-25. See Vos, *Redemptive History*, 238-239; Woolsey, "Unity and Continuity," 66, identifies the three divine covenants as the pre-temporal covenant between the Father and Son, the

Catechism first uses the term *covenant of life* for the covenant made with Adam in his state of innocency. The first covenant, "commonly called the Covenant of Works," having been breached, the catechism states that God delivered his elect out of it and brought them to a state of salvation by the second covenant, identified as "commonly called the Covenant of Grace."[172] Neither the confession nor catechism teaches of an additional divine covenant between the members of the Godhead.

In *The Principles of Christian Religion* Ussher presents two covenants, with brief statements in the first section of God having entered into "a Covenant or agreement with *Adam*, and in him with all mankind" at creation and "a New Covenant with mankind" after the fall.[173] Not until the second part of the text does Ussher name the covenants that order the state of mankind in this life. The first is "The Law, or the covenant of works: whereby God promiseth everlasting life unto man, upon condition that he performe intire and perfect obedience unto his Law, according to that strength wherewith he was indued by virtue of his creation."[174] The second is "The Gospell, or the Covenant of Grace; whereby God promiseth everlasting life unto man, upon condition that he be reconciled unto him in Christ; for as the condition of the first, was the continuance of the righteousnesse which was to be found in mans own person: so the condition of the second, is the obtaining of that righteousnesse which is without himself; even the righteousness of God which is by faith in the Mediator Jesus

---

covenant of works between God and Adam, and the covenant of grace between God and elect sinners, and observes also that neither Ball nor Ussher taught a threefold covenant system.

[172] *The humble advice of the assembly of divines, now by authority of Parliament sitting at Westminster concerning a larger catechism; presented by them lately to both Houses of Parliament; with the proofs thereof at large out of the Scriptures (Glasgow, 1675),* [Q 20-22, 30-36] 113-114, 117-120.

[173] James Ussher, *The principles of christian religion: with a brief method of the doctrine thereof* (London, 1658), 9-10, 15-16.

[174] Ussher, *Principles*, 71-72.

Christ."[175] Ussher mentions God's eternal counsel in his discussion of God's kingdom regarding the decree made from all eternity and its execution accomplished in time, but without indication of an intratrinitarian covenant or agreement.[176]

Published in 1650, Leigh does not include mention of intratrinitarian covenanting in annotations on the New Testament of Matthew 1:21, 3:17 and 26:28, 39, or Colossians 1:20 and 2:15. The last is not commented upon, but in verse 14 is the statement that "the obligatory power of the Law, as a Covenant is taken away." On 2 Timothy 1:9 regarding works, Leigh notes, "That is, not for the fore-knowledge of mans faith or works; marke the exclusive, when, before the world was; there this grace whereby we are saved, cannot be any gift of grace infused into us, unlesse it could be infused before the world was, or we were in it." With no mention of the Godhead covenanting here, Leigh does cite the passage and notes Dr. Taylor's comments of God having decreed to promise in 2 Timothy 1:9 when commenting on Titus 1:2. Leigh, however, declares his preference for focusing on the promise made before the beginning of the world, rather than the "harsh interpretation" of the decree to promise.[177]

Making observations on the first chapter of Hebrews, Leigh does refer to Dickson's 1635 Hebrews commentary and translation, but does not mark Dickson's discussion of God being Christ's God by covenant in 1:9. On Hebrews 7:22 Leigh states, "Christ was the surety of the first Covenant to pay the debt; of the second

---

[175]Ussher, *Principles*, 83-84.

[176]Ussher, *Principles*, 64-67.

[177]Edward Leigh, *Annotations upon all the New Testament philologicall and theological: wherein the emphasis and elegancies of the Greeke is observed. Some imperfections in our translation are discovered. Divers Jewish rites and customes tending to illustrate the text are mentioned. Many antilogies and seeming contradictions reconciled. Severall darke and obscure places opened. Sundry passages vinidicated from the false glosses of papists and heretiks* (London, 1650), 304, 332, 338.

Covenant, to performe the duty," offering no further clarification than mention of "a better testament" referring to the manner of its revealing, not its substance.[178]

2.4 Contemporary Declarations of the *Pactum Salutis*

Contemporary with Dickson's 1638 speech, mention of the *pactum salutis* crops up in some texts with surprisingly little, if any, introduction, as in Bayne's 1635 commentary. As this study has shown, reflections on and discussions of this divine covenant were not uncommon in the British theological community, suggesting a wider degree of familiarity with the concept of the *pactum salutis* than might be expected of a developing doctrine whose terminology continued to be fluid for some time. This seeming awareness may account for the lack of prefatory clarification.

A plausible explanation for the acceptance of the doctrine may be its connection with the covenant of grace. As von Rohr notes, the particular Puritan understanding of God as a covenanting God did not place the origin of the covenant of grace in human history but divine, "a kind of meta-history located solely in the life of God." He observes that if this constitutes abstract speculation, it reaches "concrete conclusion, for the ultimate outcome was to draw the Christ of historical revelation more directly into both the substance and assurance of the covenant of grace."[179]

The doctrine of the *pactum salutis* is also clearly exhibited in Hooker's treatise on justification with much talk of the mutuality of consent, though the identification of this consent as a covenant seems lacking. It may be that Hooker, having identified actions that remain in God as decrees and purposes before the foundation of the world

---

[178] Leigh, *Annotations*, 344, 352.
[179] von Rohr, *Covenant of Grace*, 43-44, contra T. F. Torrance.

"confined within the high Councell Table of Heaven, Father, Son and holy Ghost, and these never appeared to the eye of the world," and those actions that subsequently pass from God to the creature, considered himself somewhat limited in talking about the compact that had been revealed.[180] Published in London in 1638 and referenced by Fisher in 1645, Dickson may or may not have known of it by 1638.

In the text Hooker states that the whole Trinity was the offended party by Adam's sin with the sin directly against the Father, indirectly against the Son and Holy Ghost, in that the sin wronged the work of creation "wherein the manner of the worke of the Father appeared in a speciall manner." Similarly, "the manner of the work of the Son appeared in redemption, and the manner of the work of the holy Ghost appeared in sanctification." Thus, the Father, directly offended, is the creditor, requiring "the debt at the hands of our Suretie"; "the poore sinner is the debtor"; "the holy Spirit the messenger, that brings the acquittance from God the Father." Described by Hooker in legal terms and set forth as a forensic act of the Father, though not to exclude either the Son or Holy Ghost, justification is the act of the Father with the imagery of the King granting the plea of pardon by the Son, the Prince of peace, and sending that pardon by messenger, the Holy Ghost.[181]

Regarding God charging the sins of the faithful to Christ, Hooker states that "God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ made a mutuall decree and purpose, that so many that believe, they should bee saved. And they did not only purpose this, but they did make a mutuall agreement between themselves, that the Lord Jesus Christ should

---

[180] Hooker, *Sovles Justification*, 137-139.

[181] Hooker, *Sovles Justification*, 135-136. A later work by Hooker, *The covenant of grace opened*, is a refutation of Anabaptist teaching against infant baptism and includes a discussion of federal holiness, but not covenanting within the Godhead.

take the care of those soules to make them believe, and to save them by believing, and the Lord Jesus undertook the worke according to their compact."[182]

Thomas Blake concedes there was a covenant-transaction between God and Christ on behalf of the elect "laid down by the Prophet, Esay. 53.10, &c and commented on by the Apostle, Phil. 2.6." Given as an explicatory proposition early in his explanation of the covenant of grace, he seeks to dispel notions presented by other known writers that the two parties in the covenant of grace are God and Christ, rather than God and humanity.[183] In the treatise a system of three divine covenants—intratrinitarian, works and grace— is acknowledged, but because his primary interest was in discussing the covenant of grace and after stating clearly his intention of not being drawn off topic, Blake devoted his energies to the covenant of grace.

Christ as "the new Covenant of free grace" is the topic of a sermon by Tobias Crispe on Isaiah 42:6-7 with the description given here also of covenant as a mutual agreement. Contrasting the first covenant God entered into with humanity with the second, Crispe is unwilling to consider the covenant of works apart from grace even though the covenant of works stood on a condition. He thinks it probable, if not certain, that Christ was no less given as "the first covenant unto men" as the second, for although all creatures are bound to do what God imposes upon them, the privilege of grace is given to humanity that "in doing this he should live."[184] Crispe declares that the second covenant "is nothing but Gods love to man, Gods love to give himself to

---

[182] Hooker, *Sovles Justification*, 170.

[183] Thomas Blake, *Vindiciae foederis: or, a treatise of the covenant of God entered with mankinde, in the several kindes and degrees of it, in which the agreement and respective differences of the covenant of works and the covenant of grace, of the old and new covenant are discust*, 2nd ed. (London, 1658), 13-19.

[184] Tobias Crispe, Sermon VI, *The new covenant of free grace, in Christ alone exalted in fourteen sermons preached in and neare London, by the late Reverend Tobias Crispe* (London, 1643), 156.

man, Gods loue to take man to himself." Christ is the covenant God gives, "the Originall of the covenant," and "all the covenant is, as it were, in the loynes of Christ and springs out of him." Christ is the covenant's maker, mediator, undertaker and manager, ordering and dispatching the covenant. "He makes the Articles; he draws God the Father to an agreement unto the Articles," and "brings God down to the terms of the covenant to yield to them," as well as bringing "man also to be willing to it."[185] Yet, Crispe makes no clear declaration here of covenanting between God the Father and the Son.

Acknowledgment of intratrinitarian covenanting does figure into other mid-1640s texts including those by Owen, Calamy, and Bulkeley. Owen, in his Greater Catechism, declares that the means whereby Christ undertook the office of eternal priest was by "the Decree, Ordination, and will of God his Father, whereunto hee yeelded voluntary obedience; so that concerning this, there was a compact and Covenant between them." As references of the compact, Owen gives Psalm 2:7, 8; Isaiah 53:8, 10-12; Philippians 2:7, 9; Hebrews 12:2; and John 17:2, 4.[186] Owen also identifies two covenants between God and humanity. The first is in the context of the rule directing the first man in his obedience, "the moral or eternal law of God, implanted in his nature and written in his heart by creation, being the tenor of the covenant between God and him, sacramentally typified by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," and "the covenant broken by the sin of Adam." The second is "the new covenant of grace,"

---

[185] Crispe, Sermon VI, 165, 172-173.

[186] John Owen, *The greater catechisme, the principles of the doctrines of Christ: vnfolded in two short catechismes, wherein those principles of religion are explained, the knowledge whereof is required by the late ordinance of Parliament, before any person bee admitted to the sacrament of the Lords Supper* (London, 1645), 33.

ratified with Christ's blood, and "the free, gracious, immutable promise of God, made unto all his elect fallen in Adam."[187]

Calamy's covenant system of works and grace states that "God never made any other covenant touching the eternal state of mankind" than two. All men by nature enter into Adam's covenant of works, but the covenant of grace made to save some of the posterity of Adam was between God and Jesus Christ. Titus 1:2 is enlisted in support of the covenant of grace "being a contract or plot of God the Father with God the Sonne from all eternity as mediator for the salvation of the Elect." Calamy argues that to consider a covenant of grace made by God with Abraham separately would make for two covenants of grace with two redeemers. In fact, the covenant with Abraham is as one king makes with another "by an ambassador, so Abraham represented Christ" and received a token of the covenant made with Christ from eternity and the elect in him.[188]

It would seem that the doctrine of the *pactum salutis* was sufficiently well-known in New England by 1646 given Bulkeley does little more than interrupt his discussion of the covenant of grace for a brief defense of the doctrine of an intratrinitarian covenant to which he does not assign a name. Asserting that Scripture confirms the transaction of the whole business of salvation between the Father and Son before the revelation of such to the people of God, he cites both Old and New Testaments for reference. Bulkeley also rejects the notion that God only makes a covenant with fallen humanity in Christ and not with his people.[189]

---

[187] Owen, *Greater Catechisme*, 19, 37.

[188] Edmund Calamy, *Two solemne covenants made between God and man: viz. the covenant of workes, and the covenant of grace. Clearly laid open, distinguished, and vindicated from any dangerous opinions; the right knowledge of which will be very profitable to all those that have escaped the first, and are confirmed in the second at the Sacrament* (London, 1646), 2-8.

[189] Peter Bulkeley, *The gospel-covenant; or the covenant of grace opened. Wherein are explained; 1. The differences betwixt the covenant of grace and covenant of workes. 2. The different*

Robert's 1649 text, *Clavis Bibliorum,*[190] offered as a key to the whole Bible, does not include mention of covenanting between God the Father and Son in either the scope or the doctrines of New Testament books that Dickson had previously identified as making reference to this divine action. Roberts would, however, use the concept later in his 1557 treatise, *Mysterium & Medulla.*

2.5 Conclusion

As this portion of the study has demonstrated, deliberations on the language of Scripture in the majority of seventeenth-century sources surveyed regarding *berith, diatheke* and *suntheke* consistently show that while the latter two can be used for covenant or contract, *diatheke* is also able to carry the sense of testament. Ball makes this clear, stating that in the Old Testament *berith* is never read for a testamentary disposition, despite the fact that covenant and testament both entail "the ordination and disposition of things according to pleasure." The "weight of significance" lies in the circumstance of a particular covenant, as in Hebrews 9:16, where Ball points out the author's distinction that the covenant of grace is only established by the death of the mediator as a testator.[191]

Running consistently through these texts is the sense that covenant and contract are synonymous. Agreement, bargain, pact, and transaction were also deemed equally serviceable for conveying the revealed relationship between God and humanity, and the specified covenantal promises and conditions. Among British authors *foedus* emerged

---

administration of the covenant before and since Christ. 3. The benefits and blessings of it. 4. The condition. 5. The properties of it (London, 1646), 28-32.

[190]Roberts, *Clavis Bibliorum.*

[191] Ball, *Covenant of Grace*, 3.

clearly as the preferred technical term to *pactum* for divine covenants proper. With few exceptions, the terminology for the covenant of amity between God and Adam, or the first parents in the state of innocency, and all humanity in them, is *foedus operum*/covenant of works, sometimes *foedus legale, foedus naturale*. Although some would declare that this first covenant with Adam was not of grace, this was the minority opinion, as was Downame's view in his early treatise that the covenant made with the Fathers was the covenant of works, though he did not think it was without grace.

Significant variations notwithstanding, agreement on the general nature of the *foedus gratiae*/covenant of grace predominated discussions of the topic at this time. A single covenant of grace regarding the salvation of fallen humanity repeated in the Old and New Testaments, it continues to be between God and those he chooses and makes the promise to be their God, with the righteousness of Christ imputed to the person justified. Variations in terminology were seemingly offered more as descriptives than true alternatives. Walker offered covenant of life for both covenants of works and grace, and Roberts explained that covenant of faith more accurately expresses the contrast between the law of works and faith, thereby being a more suitable term than covenant of grace.

Legal terminology is a regular component in these texts, including declarations of: the law as the image of the unchangeable nature of God's justice; the legal context of promises in Scripture; uses of the law; distinctions of law and gospel; the means of satisfying justice; the court of justice contrasted to the court of mercy; and inherent and imputed righteousness. The term *covenant* was widely understood as an undertaking of legal validity where the terms are understood and the rights guaranteed. Efforts made to

establish the precise significance of specific terms given in lexicons and biblical contexts to define the solemn agreement or relationship give evidence that among seventeenth-century authors *covenant* was simply not to be divested of its legal context or content.

Although the doctrine of the *pactum salutis* is clearly part of the topic of divine covenants, its roots have been found in the writings of some earlier orthodox Reformed theologians in contexts other than federal, notably trinitarian relations with respect to the economy of redemption and the significance of the two natures of Christ regarding his person and office. The importance of Christ being mediator according to both natures in contrast to variously attributed views of his mediatorship according to either his divine or human nature not infrequently note in particular the opinions of Bellarmine.[192]

Examination of seventeenth-century documents shows that exegesis of Scripture gave grounds for theological formulation on the subject of covenant and led to the conclusion of an intratrinitarian covenantal relationship particularly between the Father and Son for the work of salvation. As we have seen, mention of this action as coming from the counsel of God, or of a plot or agreement laid in heaven from eternity was not unheard of before1638 with elements of the doctrine entering into discussions of the covenant of grace, in some cases even spoken of as a covenant. There is also awareness of the connection between the Trinity concurring to the work of redemption and the impropriety of thinking of the work in terms of one person of the Godhead commanding

---

[192] van't Spijker, "Reformation and Scholasticism," 89, notes that Reformed theologians were very engaged in trying to refute Bellarmine's thorough *Disputationes de controversies* (1586) contra the Reformation, its representatives and dogmas for years after its publication; Eef Dekker, "An Ecumenical Debate between Reformation and Counter-Reformation? Bellarmine and Ames on *liberum arbitrium*," *Reformation and Scholasticism*, 141-144.

another. However, the distinct formulation of the *pactum salutis* was not evident prior to 1638 in British theological circles as a separate covenant. If, therefore, British theologians of the seventeenth century before Dickson knew of various older works in which the concept of an intratrinitarian covenant had been broached, notably Olevianus' *De substantia foederis*, they did not build on its formulations.

Shortly thereafter, the covenant of redemption did appear in some texts without much introduction, suggesting the authors expected their readers or listeners to have a sufficient degree of familiarity with the doctrine to make prefatory explanations unnecessary. More elaborate expositions of the topic would come into circulation later.

CHAPTER 3
DICKSON'S METHODOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS

3.1 Introduction to Seventeenth-Century Exegesis and Doctrine

Countering the claims of older scholarship, recent research has shown that the Reformed orthodoxy of the seventeenth century understood Scripture alone as the primary norm for doctrine and assumed that doctrine arose from the exposition of Scripture in and for the church as its fundamental rule and practice.[1] The seventeenth-century Reformed, in other words, recognized an essential connection between exegesis and dogmatics for their theological work. The diligence that went into the exegesis and concern for the right handling of Scripture is evidenced by the texts on exegetical methods developed by seventeenth-century authors. In one such text, Perkins, instructing on the interpretation of Scripture, explains that the study of divinity must properly begin with prayer, asking that God would bless the means of study and "open the meaning of the Scriptures to vs that are blind."[2]

In a comprehensive discussion of the exegetical techniques of the seventeenth century, Knapp explains various views of authors on the orthodox method for interpreting Scripture, including distinctions between translation and exposition. He ably defends the Puritans against the charge that their doctrine was the result of shoddy

---

[1] van't Spijker, "Reformation and Scholasticism," 91- 92, comments on Antoine de Chandieu's use of Scripture as an example of Reformed scholasticism as a theological method that "starts from Scripture in a concise and succinct way." He cites Chandieu's essay "De verbo Dei scripto. Adversus humanas traditiones. Theologica et Scholastica Tractatio," 5-13 that prefaced his *Opera Theologica* (Geneva, 1592).

[2] William Perkins, *The arte of prophecying: or, a treatise concerning the sacred and onely true manner and methode of preaching* (London, 1607), 28: "The principall interpreter of the Scripture is the holy Ghost, 2.Pet.1.20. So that ye first know this, that no prophecie in the Scripture is of any priuate interpretation. Moreover, he that makes the law, is the best and highest interpreter of the law" (ibid., 31).

exegesis, focusing particularly on Owen's employment of the scholastic method "to help elucidate the meaning of a text." "An exegete's interpretation is often supported by an appeal to a theoretical principle . . . the preface to published commentaries frequently included some discussion of important methodological principles."[3] The routinely expressed intention of writers of commentaries on Scripture was to explicate the meaning of the text and the doctrine arising from it. "All Truths, especially divine, are of a noble and precious nature; and therefore whatsoever mysteries of his Counsell God hath been pleased in his Word to reveale, the Church is bound in her ministrie to declare unto men."[4] These statements are not infrequently found under the title and regularly in prefatory letters to the readers, manifesting the author's desire to render the text truthfully and clearly, mindful of the difference between the divine text and all others.

> Observe diligently the difference betweene the Scriptures which are the primarie truth revealed, and other mens writings which are but secondary. The Scriptures are to be read and receiued as such which cannot erre, or speake any thing contrarie to the truth, or to themselues, though we understand it not; but all other mens writings, readings, sermons, expositions, and determinations suppose of the whole Churches and Counsels must onely be receiued as farre as they agree with the Scriptures, which are the rule to which all other diuine writings must be laid, and the touchstone by which they must be tried. [5]

3.2 Dickson's Methodology

Henderson places Dickson among most exegetes in seventeenth-century Scotland who were attentive to the scope of scriptural passages or books. "We find the word explicitly by Dickson . . . It is the word *skopos* of Aristotle . . . It means '*corpus*

---

[3] Knapp, "Understanding the Mind of God," 16, 96. See also Carl R. Trueman, *The Claims of Truth: John Owen's Trinitarian Theology* (Carlisle, Cumbria: Paternoster Press, 1998), 47-101; Packer, *Among God's Giants*, 128-139, 365-382; cf. Muller, *PRRD* vol. 1, 217-219 and vol. 2, 520-524.

[4] Reynoldes, *Explication of Hvndreth and Tenth Psalme*, 1.

[5] Taylor, *Commentarie on Titvs*, ¶ ¶1-3v. Examples abound. See Barlow's title page of *Exposition of Timothie* and "Epistle to the Reader"; Bayne's title page of *Commentarie on Colossians*.

ipsum,' the intention, end or purpose of what the author has written."[6] Similarly, Clauson considers Dickson's commentary on the Psalms representative of "the typical genuine Scottish commentary," describing this as containing a short summary of each Psalm and rewording of some verses, with the explanation, application, and relevant doctrinal issues of each verse or group of verses in the commentary itself. He observes that Dickson's practice of addressing the meaning of parts of a text allowed him to add doctrinal teaching, providing propositions having not only a doctrinal but practical nature as well, as illustrated by the commentary of Psalms.[7]

Clauson considers Dickson's idea of the unity of the testaments a tenet of Scottish interpreters in particular and ties this into covenant theology. He states that as one of Dickson's hermeneutical presuppositions, covenant theology governed his "view of what various persons, places, things, and events represent (or do not represent) in the Old Testament." Another characteristic of the method that Clauson attributes to the view that Scripture interprets Scripture and borne out by the Psalms commentary was Dickson's practice giving little in the way of "nuanced and detailed attention to words, grammar, syntax, contexts and genre."[8]

Certain additional convictions regarding the Scriptures and the similarities and differences between the Old and New Testaments, matters of concern for the Reformers

---

[6] Henderson, *Religious Life*, 20-21; cf. Muller, *PRPD* vol 2, 195-223.

[7] Clauson, *Scottish Hermeneutical Method*, 107-109.

[8] Clauson, *Scottish Hermeneutical Method*, 108-115. Clauson's limited consideration of Dickson's work on the Psalms commentary does constrain his perspective on Dickson's work and his evaluation of Dickson's methods. He correctly notices that Dickson valued highly biblical clarity, emphasized doctrine and application, and did not characteristically engage in detailed examination of linguistic matters. However, Clauson's reference to genre pertains more to manners of speech, as in metaphor or euphemism, than categories of texts or mediums for teaching, as sermons, commentaries or *loci communes*.

and their successors, are also foundational for Dickson.[9] Early expressions of these principles are found in his 1635 commentary on Hebrews in assertions that both the Old and New Testaments are pertinent because the same God is author of both and by each the mind of God to his church is conveyed, whether of old or now. "GOD was the chiefe Doctor of His owne Church, from the beginning . . . And what the Prophets conveyghed from GOD, to the Church, by Scripture as it is called heere the speaking of GOD; so it is to bee accounted of still; and not as a dumbe letter."[10] As God's word the authority of Scripture "is not of men, but the holie Ghost," and the Scriptures themselves "the voyce of the holie Ghost, who by them speaketh."[11] Scripture also serves each of the elect as "the nearest Meane where-by *GOD'S* Spirit may be conveyed into his soule, for perfecting of Holinesse; and the readiest Chariot, to carrie up his spirite, to dwell in God, for perfecting of his happiness."[12]

However, Dickson's work does exhibit a high consciousness of the genre of his documents and method of teaching, whether sermons, speech, various commentaries, or treatise, and this is usually reflected in his introductions. Attention to genre is a formal issue and not unique to Dickson.[13] The influence of Melanchthon's principle that the right method of theology is the orderly exposition of *loci communes,* the common

---

[9]van't Spijker, "Reformation and Scholasticism," 89-96; cf. Muller, *PRRD*, vol.2, 119-23, 126-130.

[10]David Dickson, *Short explanation of the epistle of Pavl to the Hebrewes* (Aberdene, 1635), 3-4.

[11] Dickson, *Short Explanation to Hebrewes*, 45.

[12] Dickson, "To the Reader," *Short Explanation to Hebrewes*, ¶6v-¶7r.

[13] Robert Kolb, "The Ordering of the *Loci Communes Theologici*: The Structuring of the Melanchthonian Dogmatic Tradition," *Concordia Journal* 23, no. 4 (Oct 1997): 317-337, and "Teaching the Text: The Commonplace Method in Sixteenth-Century Lutheran Biblical Commentary," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 49 (1987): 571-585; Green, "Melanchthon's Relation to Scholasticism," 282-288; Augustijn, "Wittenberga contra Scholasticos," 70-74; Ken Ray Schurb, "Philip Melanchthon, the Formula of Concord, and the Third Use of the Law" (Ph.D.diss., Ohio State University, 2001), 8-13; cf. Richard A. Muller, *The Unaccommodated Calvin* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 5, 108-111.

places or related topics that have their origin in biblical texts and derived from exegesis, in a coherent sequence was wide and strong among Protest scholastics and can be found in Dickson's work. Melanchthon prefaced his *loci communes* with the explanation that "in teaching a subject, the order of the various parts must be demonstrated with singular care, and we must indicate the beginning, the progress, and the goal. In philosophy they call this process the "method."[14] With regard to commentaries, Calvin's insistence on brevity and clarity in commentaries and on not strewing detailed discussions of particular loci in commentaries was Dickson's preferred pattern.[15]

Introductions to Dickson's works generally include acknowledgment of the aids available for and addressed to the learned, a hope that he might provoke the church to a love of reading and searching Scripture, his objective to present chief doctrines drawn from Scripture, and a statement of his intent to be concise. "A key, the less it is, the higher it is want to be valued."[16] In the commentaries his introductory statements vary from a general discussion of his methodology in his English editions to more technical specifics of his method found in those works related to his teaching in the university, published first in Latin and later translated into English. Presentation of the methodological principle of *The Summe of Saving Knowledge* is particularly terse even

---

[14] Philip Melanchthon, *Loci Communes 1543*, trans. J. A. O. Preus (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1992), 16.

[15] John Calvin, *Commentarius in epistolam Pauli ad Romanos*, ed. T. H. L. Parker (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 1-4; *Institutionis christianae religionis 1559, Opera Selecta* vol. 3, ed. Petrus Barth and Guilelmus Niesel (Monachii: C. Kaiser, 1928), 6.

[16] David Dickson, "To the Reader," *Exposition of Pauls Epistles,* A4r; *Epistola lectori, expositio analytica ominum apostolicarvm epistolarvm: seu, brevis introductio ad pleniores commentarios, in vsum studiosorum theologiae* (Glasguae: Georgius Andersonus, 1645), n.p: "Clavis quo minoris fuerit molis tanto majoris solet estimari."

for Dickson, stating here one would find "A brief Sum of Christian Doctrine, Contained in Holy Scriptures, and holden forth in the Confession of Faith & Catechism."[17]

A Short Explanation, of the Epistle of Pavl to the Hebrewes, published in 1635, begins with Dickson expressing concern that copies of a number of his sermons "taken from his mouth" were being made available by transcribers without allowing him to correct or revise faults or mistakes. Informing readers of his hope of having time to draw up for publication points of doctrine delivered in his sermons, he admits to having been diverted as another project took shape. Although "God hath provided Helps, for understanding of holie Scripture, by large Commentaries, and sweete Sermons, especiallie from His Church in ENGLAND; where-by increase of Knowledge is given to the Learned," many in the church would likely not profit from those means. He offers instead shorter and plainer writings "where-by the weaker judgementes might bee supported and all Excuse taken away from the wittie Sluggard, and such whose worldlie Employments, and great Essayres, have seemed sufficient Reasons, to excuse their negligence."[18] Stating that "the precious Iewell of the Scriptvre . . . is more necessarie for our Soules, than the Sunne in the Firmament is for our bodies," Dickson expresses hope that his commentary may stir up in others a love of searching the Scripture.[19]

Mindful of his targeted readers, Dickson explains his method for this work and demonstrates the principle observed by Protestant scholastics in adhering to the authority of Scripture with doctrine following from exegetical study.

> The *Summe* of each *Chapter*, or the *Content*s, doe stand in steade of *Analysis*, and in some places, of a *Paraphrase*. The *Text* doeth followe, *Verse* by

---

[17] David Dickson, *The summe of saving knowledge, with the practical use thereof* (Edinburgh, 1671), I4r.

[18] Dickson, "To the Reader," *Short Explanation to Hebrewes*, ¶3v-¶4r.

[19] Dickson, "To the Reader," *Short Explanation to Hebrewes*, ¶5v-¶6r.

> *Verse*. The exposition of the *Verse*, serveth for grounds of Doctrines; which Doctrines, following upon the groundes, are joined, moste parte, with the Note of Collection. Pluralitie of Doctrines from the ground, or from the *Text* where the consequence is easie to bee perceaved, is distinguished by Figures, according to their numbers. Tearmes of Arte I have eschewed, because I would bee playne to all. I have spared enlargement of the Doctrines, which I could spare, leaving them as grayness of Seede, to get their growth in thy mynde, by Meditation.[20]

Likewise, quotations often and generously employed by other commentators to serve as additional confirmation of doctrine would be spared by Dickson because, "if the Doctrine was pertinentlie collected from the ground, the *Text* in hand was sufficient confirmation . . . A quotation could prooue the Doctrine true, but not prooue it pertinent; and so, not serue my purpose."[21] Explanations are sometimes supplemented by questions posed and answered.

The Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew, patterned after the commentary on Hebrews and published first in 1647, also shows its design for the edification of the church and accommodation to the capacity of the common people. The tone reveals a pastor's heart, guiding and encouraging practical piety. Noting that God has raised up a desire for divine knowledge in the hearts of his people, Dickson asserts that the pastors and godly learned are to be engaged in leading "the Lords people in upon the right understanding of the Scriptures, lest the plain and marvelously consonant word of God be mistaken and wrested, by the instability and unskilfulnesse of such as have not their senses exercised to discern the single meaning of the Lords Voyce, and the admirable harmony of his heavenly Speeches."[22] Observing that many

---

[20] Dickson, "To the Reader," *Short Explanation to Hebrewes*, ¶4v-¶5r.

[21] Dickson, "To the Reader," *Short Explanation to Hebrewes*, ¶5r-v.

[22] David Dickson, "The Epistle Dedicatory," *A brief exposition of the euangel of Jesus Christ, according to Matthew* (Glasgow, 1647), n.p. In 1638 Dickson had announced that the main error of the

had taken the task to heart and produced a variety texts, from large commentaries of their own or translating other Latin commentaries to shorter works that paraphrase difficult places or expositions of hard words, and all contributing to the common good, Dickson pronounces the collection of available resources wanting and gives reason for his own efforts.

> Yet besides all these laudable ways of explication of Scripture, it seemeth that these dangerous Times, (wherein so many diverse errours are privily crept in, and begun openly also to avow themselves) do call for such and Explanation of the whole Bible, as might not only shew the scope of each Book and Chapter, with the cohesion of the Verses, and the meaning of the Words; but also propone the speciall heads of Doctrine in each place, whereby people might see the whole ground of Religion in the Text, and be guarded against damnable errours (in which those persons are easily ensnared, who know not the Scriptures, nor the power of God) and all this to be in such brevity and clearnes, That men in their Dayly Set-reading of the Lords Word, might in the space of half an hour peruse a competent portion of Scripture, thus explained.[23]

Accordingly, Dickson's aim was to make the deduction of doctrine from the text even more obvious than he had in his Hebrews commentary. "I point ordinarily at some words in the Text, for a Ground of the Doctrine proponed: from which Words, if the Doctrines do not immediately arise, and formally follow; yet from these Words such Doctrines may be inferred, after some little larger Explication of them, as these illate Particles, FOR and THEREFORE, do at least impart."[24] Observing that as history is generally plain, it will be dispensed with, along with "large Contents or Analysis, or Exposition of words, and have insisted only where some difficulty is, and that so long only as was necessary to give some light; hasting in all other places unto the Doctrine,

---

Arminians was "not knowing the Scriptures, and the power of God in the matter of the Covenant of Redemption."

[23] Dickson, "Epistle dedicatory," *Matthew*, n.p.

[24] Dickson, "To the Honest Hearted Reader," *Matthew*, n.p.

and couching in them frequently so much Exposition of the Words as I could with clearness and brevity."[25]

While serving as a professor of theology at the University of Glasgow, Dickson embarked on producing a more accessible aid for the epistles of Paul and the other Apostles. This commentary manifested his role as professor to scholastically instruct candidates in divinity using more specific theological language, particularly regarding discussion of the covenant of redemption. Expressing both concern that for some younger students of theology "the perusing of larger Commentaries is impossible" and his interest in making the epistles more readily understood, Dickson announces his intent to produce a commentary from his public lectures, characterized by brevity and clear explication "lest a trussing together of many things in a few words should entangle the reader."[26]

> I have pack'd the Analysis, and Commentaries, and Exposition or Paraphrase altogether, every one of which could not singly bee disposed of, without great tediousness. . . . I have not followed the Logical Analysis any further, than was necessary to demonstrate the Scope of the Text, for to mince every member of the sentence by peecemeal, would be the work of a prolix Commentary: those that are called Logical terms of Art, I have used very sparingly. . . . The Precepts and Exhortations which are emphatically proposed in that which they call (Modus Imperativus) or any other Rhetorical Modus, according to the Rules in Logick, I have turned into Modus Indicativum, that the position to be confirmed may bee the more clearly illustrated.[27]

Dickson also declares that for the sake of brevity and perspicuity arguments to confirm the scope of the text would be few and typically managed by way of enthymeme, a form of syllogism in which, for rhetorical purposes, one premise or the conclusion is not expressed. The omitted part was considered to be necessarily

---

[25] Dickson, "To the Reader," *Matthew*, n.p.
[26] Dickson, "To the Reader," *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, A3v.
[27] Dickson, "To the Reader," *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, A4r.

understood and supplied by the readers and therefore its inclusion in the text would have been an unnecessary addition.[28] However, this declaration should not be understood as a blanket disavowal of the use of longer syllogisms for teaching or a banning of them from his commentaries. Those who tend to view syllogisms as suspect, the tool of overt scholasticism fueling speculative and esoteric musings, may be surprised by Dickson's employment of them to clarify theological issues with practical directness.

Dickson's school theology can be illustrated in his commentary on Romans 7 as the relationship between the law and the justified is set forth. He demonstrates Paul's method of taking a comparison from marriage, propounding in verses 1-3 the protasis of the comparison, or "if clause," and the apodasis, the consequence of the conditional clause, in verse 4. An apology for the law is presented in verses 7-13 in answer to two objections that arose from the earlier verses in the chapter. Dickson shows Paul distinguishing the occasion to sin from the cause of the sin, the habitual depraved human nature, and explains further the use of a thing from the abuse. A syllogism is also employed in his commentary of Galatians 2:21 with additional abbreviated syllogisms following in the third chapter.[29]

---

[28] Dickson, "To the Reader," *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, A4r. See Dudley Fenner, *The artes of logike and rethorike, plainlie set foorth in the English tounge, easie to be learned and practised: together vvith examples for the practise of the same for methode, in the gouernement of the familie, prescribed in the word of God: and for the whole in the resolution or opening of certayne partes of Scripture, according to the same* (London, 1584), C2v-C3; John Smith, *The mysterie of rhetorique unvail'd, wherein above 130 the trpes and figures are severally derived from the Greek into English, together with lively definitions and variety of latin, english, scriptural examples pertinent to each of them apart. Conducing very much to the right understanding of the sense of the letter of the Scripture, (the want whereof occasions many dangerous errors this day)* (London, 1656), 258-261.

[29] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 16-17, 97. Gal. 2:21: "If Justification be by the Law, Christ is dead in vain, because then both otherwise, and more easily Justification might be obtained, than by the death of Christ: But it is absurd to say that Christ is dead in vain: Therefore Justification is not by the Law, but by Faith." See also "Warrants to Believe" in *Summe of Saving Knowledge* where syllogisms, with few exceptions, close discussion of each warrant.

Introducing his scheme for *Therapeutica Sacra,* Dickson asserts he will be "shewing shortly, the method of healing the diseases of the Conscience, concerning Regeneration" with shortly understood as relative given the scholastic nature of this treatise. Dickson provides a brief outline of his plan in the entry to include five topics: 1) the nature of conscience and its uses in general; 2) the case of conscience generally; 3) regeneration—what it is and who is regenerate; 4) divine covenants relating to eternal happiness; 5) "the orderly and prudent application" of these divine covenants in general to allow for more clearly addressing the application of the covenants to particular cases.[30] The topics are then subjected to scrutiny, examined by layers of precise definitions and divisions of aspects to be considered, syllogisms and detailed proofs.

Regarding the topic of specific divine covenants, Dickson asks three standard questions. Does it exist? What is it? What are its articles? His task will be directed to "divine Covenants about the eternal salvation of men; and in speciall, of the Covenant of redemption, shewing that there is such a Covenant, and what are the articles thereof." He proceeds to define a divine contract as one in which God is at least "the one party contractor," stating that three divine covenants exist that pertain to the eternal salvation of humanity, and offers a description of each.[31] Then, beginning with the first, the covenant of redemption, Dickson embarks on the detailed process of explanation.

To understand this covenant, the four ways in which *redemption* is used in Scripture must be distinguished and the particular sense settled upon. Having selected

---

[30] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.1.1

[31] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.22; I.iv.17: "De foederibus divinis super aeterna salute hominum: & speciatim, de foedere Redemptionis, nempe, Quod sit: & Quid sit? seu, quibus articulis constet?"

the first sense, that of "the covenant passed between the Father and Christ His Son, designed our Mediatour, about our redemption," Dickson discusses what it means to name God the Father and Son as parties contracting the covenant of redemption, insisting that this does not exclude the Holy Spirit.[32] A fuller description of the covenant is then undertaken, followed by six ways in which Scripture provides evidence of this covenant, accompanied by six proofs,[33] and four articles of the covenant and their uses along with accompanying proofs.[34] Under the articles Dickson identifies a variety of objections, offers answers, and addresses under the third article what he considers an ongoing concern for the church, the matter of the power of humanity's free will.

3.3 Dickson's Terminology and Definitions

3.3.1 Covenant

Although the particulars of the *berith/diatheke* issue do not appear as a going concern for Dickson, it should not be supposed that he was unaware of, unable to deal with, or not engaged in the ongoing discussion.[35] Not surprisingly, given the genre, the collection of his sermons, published as *Select Practical Writings of David Dickson*,

---

[32] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.22 -24.

[33] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.24 -34.

[34] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.34 -71.

[35] Taylor, *Scottish Pulpit*, 111-112. Taylor comments on the demanding curriculum of education for the ministry and rigorous training in Scotland during Dickson's period. Because lectures were generally delivered in Latin, proficiency was expected of the student at admission. "In addition to the higher Latin classics with which the course commenced, the students were initiated into the Greek Grammar, and carried through the simple routine of Greek poets and historians. To these literary acquirements succeeded the study of rhetoric, ethics, physics, geometry, and history; after which the *alumni* were introduced to their more important work of studying theology as a science, in all its departments, and the Eastern languages with which it is connected. This course continued for six years, and without those long vacations which have crept into modern education." See also Lee, "Biblical Exegesis, Federal Theology," 15-85, for a most helpful discussion of the exegesis and development of covenant terminology; Lee, "Covenant Theology," 11-36.

reveals little distinction of covenant terminology. In the commentaries of 1645 Dickson stated that *pactum* and *foedus* may appropriately be used for covenant, a view he would continue to hold, and provided little elaboration to explain his choice of terms in a particular occurrence.[36] The Latin text contains a generous scattering of each of these terms rendered most often covenant, whether the parties involved are the Godhead, or only one of the parties is a member of the Godhead, or humans.

Dickson seemed to prefer *foedus* to *pactum* when speaking particularly of a covenant between God and humanity, though there are exceptions. *Foedus* is employed consistently for: the covenant of works, *foedus operum*; *foedus legale* and rarely *legis pactum*, the legal covenant or the old legal covenant under the Levitical priesthood, along with its parties, conditions and punishment for sin; *foedus gratiae,* the covenant of grace; and *novum foedus*, whether the new covenant with Israel and Judah or the new covenant of the gospel. The terminology is readily seen in Romans 7, 2 Corinthians 3, Galatians 2 and 3, Ephesians, and Hebrews. Concerning the pledge of salvation given believers with the Holy Spirit as earnest of the inheritance, Dickson, in Ephesians 1:14, writes of the Holy Spirit remaining for comfort and not departing until the "*redemptio pacta*" ("the covenanted Redemption") is fully perfected and completed.[37] The context and Dickson's teaching on the subject would seem to suggest, not having been specified here, the agreement between the Father and Son. Later, in *Therapeutica Sacra*, he would state that the covenant of grace procured by Christ is made with the church to

---

[36] The 1659 English edition of Dickson's 1645 Latin text, *Expositio Analytica*, gives William Retchford as the translator, not Dickson. Therefore, one must be careful about overstating the significance of the wording in the English text.

[37] Dickson, *Expositio Analytica*, 360 and *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 111.

this end, "that the covenant of Redemption might be brought unto a reall accomplishment by the covenant of Grace:"[38]

A combination of terms appears in verse 13 of the second chapter where Paul writes to the Ephesians of their having formerly been strangers to the covenants and promises of God and unable to apply themselves to the covenants and promises of God, Dickson using "*pacta et promissione.*" The Ephesians find themselves no longer far from the covenant and the church, "*aberant à foedere & ab Ecclesia,*" but now near the covenant and church, "*ad foedus & Ecclesiam.*"[39] The term *foedere salutis* occurring in Ephesians 2:6 for the covenant of salvation between God and the church through the Mediator is rare in Dickson's commentaries.[40]

However, in Galatians 3:15-23 *covenant*, whether the parties are human or divine, reads *pactum* in Dickson's Latin, although later in the chapter *foedus* is more frequent. "Covenants and Agreements (*Pacta & Conventa*) justly performed, even among men, cannot bee made void, or bee changed by superadditions . . . But a covenant (*Pactum & Conventum*) is duely made betwixt God and Abraham for uniting all the faithful, both Jews and Gentiles, into one seed, Christ . . .Therefore this covenant (*pactum*) cannot be made void."[41] Chapter four contains a combination of *pactum* and *foedus*; seemingly either term will convey the thought adequately enough. Dickson, speaking of the two wives, Hagar and Sarah, who represent the two covenants, has "*duorum foederum, seu pactorum*" (verse 24) given simply as covenant in the English edition, yet consistently using the terms *foedus operum seu legale* and *foedus gratiae* in

---

[38] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.7.142. Dickson translated the edition first published in 1664 from Latin to English, as explained by his son in the dedicatory (ibid., A2r&v).

[39] Dickson, *Expositio Analytica*, 366-367, 369.

[40] Dickson, *Expositio Analytica*, 367.

[41] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 98; *Expositio Analytica*, 321.

the third part of the chapter (from verse 21).[42] However, in 4:21 he states that the first error of the Galatians was placing themselves under a legal covenant or covenant of works (*foedus legale, foedus operum*) thereby binding themselves to the condition of perfectly fulfilling the law, to salvation according to a *legis pactum.*[43]

Foedus is used almost without exception by Dickson in chapters 7-9 of Hebrews, a passage that became a standard reference for covenant discussion.[44] In 8:6 *foedus* is given nine times in comparing the covenants having Christ or the Levitical priests as mediators with *pacta* twice for discussing covenants in general between God and humanity.[45] The remainder of the discussion comparing covenants in chapter 8 carries the term *foedus* throughout whether referring to a new covenant, old covenant, or legal covenant. In 9:16-18 Dickson explains how the "*Novum foedus Christi, est novum Testamentum Christi*," emphasizing the necessity for the death of the testator and had Christ not died "*foedus seu testamentum non fuisset ratum.*"[46]

The standard terminology for the covenant between God and the Mediator for Dickson is the *covenant of redemption, foedus redemptionis,* though both *pactum redemptionis* and *foedus redemptionis* appear in Ephesians 2:5-6. The preferred term, *foedus redemptionis,* is found also in Ephesians 1:3, 2:6; Colossians 1:20; 2 Timothy

---

[42] Dickson, *Expositio Analytica*, 334; *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 102,

[43] Dickson, *Expositio Analytica*, 332-333.

[44] Lee, "Biblical Exegesis, Federal Theology," 12, 15-85; Dickson, *Expositio Analytica Omnium*, 627-628, 636-637.

[45] Dickson, *Expositio Analytica*, 623, 627; *Exposition of Pauls Epistles,* 196, 198.

[46] Dickson, *Expositio Analytica*, 636; *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 200: "The New Covenant of Christ is the New Testament of Christ: Therefore it was necessary that the death of the Testator Christ should intercede . . . Confirming the former, unless Christ had died, the Covenant or Testament had not been firm, for even among men a Testament is not valid while the Testator is alive, but onely after his death. For while he lives it may be changed, but not when he is dead: Therefore it was necessary that Christ should die."

1:9; and Titus 1:2.[47] Elsewhere Dickson sometimes refers to this covenant or some aspect of it as *pactum* (Philippians 2:8, Colossians 2:15, Hebrews 1:2) or *foedus inter Patrem & Christum* (Ephesians 1:3).[48] It does not appear that in his commentary on the epistles Dickson makes use of the other major term used in the seventeenth century for the intratrinitarian covenant, *pactum salutis.*

In the Matthew commentary Dickson does not identify the word but explains that one word signifies both covenant and testament, therefore, properly the whole Bible is "*A Testamentary Covenant*" and gives two reasons for this view of Scripture. He points out the covenant between the Father and Son for the purpose of purchasing salvation and saving graces by paction for the elect, with *covenant of redemption* the term consistently used for this covenant, and the covenant of grace made through Christ with the church for the application of all purchased graces. Continuing in the tradition that holds to a single testament of grace in substance, twofold in manner of its making, testament pertains to Christ undertaking to lay down his life to purchase redemption and dispose by way of a legacy that which his death purchased in two ways.[49]

In his expansive discussion of the three divine covenants regarding eternal salvation in *Therapeutica Sacra*, Dickson explains that a divine covenant may be called "a contract, or paction wherein God is at least the one party contractor." His Latin text shows willingness to use various terms for the concept generally, "*Foedus Divinum vocamus, Contractum, seu pactum, transactum, de aeterna salute hominum,*" [50] with

---

[47] Dickson, *Expositio Analytica*, 350, 367, 547, 548.

[48] Phil. 2:8, Christ is made man not by obligation but by a voluntary covenant (*ex pacto voluntario*); Col. 2:15, by paying the price of redemption, Christ obtains by covenant of the Father (*ex pacto à PATRE*) deliverance of the redeemed from ignorance, sin and death; Heb. 1:2 Christ is appointed heir by special covenant (*ex pactione speciali*).

[49] Dickson, *Matthew*, A.

[50] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.22; *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.iv.17.

pactum redemptionis and *foedus redemptionis* appearing regularly as the agreement or covenant between the Father and Son. "*Foedus Redemptionis initum inter Deum Patrem, & Deum Filium, Mediatorem designatum*" [51] is consistently rendered in English texts the covenant of redemption.

In this text Dickson tends to use *pactum* when referring to some aspect of the agreement or agreed upon bargain between God the Father and Son regarding the selling and buying of lost humanity. Introductory definitions of redemption are: "*pro Contractu seu pacto venditionis & emptionis hominum, in perditionis statu consideratorum*"; "*Pactitia, seu Redemptio pacta*"; "*in foedere Redemptionis pacti*"; "*per pretii pacti persolutionem.*" He declares, "*Sed nos hic Redemptionem sumimus in prima significatione, Scilicet, pro Redemptione pactitia, seu pro foedere inter Deum Patrem & Filium inito, de hominibus redimendis.*"[52] Although his English text eliminates mention of redemption by paction at this point, stating that this is redemption by "covenant past between the Father and Christ His Son, designed Mediatour," this aspect is included later on the same page. "This covenant of redemption then may be thus described. *It is a bargain, agreed upon between the Father and Son* . . . The seller of the elect, is God; the buyer, is God incarnate; the persons bought, are the Church of the elect; the price, is the blood of God."[53]

---

[51] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.iv.17.

[52] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra* I.iv.17-18; *Therapeutica Sacra* I.4.23: "Sometime it [redemption] is taken for the contract and agreement of selling and buying back to eternall salvation, of lost man, looked upon as in the state of sin and misery . . . Sometime *redemption* is taken for the paying of the price agreed upon . . . Sometime *redemption* is taken for the begun application of the benefits purchased in the covenant by the price payed . . . Sometime *redemption* is taken for the perfect and full possession of all the benefits agreed upon between the Father and Christ His Son the Mediatour."

[53] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.24-25.; I.iv.18: "Est autem Foedus Redemptionis, [pactum inter Patrem & Filium designatum Mediatorem] . . . In hoc foedere, emptio est & Venditio: Vendens, est Deus; Emens, est Deus incarnandus; personae emptae, sunt Ecclesia; pretium, est Dei sanguis."

Dickson's Latin usage may imply greater precision than his English. The use of *pactum* or *foedus* can be seen as Dickson sketches evidence of "*pactum initum Patrem & Filium, de redimendus Electis*" given by Scripture in six ways. "*Primo, ex phrasibus & loquendi modis, contractum formalem denotantibus, aut praesupponentibus. Secundo, ex nominibus Christo Redemptori impolitis. Tertio, ex aeterno Dei decreto, de Redemptionis pacto in executionem mandando. Quarto, ex foederis delineatione in typis leviticis. Quinto, ex foederis ratificatione, per Christam Redemptorem jam incarnatum. Sexto, ex articulis, seu capitibus Redemptionis pactitiae, in quibus foedus consistit.*" [54] Here the issue seems to be that while *pactum* is the better term for the original divine agreement, *foedus* is the result of the execution of the pactum, i.e., the temporal arrangement.

The terms *foedus operum* and *foedus gratiae* are consistently used. More detailed distinctions will be made between the law of nature (*foedus naturae*), the formal covenant of works (*formali foedere operum*) and the law as the matter or substance of the law of nature and the work of the law in human hearts. The law of nature written in the hearts of the first parents preceded "in order both of nature and time" the covenant made for keeping the law. Death of soul and body was "the naturall wages and merit of sin" against God by "the rule of simple justice" and required no consent to the punishment.[55] The covenant of works (*foedus operum*) made with Adam before the fall may be called *foedus naturae* because it required nothing of humanity but

---

[54] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.iv.19; *Therapeutica Sacra* I.4.25-6: "The first way is by expressions, which import & presuppose a formall covenant between the parties, buying and selling; the second way is, by styles and titles given to Christ the Redeemer; the third is, by expressions relating to an eternal decree for execution and performance of the covenant of redemption; the fourth is, by representation of this covenant in the Leviticall types; the fifth is, by Christ the Redeemer now incarnate, His ratification of the covenant; and the sixth way is, by holding forth to the heads and articles agreed upon, wherein the covenant consists."

[55] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.5.71 -73.

what God mandated according to the law of nature and "appeareth by the force of the conscience being wakened from its sleepy security," challenging sin according to the covenant and pronouncing "the sentence of God's wrath against the sinner" whose conscience acknowledges the judgment of God.[56] The covenant of works is "superadded" to the law of nature whereby God freely obliges himself to preserve Adam, not yet having sinned and in friendship with God, in a happy life provided Adam continued in a life of perfect obedience to the will of God. Dickson makes it clear that when the covenant of works is abolished as far as justifying or condemning one who has fled to Christ and entered into the covenant of grace, the natural obligation remains for humanity to take direction from and give obedience to the natural law.[57]

3.3.2 Legal Language

The frequency of Dickson's insistence that grace is the only cause of salvation underscores his concern that attacks on the principle of *sola gratia* had not diminished in his day and bears witness to the role of grace in his understanding of federal theology. His awareness of the legal language of Scripture and its use manifests a rich understanding of and appreciation for the law, as well as the need to properly distinguish what *law* refers to in each context and what purpose it serves or was meant to serve.

Dickson gives five reasons for thinking God's dealing with humanity by way of the often maligned covenant of works (*foedus operum*) was a most fit means to both human happiness and God's glory. First is the exceptional honor and respect that comes

---

[56] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.5.80.

[57] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.5.73-78, 80. For the continuing obligation to obey the law as the rule of manner see also commentary on Gal. 3:25.

with being made a "confederate friend of God; for, if it be an honour to a mean and poor man to be joined with a King or Prince in a formal bond of mutual friendship, how much greater the honour is it unto man, to be joined in a bond of mutual love and friendship with God?" Second, in this covenantal relationship, not only did God freely oblige himself to give promises, but "made to man a right to ask, and to expect of God, with a ground of certainty, to obtain of him such things, as without promise past he could not ask, or at least, he could not certainly expect to have granted to him."[58]

Third, prior to making the covenant "nothing hindered the Lord, if he had pleased, to command man to return to dust whereof he was; but after the *foedus*, it pleased God, by his own free promise, to oblige himself to perpetuat mans happiness wherein he was made, so long as he should go on in obedience."[59] Fourth, by creation God gave to Adam natural life and earthly happiness to enjoy on earth, but "God, by the Covenant, made paction with him upon condition of perfect obedience, to give him a life and felicity super-natural, opposite to death bodily and spiritual, which was threatened unto him should he transgress the command."[60]

The fifth reason explains the covenant of works as the help and prop for Adam to stand fixed in setting before and promising to him the greatest reward, eternal life, and the greatest punishment should he disobey.

> For on the one hand, he was advertised and forewarned of the danger of sinning, that he might beware to offend God; and on the other, he was encouraged and allowed to serve God more chearfully, and to perform due obedience to God the more diligently: for, in the Covenant, the greatest reward that could be thought upon was set before him, and promised unto him; to wit, eternal life upon his

---

[58] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.5.73.

[59] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.5.73-74.

[60] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.5.74; I.v.44: "Deus per foedus initum pactus est sub, conditione obedientiae perfectae, se datum vitam & foelicitatem supernaturalem, oppositam morti corporali & spirituali, quam miniatus est homini si transgrederetur mandatum."

> obedience and the greatest punishment threatened if he should dis-obey; both which served greatly to move him to be constant in his obedience.[61]

Among the aspects regarding the covenant of works and God's glory that Dickson includes is how this covenant by mutual consent (*ex pacto & consensus*) makes way for the demonstration of the justice of God in the execution of punishment. As "a most holy and fit way to manifest the vanity and instability of the most perfect creature … to acknowledge God, and in everything less and more, constantly imploy him and depend upon him," it brings to light in a most holy fashion the grace and mercy of God in Christ "providing a remedy for fallen man before he fell, and to open up the decree and covenant of Redemption in due time to be brought about by Christ."[62]

The breaking of a covenant on humanity's part does not abolish the covenant or deliver sinners from the obligations entailed or the penalties. The inability to perfectly obey the law "is the fruit of our sin, and is drawn on by our selves; nor doth God lose his right to crave the debt due him, because the Bankrupt is not able to pay what he oweth: For even among men, such as have mis-spent their patrimony, are not absolved of their debt because they are not able to pay the debt; yea, even the children of the mis-spender of his goods, do stand debtors so long as the debt is neither payed nor forgiven."[63]

A strong emphasis on the inability of sinful persons to achieve righteousness by their own works by the law runs through Dickson's work and the importance of understanding the differences between what he identifies as the genuine and false covenant of works should not be minimized. Reference is often made to the law as

---

[61] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.5.74.
[62] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.5.76-77.
[63] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.5.79. See also *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, I4v-I5r.

requiring perfect obedience, the cause of justifying by works, the external form of the legal covenant, identifying sins, and schoolmaster sent by God to instruct the church and lead it to Christ in contrast to the covenant of grace or gospel with its promises and imputed justification.[64] Exposition of the theme of justification running through Dickson's commentaries can be illustrated by a few examples.

In the opening of his commentary on the epistle to the Romans, Dickson identifies the doctrine of justification by imputed, not inherent, righteousness as the sustained focus. Early in chapter seven the comparison is given between a covenant of law, *foedus legale*, and a covenant of grace, *foedus gratiae,* by way of marriage, *foedus operum conjugale*. Dickson explains that those who are justified by faith were formerly "espoused to the law by a Covenant of Works" but are no longer because of Christ's death and his having satisfied the law, justice, and covenant of works in their name. Now "judicially dead to the Law, in the body of Christ (for the Law, or Covenant of Works hath slain Christ, and you in him) and by consequence you are delivered from the matrimonial Covenant of Law; so that without the breach of Justice you may enter into a new Covenant of Grace, with Christ, being raised from the dead."[65]

Continuing to emphasize the doctrine of justification by faith in Galatians Dickson comments on 2:20, "I being justified by Faith, am judicially united to Christ

---

[64] See Dickson's commentaries of Romans 7, Galatians, Ephesians 2, and Hebrews; and *Truths victory over error, Or, an abridgement of the chief controversies in religion, which since the apostles days to this time, have been, and are in agitation, between those of the orthodox faith, and all adversaries whatsoever; a list of whose names are set down after the epistle to the reader* (Edinburgh, 1684), 77-85.

[65] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 16, Rom. 7:4; *Expositio Analytica Omnium*, 50: "Sic vos, qui olim desponsati quasi eratis legi per foedus operum conjugale, mortuo CHRISTO pro vobis, ut Legi, Justitiae, & Foederi Operum satisfieret vestro nomine, judicialiter mortui estis legi, seu foederi legali, in corpore CHRISTI: (nam lex, seu foedus legale interfecit CHRISTUM, & vos in eo) & per consequens liberati estis à conjugio Legis, seu conjugali foedere legis; its ut sine justitiae violatione novum matrimoniale foedus Gratiae feriatis cum CHRISTO ex mortuis susciato." See also *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 138, Col. 2:14, where the covenant of works is "handwriting, established partly in threatenings, partly in appointed Ceremonials."

crucified, and in him I am judicially bound to dye unto sin, to crucify the old man."[66] The ways of being justified are distinct, do not allow for combination, and it is foolishness to abject failure to attempt such confusion. The covenant of works is "the legal promise of giving life to him that doth, and performeth the Law, or to him who hath perfect inherent righteousness. For faith bringeth righteousness imputed to them that beleeve in him who justifies the ungodly, or bringeth righteousness to him, who is destitute of Righteousness from himself."[67] The covenant made between God and Abraham for uniting all the elect in Christ by justification by faith is God's absolute promise and cannot be made void or changed by the superaddition of the law given later to Abraham's descendants at Sinai.[68]

In Ephesians Dickson asserts that the problem for humanity is being not merely defiled with, but dead in sin, not only judicially dead because of being both guilty and liable to death, "but also really in effect spiritually dead, so that the dead could as easily raise themselves to life, or perform actions of being, as you could free yourselves from this death or do any good deed."[69] Colossians 1:14 presents the freedom from the revenging justice of God as "a lawful redemption," having the consent of the parties and the price of redemption paid, and the resulting benefit of liberty cause for great thanksgiving.[70]

The Matthew commentary provides instruction that the Law and covenant of works serve to "discover unto us the vileness of sin, and the unsupportable burden of

---

[66] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 97.
[67] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 98, Gal. 3:12.
[68] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 98-99.
[69] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 112, Eph.2:1.
[70] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 135-136. See also Col. 2:11 for the lawful sign of internal circumcision and the right to benefits.

GODS wrath, due to our sin."[71] The significance of the bread, to be understood neither "physically nor miraculously," and cup of the Lord's Supper are explained by Dickson in his analogy of that which is lawful before the bars of civil and divine justice.

> So this Bread, thus given and thus taken, is by the institution and appointment of Divine Ordinance, in a judicial sense, the very Body of Christ suffering, judicially and truly, or really in divine Law, made sure to the receiver for all profitable effects before the Bar of Divine Justice... So this bread by Divine Ordinance doth, signifie, exhibit, and confirme the Beleevers right and title unto Christs body, as suffering for the Beleevers redemption, more certainly and surely, then if Christs body suffering were physically imbraced by him in his armes, if it were possible...For this cup, or wine in the cup, *is my blood*, saith the Lord, to wit, Appointed of me judicially to make you truly and really sure of your right unto my death and bloodshed, and unto all benefits bought thereof.[72]

3.3.3 Mediator

In the ongoing dialog regarding the nature and work of Christ's mediatorship, against those arguing this is a matter of either the Son's divine or human nature, Dickson presents evidence for Christ being mediator according to both his divine and human natures. In his commentary on the Westminster Confession on Christ's work of mediation, Dickson focuses on the error of the Papists in maintaining that Christ is mediator only according to his human nature and states that this error is confuted by four reasons. Citing 1 Peter 3:18, he points out that perfecting the work of the mediator required Christ overcoming death, something which could not be done by the strength of Christ's human nature. Second, there are "properties of the Mediator" that do not correspond to his human nature, "as undertaking and promising, that he will raise up all at the last day, whom the Father has given him; John 6.39," and laying down and taking up his life again. Third, the application of the things merited by the mediator can only

---

[71] Dickson, *Matthew*, A.
[72] Dickson, *Matthew*, Ddv, Dd2r.

be done by his divine nature. Finally, Christ is prophet, priest and king according to both his natures.[73]

Discussing the titles of the Son in relation to the procuring of a covenant of reconciliation between God and the elect, Dickson gives *Mediator*, μεσιτης, as the first title. The dual nature of the "one Mediatour between God and man (to wit, God incarnat)" is seen in Christ's "interceeding for procuring of it [the covenant], and that not by a simple intreaty, but by giving Himself over to the Father (calling for satisfaction to Justice, that reconciliation might go on) for paying a compensatory price, sufficient to satisfie Justice for the elect, 1 Tim.2.5.6." The second title comes from Job 19:24 and includes the Hebrew *GOEL* in the Latin text. Dickson explains that Christ is also called "*Redeemer*, a near kinsman, who before His incarnation had obliged Himself to take on humane nature, and to pay the price of Redemption (represented by slain sacrifices) for the elect His kinsmen."[74]

Dickson engages in various discussions on the price of redemption and fitness of the redeemer for accomplishing the work of redemption, reminding that both the Old and New Testaments teach that redemption of the soul is precious and incapable of being accomplished by any corruptible thing. "All men are God's prisoners of war, his captives, and liable by justice to death temporal and eternal; and there is no delivery from death, whether temporal or eternal, but by paying a ransom unto God, which is impossible for a mere man to pay: *none can give to God a ransom for his brother*. We are not redeemed with silver or gold, or any perishing thing; our ransom must be of

---

[73] Dickson, *Truths Victory Over Error*, 63-64. See also *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, I5r-I6v, K5r-v, K11r; *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 294 (1 Peter 3:18); David Dickson, *A Brief Explication of the First Fifty Psalms* (London, 1655), 117-119 (Psa. 2:1-2).

[74] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra* I.4.27; I.iv.20.

greater value than a mere man can pay, that is a man and no more: *the redemption of a man's soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever.*"[75]

However, God would have "His own co-eternall and only begotten Son to become a man, to take on the yoke of the law, and to do all His will, that He alone might redeem the elect, who by nature are under the curse of the law. He would have Him the second Adam to be obedient even to the death on the cross, that by His obedience many might be justified, Rom.5.19."[76] Describing these sufferings, Dickson notes the distinctions made between Christ's active and passive obedience, insisting that these are "but two notions of the one thing; for his incarnation, subjection to the law, and the whole course of his life was a continued course of suffering, and in all his suffering he was a free and voluntary agent, fulfilling all which he had undertaken unto the Father, for making the promised price of Redemption, and accomplishing what the Father had commanded him to do."[77]

Dickson further identifies the price of redemption as the infinite value of the sufferings of the incarnate Son, "both in body and soul for a season, as much as should be equivalent to the due deserved punishment of them whom he should redeem," sufferings "agreed upon in the covenant of redemption" to which the Son yielded himself. As all sinners are liable to the death of body and soul through the breaking of the covenant of works, justice required the redeemed be delivered from the dual death by the "tasting of death in both kinds" by the redeemer.[78] Death of the soul being unlike death of the body and consisting in the separation of the soul "from communion

---

[75] Dickson, *First Fifty Psalms*, 315.
[76] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.37.
[77] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.38.
[78] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.39; *First Fifty Psalms*, 317-318.

with God, in such and such degrees, as justly may be called the death of the soul," Dickson explains the sufferings of Christ's soul. "Albeit the con-natural holinesss of the soul of Christ could not be removed, nor the personal union of it be dissolved, no not when the soul was separated from the body, yet it was subject, by Christ's own consent, to be emptied of strength-natural, to be deprived for a time of the clearness of vision of its own blessedness, and of the quiet possession of the formerly felt peace, and of the fruition of joy for a time, and so suffer an eclipse of light and consolation, otherwise shinning from His God-head; and so in this sort of spiritual death might undergo some degrees of spiritual death."[79] Thus, Dickson argues, Christ's satisfaction for the redeemed "doth not stand in any one part of His doings and sufferings, but in the whole and intire precious pearl, and complete price of His whole obedience from His incarnation event to the death of His crosse."[80]

3.3.4 Surety

The terms *surety*, *ἔγγυος,* but more often *sponsor,* are frequently employed by Dickson in discussion of the covenant of redemption, stressing Christ's offer of himself as redeemer and surety, the one who accepts legal obligation, or is surety for the elect. Dickson also occasionally uses *reus,* translated *cautioner*, the term from Scots law for the one who becomes bond or surety for another for the performance of an obligation or contract, and, on at least one occasion, writes of the Mediator who is himself bail

---

[79] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra,* I.4.40. Dickson details degrees of the sufferings of Christ's soul from I.4.40-54.

[80] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.54.

(*Vadem*).[81] *Sponsio,* defined as the standard term for a guarantee or surety from Roman law adopted by Reformed federalists for the promise of God the Son to God the Father in the covenant of redemption, is less frequently used by Dickson and *fideiussio*, indicating the actual posted bond or set guarantee required for the freedom of the accused, much less.[82] The rare appearances of *fidejussor* provoke the question of whether Dickson is merely indicating awareness of ongoing dialogue regarding the theological significance of *sponsio* or *fidejussor* and engaging in a very limited manner in the conversation.[83] As Dickson typically does not avoid explanation when he deems such necessary or expects that it would be helpful, it would seem that this terminology was not something he considered particularly constructive, at least not in print. In the classroom Professor Dickson may have had more to say. He does, over the course of his writings, address the sense in which Christ is surety.

In an early sermon on Isaiah 52, Dickson declares that all the promises of God spoken of in this chapter are performed in Christ and calls Christ God's "elect servant," "the surety of the covenant," "the cautioner" both for God's part and the believer's, paying both the debt to the Father and performing all that God has promised.[84] Dickson seems equally comfortable with *cautioner* or *surety*, continuing the use of cautioner in

---

[81] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.iv.40: "Mediator se Vadem & Sponsorem sponte offert & accipit Conditionem: Tunc dixi ego, Ecco adsum, nempe, Sponsor & Redemptor, Heb.10.7." Dickson renders this in English, "Fourthly, the Mediatour Christ offers Himself pledge and Surety of His own accord, and takes the condition; *then said I, lo, I come*, to wit, as *Surety* to pay the ransom and *to do thy will*, Heb. 10.7."; cf., Beach, "Doctrine of the *Pactum Salutis*," 130-135.

[82] Richard A. Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms Drawn Principally from Protestant Scholastic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1985), 114, 287.

[83] See van Asselt, "*Expromissio* or *Fideiussio*," 37-57. Dickson does not indicate sympathy for Cocceius' distinctions regarding the issue of forgiveness in the Old and New Testament as *paresis* and *aphesis* respectively where there is a conditional sense of *fideiussio* that allows the transfer of debt to the surety, but leaves the debtor liable until the *fideiussio* is applied in time.

[84] Dickson, *Select Practical Writings*, 114-117.

the 1638 speech and in conjunction with surety in *Therapeutica Sacra.*[85] Although *sponsor* in the Latin texts is most often translated *surety* in the commentaries, sometimes *sponsio* is also translated *surety*, as well as *suretyship* or rendered "His undertaking for payment."[86]

The second proof propounded in *Therapeutica Sacra* as evidence of this covenant identifies "the titles and styles" given to Christ in his procuring a covenant with the elect and reconciling them to God. *Surety*, with *ἔγγυος* and *sponsor* both in the Latin text, is third on the list and Hebrews 7:22 given as reference. Dickson argues that God would not pass a covenant of grace and reconciliation unless he had a good surety to "answer for the debt" of those needing reconciliation and undertake to make those reconciled "stand to his Covenant." Christ is called the "*Surety* of a better Covenant" and his suretyship must signify "a Covenant between Him and the Fathers Justice, to whom He becometh surety for us: for, what is *suretiship*, but a voluntary transferring of anothers debt upon the Surety, oblieging to pay the debt for which he ingageth as Surety?" The covenant of grace established by Christ is much better than either the covenant of works or the old covenant of grace with Israel "as they made use

---

[85] Dickson, Speech, 158; *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.51. Speaking of Christ's suffering on the cross and the sense of God's consolation removed from Christ, Dickson explains, "In which desertion Christ is not to be looked upon simply as He is in His own person, the Son of the Father, in whom He is always pleased, but as He standeth in the room of sinners, Surety and Cautioner, paying their debt." I.iv.32.36: "...sed secundum conditionem judicialem assumptam, prout erat sponsor nostrer & nostro nomine reus tractabatur, debitamque nobis derelictionem persolvebat."

[86] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles,* see Gal. 2:20, L316/E96; Eph. 1:7, L335/E109; Heb.7:22, L623/E196. Heb. 7:22 contains both *sponsor* and *sponsio*. The last appears in *Therapeutica Sacra* I.iv.22.10: "Admisit Pater sponsorem, & sponsionem ab ipso factam: & vers. 17. Ecce vox a coelis aicens, hic est Filius ille meus dilectus, in quo acquiesco." Loonstra, *Verkiezing – Verzoening – Verbond*, 101, identifies the concept of *sponsio* as support for Dickson's doctrine of the covenant of redemption. Christ through a voluntary arrangement (*pactio*) placed himself as surety for a foreign guilt and bound himself to give satisfaction.

of it."[87] In the Latin text Dickson further states that the surety is indeed the bond or guarantee and also notes the necessity for the *sponsio* to the covenanting between God and humanity.

Other direct statements of Dickson's understanding of the significance of Christ as surety taking on the debt in the absolute sense of *expromissio* and without the sense of liability remaining on the part of the debtors are found in his commentary on Matthew and in *Therapeutica Sacra*. In Matthew 26:50 he explains, "Christ being surety for the Redeemed, who cannot defray their own debt, he behoved to answer unto justice for them, and therefore must he be *laid hands on and taken*." Discussing the levitical priesthood as providing testimonies and evidences of the intratrinitarian covenant, Dickson states that the "promised price of Redemption was of no lesse worth, to give righteousness and life eternall to believers in the Messiah to come, then the price now payed is now of worth to give for it, righteousnesse and life eternall to these that believe in the Messiah now come, Jesus Christ incarnate."[88]

3.3.5 Conditions

How the covenants were to be understood as *monopleuron* or *dipleuron* was still under discussion in the seventeenth century and these issues underlie some efforts to precisely define the covenant of grace. Criticism has been lodged particularly against the conditions required of the redeemed with regard to the covenant of grace that

---

[87] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.26-28; I.iv.20: "Vocatur ἔγγυος, sponsor foederis inter Deum & homines contrahendi: quae sponsio, pro hominibus apud Patrem, non potest concipi, nisi per modum pacti: Sponsor enim est fidejussor, qui transfert in seipsum debitum alienum, per voluntariam pactionem, & spontaneam substitutionem sui pro debtore, obligans se satisfa turum pro debitore." *Fidejussor* also occurs in I.iv.26.

[88] Dickson, *Matthew*, Ee; *Therapeutica Sacra* I.4.30-31. See also commentary on Matt. 27.26.

Dickson ostensibly propounded, a case more readily made by extracting snippets of his texts from their contexts.[89] Clear statements by Dickson of the lack of conditions required of the redeemed regarding the drawing of them into the covenant do not indicate that the redeemed are without responsibility for faithful obedience after regeneration. Examples of these responsibilities are found throughout Dickson's works.

In the Matthew commentary Dickson explains that the twofold manner of making a covenant of grace between God and the church entailed the old covenant "of typicall promises, painfull and chargeable rites and harder conditions to the external Beholders" and the new covenant after Christ's incarnation "of better promises, and more comfortable conditions because the dimnesse of the shadow is removed, the yoke of the ceremonies is broken, and the substance of the covenant is more clearly seen."[90] He did not consider the covenant made with the church of the Old Testament to have either been a covenant of righteousness by works or to have suggested the possibility of achieving righteousness by adherence to the law. A fuller treatment given later declares the terms of the covenant of grace have been "diversly propounded in Scripture" in both Old and New Testaments with three things to be distinguished: the condition of the person desiring to be in covenant with God for reconciliation through Christ; the condition upon which the person entered into the covenant; the condition required of the person evidencing the sincerity of the covenanting.[91]

The first condition requires a person to acknowledge his sins, confess to being a sinner and unable to help himself. Christ calls those that "labour and are heavy laden"

---

[89] Bell, *Calvin and Scottish Theology*, 94, claims that the covenant of grace in *Therapeutica Sacra* is a bilateral agreement with "the threefold condition of confession of our sins, consent to receive God's gospel grace, or faith in Jesus Christ, and obedience and fruit of a sanctified life."

[90] Dickson, *Matthew*, Dd2.

[91] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.6.99-103.

into a covenant and fellowship of his grace. The second is faith, consenting to receive the grace and benefits offered in Christ for righteousness and life eternal as given in the gospel. Those who believe in Christ find "full relief from sin and misery" and "full righteousness and felicity." The third condition pertains to evidences of "the truth and sincerity of the faith" professed, and to the covenanter taking on the yoke of Christ, giving himself "to Christ's government and obedience to his commands."[92]

At this point Dickson allows that "a covenanter in the letter externally" will profess to have these conditions and purpose to follow, but only true covenanters in the spirit do have all three. "For true faith in Christ, or the receiving of Christ offered in the Evangell for justification and salvation, which is the condition of the covenant, presupposeth the condition of the man who is called to imbrace Christ, and draweth after it the condition required of the man covenanting."[93]

As with the covenant of works, Dickson asserts humans are driven to innovation with regard to the covenant of grace, insisting on framing "counterfeit covenants" with their own conditions other than faith, and identifies various examples of such aberrations. Examples from Scripture include the false apostles mentioned by Paul in Galatians who attempted to join justification by works and grace, and the Pharisees in Luke 18. Of particular concern to Dickson are those who "make the act of faith brought forth by the power of natural free-will to be the condition of the covenant, contrary to the doctrine of the Gospel, which makes faith infused, to be the gift of God." Also noted are those whose conditions include Christ paying for mortal sins in his temporal suffering with each sinner paying for venial sins by temporal suffering on earth and in

---

[92] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.6.100.
[93] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.6.100-101.

purgatory, and the equation that if one does all the good he/she is able to do and wills to do better, God is obligated to accept the will for the perfect deed.[94]

Dickson identifies a regenerate person's three duties, not to be confused with conditions. The first allows for no confidence in the flesh, but following "the leading of the Spirit in the poynt of more and more humbling of himself before God in all the sense of his own insufficiency, and eschewing of all leaning on his own parts, gifts, works or sufferings, or any thing else beside Christ." The second duty pertains to rejoicing in Christ, growing "in the estimation of Christs righteousness and fulnesse of all graces to be letten forth to the believer imploying Him by faith and comforting himself in Christ against all difficulties, troubles and temptations." Third, being a worshipper of God calls for endeavoring "communion-keeping with God in the course of new obedience in all cases, worshipping and serving God in sincerity of heart."[95]

The condition stipulated by God and accepted by the Son in the intratrinitarian covenant transacted before the world began for redeeming lost humanity required that God the Son appointed Redeemer "would humble himself so far as to assume the humane nature of a soul and body, unto personal union with his Divine Nature, and submit himself to the Law as surety for them, and satisfie Justice for them, by giving obedience in their name, even unto the suffering of the cursed death of the Cross." By so doing, Christ would "ransom and redeem them all from sin and death, and purchase unto them righteousness and eternal life, with all saving graces leading thereunto, to be

---

[94] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.6.109-110.
[95] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.3.19-20.

effectually, by means of his own appointment, applied in due time to every one of them."[96]

The statement that those reconciled to God "must understand that God requireth no other conditions but Faith and testifies from Heaven that he is well pleased to justifie sinners upon this condition"[97] follows Dickson's explanation of how anyone comes to meet that condition of faith. Evidencing his understanding this as the work of the whole Trinity, Dickson states that Christ by the power of his Spirit "applies unto the Elect effectually, all saving graces purchased to them in the Covenant of Redemption," resulting in the inward change of their persons and the accompanying change in their state by God.

> He doth convert or regenerate them, by giving spiritual life to them, in opening their understandings, renewing their wills, affections and faculties, for giving spiritual obedience to his commands. 2. He gives unto them *saving Faith* by making them in the sense of deserved condemnation, to give their consent heartily to the Covenant of Grace, and it imbrace Christ Jesus unfained. 3. He gives them *Repentance*, by making them, with Godly sorrow in the hatred of sin, and love of Righteousness: turn from all iniquity to the service of God, and 4. He *Sanctifies* them, by making them go on and persevere in faith, and spiritual obedience of the Law of God, manifested by fruitfullness in all duties, and doing good works as God offereth occasion."[98]

This change in their state brought about by God as soon as they are brought into the covenant of grace by faith entails God justifying them, reconciling his former enemies and making them friends, adopting them as his children and enriching them "with all spiritual priviledges of his Sons." At the end of this life God perfects "the holiness and blessedness, first of their souls at their death and then both their souls and

---

[96] Dickson, *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, I5r-I5v.
[97] Dickson, *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, I10v-I11r.
[98] Dickson, *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, I7r.

their bodys, being joyfully joined together again, in the Resurrection, at the day of his Glorious coming to Judgment."[99]

3.3.6 Mercantile Language

Dickson had no need to look to the mundane to supply imagery or language to convey a particular relationship between God and humans. "God draweth nigh vnto vs in His Word, speaking vnto vs, as a king vnto his Subjects, or a Master vnto his Servanntes; that the obedience, or disobedience, which wee giue to His Speaches, resolveth, directlie, and immediatelie, vpon GOD HIMSELFE."[100] Here the earthly and political analogies are already implicit in the biblical language itself, as is the so-called "contractual" element of the covenant, the stipulations. Accordingly, Dickson's use of mercantile terminology is neither secularly derived nor innovative, but shows conscious and careful borrowing. The use reflects as well his certainty that failing to read God's writings and take notice of his speaking would be to despise and disobey the God who has "written the Great things of His Lawe vnto us, even to bee a Touch-Stone, not onlie to trye all mens Doctrine there-by, but also to trye all mens disposition towards Himself; and, howe they stand affected to His Honour, whether as Foes, or as Friends."[101]

In order to understand the significance of *foedus redemptionis,* Dickson distinguishes between four meanings of the term *redemptio* occurring in the New Testament: "the contract and agreement of selling and buying-back to eternall salvation" of lost people found in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; the paying of the agreed upon

---

[99] Dickson, *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, I7r-I7v; *First Fifty Psalms*, 317-318.
[100] Dickson, "To the Reader," *Short Explanation to Hebrewes*, ¶6r.
[101] Dickson, "To the Reader," *Short Explanation to Hebrewes*, ¶6v.

price as in Christ's ransoming of the elect, Galatians 3:13; the begun application of covenant benefits purchased by the paid price, Ephesians 1:7; and the full and perfect possession of the benefits agreed upon through the sealing by the Holy Spirit as the earnest of the inheritance, Ephesians 1:14 and 4:30. The first sense of redemption, which may also be called "redemption by paction and agreed bargain," is identified as an accurate description of the covenant of redemption past between the Father and Son about the redemption of the elect.[102]

Mercantile language also figures prominently in the confidence-building warrants given in *Summe of Saving Knowledge.* "The hearty invitation" given by God from Isaiah 55 is for the thirsty to come to the waters and buy without money and price. God asks why "spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not?"[103] Mentioning "the precious ransom of our Redemption by the sufferings of Christ and the rich blessing purchased to us thereby" in the two previous chapters of Isaiah, Dickson states that the Lord makes specific offers in this chapter.

> 1. Maketh open offer of Christ and his grace by proclamation of a free and gracious market of Righteousness and Salvation; to be had through Christ to every soul without exception that truly desires to be saved from sin and wrath; *Ho, every one that thirsteth,* saith he. 2. He inviteth all sinners, that, for any reason, stand at distance with God, to come and take from him riches of grace running in Christ as a River to wash away sin, and to slocken wrath: *Come ye to the water,* saith he. 3. Lest any should stand back, in the sense of his own sinfulness or unworthiness and inability to do any good, the Lord called upon such persons in special, saying, *He that hath no money, come*. 4. He craveth no more of his Merchant, but that he be pleased with the wares offered, which are grace and more grace, and that he heartily consent unto, and imbrace this offer of grace, that so he may close a bargain and a formal Covenant with God, *Come, buy without money* (saith he) *Come eat*, that is, consent to have, and take unto you all saving graces, make the wares your own, possess them, and make use of all the blessings in Christ, whatsoever maketh for your spiritual life and comfort,

---

[102] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.23-24; *Therapeutica Sacra* I.iv.17: "Et haec Redemptio dici potest Pactitia, seu Redemptio pacta."

[103] Dickson, *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, K3r.

use and enjoy it freely, without paying any thing for it. *Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price*, saith he. [104]

Dickson explains these offers are made by God because he knows how inclined people are to seek righteousness through personal performance "by the way of works, and how loath we are to embrace Christ Jesus, and to take life by way of free grace, through Jesus Christ, upon the tearms whereupon it is offered to us, therefore the Lord lovingly calls us off this our crooked and unhappy way, with a gentle and timous admonition, giving us to understand that we shall but lose our labour in this our way, *Wherefore do ye spend your money* (saith he) *for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not?*" [105]

3.3.7 Free will

Dickson considered incorrect and misleading the impression that freedom of the human will allows humans to guide the matter of salvation, evaluating God's offer and deciding one way or other, thereby reducing God to a spectator, "a furnisher of directions" subject to a person's beck and call. Before the General Assembly he stated that regarding conversion freedom of the will properly refers to the working of the Holy Spirit whereby the mind of "a naturall man and so wicked in himselff" is persuaded and convinced to "most willinglie and freilie" turn to God, with the sure result that where formerly the person had been "in the armes of Sathan" he now embraces Christ.[106] Expanding on statements of the Westminster Confession, Dickson cites and confutes the errors attributed to the Pelagians and Socinians that "the Natural Man, without

[104] Dickson, *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, K3v-K4r.
[105] Dickson, *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, K4r.
[106] Dickson, Speech, 157.

supernatural, and divine grace, is able to convert himself to God, by his own strength," and "the Semipelagians, Papists, Arminians, and Lutherians," in maintaining that "fallen Man, and corrupted with Original sin, is partly able by his own strength (the Grace of God assisting him) to prepare himself, and turn himself to God."[107]

3.4 Conclusion

Dickson's seeming lack of involvement in the technical *berith/diatheke* or *expromissio/fideiussio* deliberations should not be viewed as indications of his ignorance of the subtleties of the issues or signal a deficiency of scholarship, rendering him unprepared to enter into the debates. His commentaries are not characterized by settling issues of translation but reveal his use of distinctions and drawing doctrine from rather than parsing Scripture with his emphasis on exposition. It was not that Dickson denied the value of scholarly attention to Scripture for the church, but given the existence of many commentaries suitable for the learned, he saw no need to duplicate those efforts when what was lacking were sufficient aids for the laity. To assume that discussion of the more technical aspects did not come up in his classroom would be unrealistic.

Consistent use of *foedus* by Dickson for the name of the particular covenants is in accord with the practice found in the British literature of his time and seems to indicate his acceptance of *foedus naturae, foedus legale, foedus operum, foedus gratiae,* and *foedus novum* as standard terms. He carried the usage over to *foedus redemptionis,* the term he designates for the *pactum salutis*. His later use of *pactum* and *foedus* does suggest a progression in his thinking on the subject with some evidence in the Galatians

[107] Dickson, *Truths Victory Over Error*, 64-66.

and Matthew commentaries of Dickson working on fine-tuning the concept that would later generally, but not rigidly, allow *pactum* to convey the bargain or arrangement or some aspect thereof, and *foedus* as covenant. In later works the differences between the covenants and their relationships to each other are more fully articulated.

Objections made by critics of legal aspects in federal theology as compromising the love of God in salvation seem to miscast both the legal terminology and strong legal context that run through both Scripture and Dickson's work.[108] Relationships by covenants are legal interactions with legal standing. Dickson finds legal language in Scripture, the basis of which is not the covenant of works in the garden with its obligation and reward, nor the laws of Moses and obedience of the Israelites, but the *pactum salutis* with the radical voluntary nature of the Godhead's undertaking that results in bequeathing the legacy and making the beneficiaries truly sure of their rights and all pertinent benefits. Additionally, the matter of justification and distinguishing imputed from inherent or infused righteousness require more than a passing acquaintance with legal terminology.

The mercantile or commercial language is obvious, but it does rest on biblical motifs, so that arguably, its presence is explained not by the imposition of commercial concepts and concerns on Scripture, but by Dickson's concern to use a variety of biblical patterns of explanation, of which the commercial or mercantile is one.[109] It may also be that Dickson not only uses, but seems to like the commercial language, perhaps more so than preceding writers on the covenant because it puts. As the son of a Glasgow merchant, the commercial language would have been familiar, enabling

---

[108]Contra M'Crie, Knappen, Bell, Armstrong, J. B. Torrance, T. F. Torrance, Jinkins, and Holsteen.

[109]Contra Morris, Knappen, Dillistone, Brown, Bell, the Torrances, Strehle, Jinkins, and Wong.

Dickson to put the doctrine in language that would also readily convey thethat doctrine to his culture in an immediately understandable way.

Serious qualifications must be given to both the portrayal of the concept of ownership as one of the selling points for Puritan clerics and the explanation that "covenant theology avoided complacency because the idea of a heavenly contract implied that salvation rested on an agreement between God and the believer. This focused attention on the nature and role of human consent in salvation, in place of a fixed and unknowable decree made by God at the beginning of time."[110] Dickson's emphasis was not on human ownership of the covenant but on what the redeemed owed to the voluntary graciousness of God, and the comfort and confidence the redeemed could find in the revelation of the secure intratrinitarian covenant concerning their redemption. Dickson would have granted the explanation of joint ownership characteristic of Arminianism, but argued repeatedly that the covenant of redemption refutes those tenets and stressed the person and work of the Son as mediator according to both his divine and human natures.

Another proposition that is also unsatisfying concerns the idea that clerics argued a bilateral covenant because it was more suited to popular consumption.[111] Dickson maintained that the heavenly contract of grace has both unilateral and bilateral dimensions. However, the stability of the contract and its blessing are not conditional and the sense of *quid pro quo* does not typify his teaching on the bilateral aspect of the covenant of grace, either in its establishment with the elect or with what passes for its conditions. Dickson insisted that both the making and the way of making a covenant

---

[110] Zaret, *Heavenly Contract*, 153.
[111] Zaret, *Heavenly Contract*, 153-158.

with humanity depends absolutely on God who determines to make or not make a covenant and sets the conditions with whomever he chooses. Salvation does rest on an agreement, not between God and the believer, but on the *pactum salutis*.

Thus, similarities between heavenly and secular contracts are not as great as some suggest. The differences between divine and human contracts point us back toward the biblical basis of the earlier covenant theology, where some of the similarities are also exegetically grounded.

CHAPTER 4
THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION BY DICKSON

4.1 Dickson and the *Pactum Salutis*

4.1.1 Context and Issues

Dickson plays a significant role in the trajectory of ongoing exegesis and dialog on divine covenants, specifically in his formulation of the intratrinitarian covenant resulting from the counsel of God pertaining to works of the Trinity *ad intra* and *ad extra* in the whole work of redemption. His works show attentiveness to the substantial issue of how to understand the work of redemption so as not to call into question the radical equality of the members of the Trinity given discussion of the divine nature of the Son with his humanity subordinating himself to the Father.

As early as Calvin's generation the Reformed definition of Christ as Mediator was according to his two natures and in combination with the double designation of Christ as surety and his eternal suretyship or *sponsio.* These provide the components of what would be formulated as the *pactum salutis*. The *pactum salutis* would stand as proof in the theologies of various authors of the nature of God's redemptive plan as both eternal and other than a reaction to the problem of sin.[1]

As noted earlier in this study, although the language was not precise, statements indicating a *pactum salutis*, particular interaction between the Father and Son having the characteristics of a mutually voluntary, contractual agreement, have been noted in print among British and Continental theologians prior to 1638 in a variety of settings from sermons to theological systems. Similar language on the subject in sermons that appear to date by 1635 point to thinking by Dickson on the subject of the covenant of

[1]Muller, "Toward the *Pactum Salutis*," 15-24.

redemption without precise terminology. However, the explicit treatment is in his speech to the General Assembly in Glasgow three years later, setting forth the *pactum salutis* with clarity and precision as a separate intratrinitarian covenant from eternity that concerns the whole work of redemption of the elect.

Although exegesis of *The Epistle to the Hebrews* has figured significantly in recent discussions of the development of federal theology,[2] Dickson's commentaries on *Hebrews* (1635, 1645, 1659) offer little evidence of major alternations in covenant thought: they openly present a two-covenant system with signals pointing toward the doctrine of the covenant of redemption. However, following the speech additional precise statements of the doctrine of the *pactum salutis* are found in his commentaries of Paul's epistles published in 1645 and at greater length in his little discussed *Matthew* commentary of 1647, all predating the publication of Cocceius' formulation of the doctrine in 1648. We will examine Dickson's formulations of the *pactum salutis* from the earliest indications in sermons (ca. 1635) to the thorough treatment in *Therapeutica Sacra*, noting developments in his thinking along the way. Beyond the polemic or academic value of the doctrine, this study will also consider Dickson's regard for its practical uses and benefits. Following the presentation of Dickson's views, issues raised in the scholarship regarding the covenant of redemption will be addressed.

4.1.2 Dickson's Attention to Genre in Teaching on the Covenant of Redemption

While Dickson taught on the *pactum salutis* in several genres, the treatment varied in accordance to the method of the particular genre. His sermons are characteristic of what has been recognized as typical of discursive rather than

[2] See Ph.D. dissertations by Knapp on Owen and Lee on Cocceius noted earlier.

disputational Scottish preaching, proceeding logically from topic to topic with little or no use of the scholastic discourse suited for the classroom. The focus was on interpreting the biblical text, stating principal doctrines and applying the message to the hearers rather than providing exhaustive linguistic precision or disputing particular opponents.[3] The extent of Dickson's teaching on the subject of the covenant of redemption in his commentaries is limited by his characteristic brevity and perspicuity. "Therefore, doe not looke howe much thou doest misse, which might have been sayde; but, what in the first frame of this moulde could bee done, in such brevitie."[4] In expounding Scripture his method was to draw doctrine from his exegesis of Scripture, and deliver the points of doctrine contained in the passages without enlarging on those doctrines.[5] Therefore, extended formulations of doctrine should not be expected in the measured instruction and exhortation of his sermons or in his commentaries.

Dickson's speech to the General Assembly was similarly constrained, the polemics and corresponding instruction focused on particulars, not encompassing all components of federal theology or every nuance. The doctrine in *Summe of Saving Knowledge* is presented as a *medulla*, a collection of primary loci articulated briefly, with this abridgment of the saving knowledge contained in Scripture accompanied by a longer section giving more detail of some practical uses of the knowledge. *Therapeutica Sacra* is a *loci communes,* with carefully drawn definitions, and distinctions. The significances of the *pactum salutis* and federal theology are employed as a separate

---

[3] Ryken, "Scottish Reformed Scholasticism," 204-208.

[4] Dickson, *Explanation of Hebrewes*, ¶3v-¶5v; *Matthew*, A2v, A4v-A5v.

[5] Henderson, *Religious Life*, 23. Henderson notes that Dickson's studies of the epistles are "indeed very brief and confine themselves to the essentials."

locus within the context of this practical, thorough examination of topics related to sin-sick consciences and methods of identifying and healing their diseases.

4.2 Teaching on the Covenant of Redemption ca. 1630s-1647

4.2.1 Sermons

The editor of the volume of Dickson's writings containing sermons states that the collection came from a never before published manuscript bearing the date 1635 and supposes that the manuscript had been written during that year by a devoted hearer of Dickson. The sermons were identified as having been preached for communion services in Irvine.[6]

Mullan notes that Dickson speaks of the covenant between the Father and Son in the sermon on Isaiah 52:13-15 in discussing the necessity of Christ's sufferings as the way of satisfying the law, removing its curse, and taking on the debt and punishment of the elect.[7] "By this, all the scandal of Christ's cross is removed; for when we see, that all that Christ suffered, was a concluded matter betwixt the Father and him, and that he was the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world, if it was fore-agreed betwixt him and the Father, we have no reason to stumble at his sufferings."[8] Dickson does not, however, employ the term covenant of redemption in this sermon for the "matter" between the Father and Son, though Christ is referred to as the surety and the "cautioner both for God's part and my part of the covenant."[9]

---

[6] Dickson, *Select Practical Writings*, l-li.
[7] Mullan, *Scottish Puritanism*, 199.
[8] Dickson, *Select Practical Writings*, 127.
[9] Dickson, *Select Practical Writings*, 114.

This covenant between the Father and Son is touched on again in speaking of the sprinkling of many nations. "This sprinkling is an action of the ceremonial law, which was used for two ends; for sealing of the covenant betwixt God and man, and for cleansing; therefore Moses sprinkled the books of the testimony. So Christ sprinkles, by making a covenant, and recounting us to the Father, and sprinkles many foul souls."[10]

Dickson also exhorts the Lord's people to speak to Christ regarding the promises of God.

> Lord Jesus, thou must perform this to me, for the father has bidden me behold thee: he has told me, that he had given thee for a "leader and witness to his people;" that thou are his elect servant; that thou are the surety of the covenant which includes the whole promises: thou are cautioner both for God's part and my part of the covenant; therefore perform this promise of making me clean, bringing of me to the temple, making me holy and giving me victory over my enemies. The Lord has said to me, Behold my servant; and lo, thou pleasest me well, thou are of mine own flesh. I take thee for the cautioner: pay thy Father's debt, and perform all that he has promised . . .
> We see the whole matter is put over upon Christ, as the doer of all. Albeit we be bidden depart, come out, and touch no unclean thing, yet He must do all the work; which lets us see, that whatever we are bidden do, Christ has gotten the commission to do it; the Father has committed us to him, and of him he will crave account. Therefore Christ must perform that which concerns us; he must do all our work; for the whole company of the elect are given to him, to be framed and fashioned by him, as clay into the hands of the potter, to make us clean vessels.[11]

Dickson further refers to the work of redemption as "a special point of service to God, wherewith he is well pleased. God counts it good service in his Son, to bring home rebels; and Christ has humbled himself to the estate of a servant, that he may help the helpless, and restore rebels; and nothing will be counted service, but that which he

---

[10] Dickson, *Select Practical Writings*, 130-131.

[11] Dickson, *Select Practical Writings*, 114-115. Echoes of this come later in *Summe of Saving Knowledge* as the believer is enjoined to embrace God's offer of the everlasting covenant and accept the bargain, 112v.

doeth."[12] Christ is fully furnished in his person, office and endowments to be "a meet Mediator," his threefold office of prophet, priest and king identified.[13] Reminding his hearers that Christ's service required encountering the justice of God and satisfying a just God, "Christ came not to abolish the law, but to fulfil the law; he came only to abolish the *cursing* part of it, but to establish the *obeying* part of it."[14]

A sermon on 2 Timothy 2:19 addresses election, indicates the covenant of redemption without the specific terminology, and assures the elect that God "knows them, while he calls them to his kingdom of both grace and glory; he knows them, when it was agreed betwixt him and his Son about the price of their redemption, when he gave them to Christ, and Christ took in hand to satisfy for them."[15] Dickson uses a coin of the realm analogy to discuss the mark of the seal of election. "The seal of the elect has two sides; the one is read of God, the other toward us, is read of us . . . As in a common or ordinarily current coin of money, if ye let a man see the one side of it, he can readily tell what is on the other side of it, so, in this seal, he who knows the one side, will also know the other; for God has no adulterate or false coins as uses to be among men, but if any can find that they adhere to Jesus and depart from iniquity on the one side, they may be sure to find that God has elected them on the other side."[16]

Also in the series is a sermon on Job 10 in which Dickson speaks of Job having "good skill in the covenant of grace" and knowing of the covenant of grace made in the Mediator, later in the sermon called "the covenant of Christ's righteousness."[17] That

---

[12] Dickson, *Select Practical Writings*, 116.
[13] Dickson, *Select Practical Writings*, 117.
[14] Dickson, *Select Practical Writings,* 119.
[15] Dickson, *Select Practical Writings*, 101.
[16] Dickson, *Select Practical Writings*, 102-103.
[17] Dickson, *Select Practical Writings*, 14, 22, exposition of Job 10:4-7.

covenant is briefly contrasted with "the first covenant" under which a person deals with God in terms of justice not mercy, the context clearly making reference to the covenant of works. The language in this sermon does not identify the *pactum salutis* or stipulate its relationship to the covenant of grace.

> To deal with God, we must know the covenant of grace well, and reason with him from the grounds of it; for if a man only ken the first covenant, he will be dung all in sticks[18] when he comes to deal with God; he cannot deal with him in terms of mercy, but only in terms of justice. But the man who knows the covenant of grace made in the Mediator, as Job, who hereafter call the Mediator his kinsman, will reason with God according to the grounds of it; yea, all from Adam to this day, are saved by the covenant of grace, for there is one way of salvation unto all. Therefore, study diligently the covenant of grace made betwixt God and us in the Mediator.[19]

4.2.2 Explanation of the Epistle to the Hebrews

Ten years separate the publication of Dickson's first commentary on Hebrews taken from his sermons and the second taken from his lectures. The two sets document considerable development in his understanding of the divine covenants. The covenant theme scattered through the 1635 edition of Dickson's commentary on Hebrews reflects the teaching he attributes to Paul where the focus is on the excellency of Christ with respect to the covenants and reference is made to two covenants whereby believers are saved. Although the old is called the law or levitical covenant with ceremonial precepts and levitical priesthood, and the other the new or evangelical covenant, in the substance of salvation they are one. The old covenant should not be confused with the covenant of works made with Adam that had no mediating priesthood. While the early

---

[18] Dickson, *Select Practical Writings*, 14. Explanation noted in the text, "Knocked all to pieces – utterly discomfited."

[19] Dickson, *Select Practical Writings*, 14-15.

commentary does not specify precise covenant of redemption terminology, there are some indications that his formulation of the concept may not be far off.

In the commentary on Hebrews 1:2, Dickson speaks of God being the author of both the Old Testament and the doctrine of the New Testament, with no further discussion of covenant here.[20] Ten years later his comments on this verse regarding the excellency of Christ's prophetical office include the eternal appointment of Christ to his Mediatorship by God and the special covenant by which Christ is appointed heir "or Lord Proprietor, of all creatures in heaven and earth."[21] Although both commentaries contain a reference to Psalms 2:7 in Hebrews1:5, discussion or language of the covenant of redemption does not occur. However, in his Psalms commentary, dated 1655, the term appears in the explication of 2:7-8 four times and once as "the Fathers compact with the Son."[22]

Dickson mentions the covenant between God and Christ briefly as part of the case for Christ's excellency because of his deity in Hebrews 1:9, but without distinguishing the intratrinitarian covenant from the covenant of grace with the elect. In the early commentary Dickson points out a number of notable doctrines concerning Christ drawn from Psalm 45, beginning with Christ "called God and so is fit to reconcile us to God; able, and all-sufficient, to accomplish our Salvation." Christ is both God himself and man under God "in regarde of his Manhead and Office therein," from which follows "God is his God by Covenant: Christ, as Man, is confederate with God," the focus as much on the "Fellow-brethren" or "Shares-men in all the Fathers

---

[20] Dickson, *Short Explanation of Hebrewes*, 4-6.

[21] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 185; *Expositio Analytica,* 587: "Sic etiam aeterna Dei ordinatione ad officium Mediatoris, & ex pactione speciali constitutus est haeres."

[22] Dickson, *First Fifty Psalms*, 10-12.

Goods" with Christ.[23] The later version of the Hebrews commentary continues the thought of Christ's fellows in the covenant with different phrasing and includes the term *foedus gratiae.* "That one part of that Covenant of grace, which hee entered into with his Father, was, that as man, and the chief head of the Covenanters, his Father should be his God."[24] This thought continues in Hebrews 2:13 as Christ is numbered among the believers, "one of the Covenant of Grace," in the 1635 edition and "put in the number of the Covenanters" in the later version.[25]

Comparison in 7:22 is made between the levitical and evangelical covenants, with Christ surety of the latter. Although "Christ is content to bee Suretie: and the Father hath consented, and ordained, and made him Suretie,"[26] there is no overt talk of a covenant between the members of the Godhead, but certainly acknowledgment of the agreement. In the 1645 edition Dickson gives *foederis* in the verse and uses *foedus* consistently through his comments, the English edition translating *foederis* as *testament* in the verse and *covenant* in the following discourse.[27] Dickson, however, does not devote time to resolving translation details at this juncture. His emphasis, instead, is on what he sees as the opening arguments of the excellency of the covenant and priesthood of Christ as surety, *sponsor*, of the covenant of grace, arguing that where there is a priest, there is a covenant with the priest as the surety of the covenant. Noting that a

---

[23] Dickson, *Short Explanation of Hebrewes*, 13-14.

[24] Dickson, *Expositio Analytica,* 590: "Quod foederis Gratia cum Patre initi, altera pars foederata fuerit, qua homo & princeps Foederatorum, Patrem suum, Deum suum habitutus"; *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 186.

[25] Dickson, *Short Explanation of Hebrewes*, 30-31; *Expositio Analytica*, 596, "quia in numero foederatorum"; *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 188.

[26] Dickson, *Short Explanation of Hebrewes*, 133.

[27] Dickson, *Expositio Analytica,* 623; *Short Explanation of Hebrewes*, 196. See also Lee, "Biblical Exegesis, Federal Theology," 15-85. Lee chronicles the ongoing, complex translation issues for the theological community of *diatheke* as the equivalent of *berith* given that *berith* is always *foedus*, but particularly in Hebrews, *diatheke* demands *testamentum* as a will and testament.

surety has more than one office, Christ in his office "first of all bound himself to give satisfaction to Divine Justice for our debts; furthermore that as the friends of God in the Covenant of Grace we should walk to life eternal."[28]

Discussion of the old and new covenants in chapter 8 of the 1635 version presents the old covenant as composed of "the ten Commandments, and the rest of the Law delivered unto them, when they came out of AEgypt . . . wherein GOD promised, To bee their GOD, upon Condition, That they did all that hee commanded them: and, they accepted the Condition. So, Albeit there was Grace here, in sundrie Articles, covenanted, yet the forme of the Covenant, was lyke the Covenant of Workes. Compare Ierem. xvii.23 with Ierem. xxxi.31.32.33.&c."[29] There is no mention of a covenant of works in the later commentary, but of the new covenant being free of the condition of works.[30]

Translation issues are evident in the 1635 text (and more expansive than in the later commentary) in the discussion on Hebrews 9:16 as Dickson writes of the necessity of Christ's death, proved "from the force of the word COVENANT, which signfieth also a Testament" and harkening back to Christ's promise in Jeremiah 31:32 to make a new covenant which is also both a new testament and a promise to die. "For, in Ier. xxxj. the Lord Christ promiseth, to reconcile his People to GOD, to take away their sinnes, and to bee their GOD. Justice requyred satisfaction of them, before they could bee reconciled: Satisfaction they could not make themselves; therefore, hee who promised to make the Reconciliation with GOD, was bound to make the Satisfaction for

---

[28] Dickson, *Short Explanation to Hebrewes*, 196.

[29] Dickson, *Short Explanation to Hebrewes*, 156-7.

[30] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles,* 198; *Expositio Analytica, 629:* "Novum veró (ut statim patebit) absolutum à conditione operum."

them to GOD: and if Satisfaction for them; then to underlye the Curse of the Lawe for them, and so to die." Continuing this thought Dickson states that "Christ Iesus, is both the Maker of the Covenant which is in Ieremie xxxj. and the Mediatour thereof also: the Testatour, and Executour, of that blessed Testament," whose death "was concluded, and resolved vpon, and intimated, before Hee came into the World."[31]

Although Hebrews 10:5, 6 will be cited later in the commentary of Psalm 40 as indicating the *pactum salutis*, an agreement that only suggests without identifying such a covenant appears later in his 1635 commentary of 10:10 in connection with Christ offering his body once. "These All, for whome hee offered, were condescended vpon, betwixt the Father, and the Mediator. God knewe those whome hee gaue to the Sonne, to bee ransomed: and CHRIST knewe those whome he bought."[32] Also in the 1635 edition, in 10:14, Christ, having made the one offering, has "onlie to beholde the fruite of his Sufferings, brought about by the Father; and, to concurre with the Father, on his Throne, for that ende."[33]

Explanation in the later version of the Son performing obedience to the Father and offering himself up to death according to the Father's will is not given early in the chapter 10 in terms of a covenant between them, but there is mention of the new covenant under which the sacrifice of Christ obtains full pardon of the sins of the faithful from God.[34]

---

[31] Dickson, *Short Explanation to Hebrewes*, 180-181; *Expositio Analytica*, 636. In the 1645 text of Heb. 9:16, the verse reads. "Nam ubi testamentum est, mors intercedat, necesse est testatoris," with the "novum foedus Christi, est novum Testamentum Christi" in his explication.

[32] Dickson, *Short Explanation of Hebrewes*, 208.

[33] Dickson, *Short Explanation to Hebrewes*, 213.

[34] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 202.

4.2.3 Speech to the General Assembly

Steele observes that Arminianism posed a double threat to the integrity and character of the church. Theologically, its beliefs and practices "challenged the theological underpinnings of the established church" and "seemed to subvert the Reformation," while with regard to church-state relations, its ecclesiastical policy was "overtly Erastian" and hierarchical.[35] Called upon to refute the errors of Arminianism in December 1638 at a meeting of General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, Dickson touches on the second issue, but focuses on the first, declaring the "preaching of errour is like the selling of poisoned pestied bread, that slay the eater of it, and infects the breath of everyman that comes neir hand."[36]

This speech is significant for several reasons. Dickson's formulation here of the intratrinitarian covenant outlines the hallmarks of federal theology with particular clarity, including those elements that continue to generate serious objections, particularly limited atonement, the contractual agreement, and mercantile language. In the speech the relation of the covenant of redemption to the covenant of grace is stated and the charge that federal theology was primarily important for polemical endeavors is refuted, a claim that fails to accurately account for how beneficial proponents of federal theology considered it to be for the wellbeing of the church.

For Dickson, to have confined himself to refuting the specifics of Arminianism would have been to perform half a task. Providing doctrine opposing Arminianism and

---

[35] Steele, "The Politick Christian," 35-36.

[36] Dickson, Speech, 156: "Albeit the Lord hath brought in wholesome food in his house, and hes held his table long covered, yet the malice of Sathan, and the bussines of the Pope to recover his Kingdome, and the dalliance of worldlie men, hes sett instruments on foot to trouble our Church againe; and God, in his deep wisdome and justice, hes suffered the matter to goe that farr on, that we might see what a fearfull sin it was to put the keyes of the house of God in wrong hands."

demonstrating its ground in Scripture was an instructive corrective for the church and the completion of the task. Announcing his plan to set out the points of the Remonstrants' and the Canons of Dort refutations of those points under four heads each, Dickson declares two passages in Scripture, Isaiah 52 and John 6, sufficient to confirm the doctrine he will present as that of the church against the doctrine advanced by the Arminians.[37]

The first error of Arminianism that Dickson addresses is election, noting the Arminian objection to the kirk's doctrine of "a speciall election and a speciall reprobation" and claim that the doctrine is "not good for tender consciences that are converted."[38] To the contrary, Dickson states that the Arminian view makes humanity "the chooser of God" and reduces the death of Christ to making salvation possible for some. By placing the matter of conversion in the hands of those with the power of free will, Arminianism allows everyone to have the glory of having turned to God and received grace. This makes for the resignation of God's sovereignty, for "man will guyde the matter of his salvation by his frie will, and so they make God a spectator or furnisher of directions only as he is called by the mans frie will. God comes in at frie-wills beck and furnishes directions, and frie-will determines; and so they give a Godhead to frie-will, and makes God resigne his Sovereigntie quhill doomsday."[39]

Instead, Dickson insists that from Scripture comes clear teaching that for his special purpose God severs out a number from the race of mankind upon whom he will have mercy. A "Soveraigne Lord . . . of his owne workmanship, he can advance ane

---

[37] The passage from Isaiah 52:13 to the end of 53 figures prominently in proving the third article of the covenant of redemption in *Therapeutica Sacra,* I.4.59-62.

[38] Dickson, Speech, 158.

[39] Dickson, Speech, 157.

pairt higher of it than ane uther, and doe no wrang to the rest." Stating that Christ's purchase by his death was specific, "Our Lord made no blind blocke, but wist weill what he bought, as the Father wist what he sold: and has his scheepe before his eyes and was content to lay doune his lyfe for them."[40] The idea that in laying down his blood Christ "buyes no waires bot a possibilitie of some mans salvation" is also unacceptable, and reduces Christ's death to "drawing on of a bargaine betwixt God and man, to put man in the terms that Adam fell into, that man may take a new essay of himselfe, by the force of universal grace, to hold his feet where Adam fell."[41] Dickson here reflects the Canons of Dort: Christ's death did not merely create a possibility of salvation, but rather grounded the new covenant objectively.[42]

This speech is an example of Dickson's use of the term *bargain* in the context of the covenant between God and humanity regarding salvation and conveys his rejection of Arminianism's proposition that humanity has the wherewithal to bargain directly. "All things that belonges to lyfe and Salvation he [Christ] has layd doune such a pryce to the Father, and declared, by a voice from Heaven, that he was pleased with it."[43] Dickson does find *bargain* an appropriate term for the agreement Christ enters into for the sake of the salvation, and rejects the interpretation that allows Christ to be "so evill a Merchant as to lay doune his lyfe, and never will therefore, not sick a foole as to make a bargane whilk might be suspended by mans fickle frie-will, who hes that much prudence that he forsee a losse or danger he will governe it."[44]

---

[40] Dickson, Speech, 156.
[41] Dickson, Speech, 156.
[42] *Canones Synodi Dordrechtanae, Rejection Errorum II, Creeds of Christendom*, vol. 3, 563. See the translation in *Ecumenical Creeds and Reformed Confessions* (Grand Rapids: CRC Publications, 1988), 131.
[43] Dickson, Speech, 157.
[44] Dickson, Speech, 158.

Dickson points to the denial of the assurance of perseverance found in both Roman Catholic and Arminian views, essentially limiting Christ's resolve, resources, and work as mediator. "They sever poor simple man, and setts him alone with the staff of his frie will tottering in his hand, and the Divell, the world, and sin tempting him."[45] By contrast to the opinion that having done what he can as mediator, Christ can "only stand beside as a spectator," "in the perseverance of the Saints, the man and master go togither—the debtor and the cautioner goes togither—the captaine and soldiour goes togither—Christ and the man never sheds."[46]

In declaring to the Assembly the main error of the Arminianism, Dickson begins to speak of the covenant of redemption between God and Christ made in eternity, a superior covenant made by Christ containing articles that have no possibility of breaking, nor the possibility that God and Christ might fail. He adds his opinion that previous recognition of this covenant had been found in Arminianism, and charges Arminians with faulty handling of Scripture.

> "Thair main errour is this, (let me speak of it with reverence towards your learning) – not knowing the Scriptures, and the power of God in the matter of the Covenant of redemption betwixt God and Christ: yet there is enough of it in the Scripture. They pointed at it themselves, which, if they should have followed, they might sein all their matter in the midst; for the Covenant of Salvation betwixt God and man is ane thing, and the Covenant of Redemption betwixt God and Christ is ane uther thing. The Covenant betwixt God and Christ was done and endit before there was word in the world; but the Covenant betwixt God and man is by the means of the Mediator, which makes all sufficient, and he is our strength and bulwarke."[47]

---

[45] Dickson, Speech, 156.
[46] Dickson, Speech, 158.
[47] Dickson, Speech, 158.

Insisting, "since the whole Byble takes the denomination from this Covenant, it is recommended to us to studie it better,"[48] Dickson offers five theses, indicating that further discussion of these will be given at another time. The first thesis states the existence of the intratrinitarian covenant, the parties involved and its relation to a later covenant of grace and salvation between God and humanity. Although on this occasion the covenant of redemption is explained as a matter between God and Christ the Mediator, Dickson would include in later works careful discussion of the Holy Spirit's participation in this covenant. The second and third theses indicate the mutually voluntary nature of the covenant of redemption. The second thesis asserts that in this covenant the specifics of election were designated and agreed upon by God and the second person of the Trinity, including the number and names of the elect, the gifts and graces to be bestowed upon the elect and the time and means of bestowing them. Determination of the details of the price of the redemption, the associated gifts to be paid by the Redeemer, and the length of the Redeemer's captivity to death comprise the third thesis. The fourth specifies the soul's refuge, "a sufficient post against all Arminian doubts," identifying this covenant as having been made in eternity with the success of the Mediator assured to collect, convert and bring to peace all the elect before his hand was put to the making of the world. Management of the matter of redemption "in the dispensation of the Gospell" by Christ such that none has "any reasonable ground either to presume of Gods mercy or to despair of Gods grace" is the subject of the fifth thesis.[49]

---

[48] Dickson, Speech, 159.
[49] Dickson, Speech, 159.

4.2.4 Exposition of the Epistles

Mention of the *pactum salutis* is scattered through Dickson's 1645 commentary of the apostolic letters as an important component in discussing grace as the sole cause of salvation. It can be found in others texts on divine covenants also in circulation at the time, indicating at least a degree of familiarity with if not agreement on the topic.[50]

Although expositions of Galatians 3:16-17 drew theologians to the *pactum salutis*, Dickson's exegesis of this passage is not so illustrative, nor is the passage cited in *Summe of Saving Knowledge* or *Therapeutica Sacra* in either discussions of or in the chapter on the covenant of redemption. However, Galatians 3:13 is the reference for Christ paying the price of redemption and the book figures prominently in the chapter on the covenant of works in *Therapeutica Sacra* with Galatians 3:10, 12 the first Scripture cited.[51]

Earlier in Galatians 3, calling attention to the Holy Spirit preaching to Abraham the promise of blessing all nations in Abraham's seed Christ, which blessing "containeth in itself, Righteousness and life eternal in Christ," and the application of this blessing to Abraham by his believing God, Dickson asserts that the justification of Gentiles by faith is in accordance with the counsel of God.[52] Christ's death on the cross to redeem those who believe from the curse of the law is also declared to be according

---

[50] John Owen, *The Greater Catechism*, Chapter XII, Q.1 in *Works*, vol.1, 481. Owen refers to a "compact or covenant" between God the Father and Jesus Christ concerning Christ's yielding voluntary obedience to the decree, ordination and will of his Father by undertaking the office of eternal priest.

[51] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra,* I.4.23 and I.5.71. Dickson finds the contrast between the two ways of seeking justification set out in Galatians, showing "this natural inclination, even of the regenerat, to seek righteouness by works, doth prove the Covenant of works to be naturally ingraft in all mens hearts, as appeareth in Galatians." Also cited in the context of the covenant of works and the pervasiveness of turning a covenant of grace into a covenant of works are the passages Gal. 4:9, 21 and 5:2-4. I.5.81-82.

[52] Dickson, Gal. 3:6-8, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 97.

to the counsel of God, "for this end Christ was made a curse."[53] In verses 15-17, explaining the even greater stability of the covenant between God and Abraham than exists between humans, Dickson, at most, touches lightly on the *pactum salutis*, content to hint at this covenant with the wording that the covenant with Abraham predating the law was confirmed before "with respect to Christ."[54]

In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, Dickson identifies the first of two parts of the epistle as "The Doctrine of Grace for the confirmation of their Faith" and discusses the covenant of redemption in the context of Paul's teaching on "the fountain and channel of the Grace and Peace wished to them, *viz.* God from whom, and Christ the Mediator by whom, and for whose sake, this grace and peace is conferred upon us."[55] Dickson notes a proposition to be proved in the early part of the first chapter, "that the Grace of God in Christ ought to be celebrated with an acknowledgement of Gods blessing toward us, in the whole business of the Salvation of Believers: For our blessing, as it hath relation to God, is nothing else but an acknowledgement that God is every way the Author of all blessing or Grace toward us."[56] No room exists for considering human merit, effort, forseen faith or works as contributing factors and the only free will in the equation is God's: "Nor doth God go out of himself, to seek causes of his purpose, or of his operation, but hee works all things after his counsel, or after his free and most wise will: Therefore our glorification or salvation is of Grace, and not of Works, nor from the choice of our free will; for that our will is carried to the choice of good and of life, and

---

[53] Dickson, Gal. 3:13-14, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 98.

[54] Dickson, Gal. 3:17, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 96; *Expositio Analytica*, 321: "Hoc autem dico pactionem ante confirmatam à Deo, respectu Christi, Lex quae post annos quadringentos, & triginta coepit, non facet irritiam, ut aboleat promissionem."

[55] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 107.

[56] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 107.

that wee perform any good works, is of the meer, free, good pleasure of God, who worketh all good things after the counsel of his Will: Therefore Grace is praise-worthy."[57]

The context for discussion of the covenant of redemption in Ephesians is showing that the whole business of salvation is "merely of Grace." Commenting on 1:3, Dickson finds Paul having put a difference between "God the Father and Jesus Christ the Mediator God-man that the person and office of the Mediator might more manifestly appear" and gives "the Covenant of Redemption made between God and Christ the Mediator" as the reason Paul calls God the Father "the God of Christ. Two arguments are offered as proof of the proposition. First, the spiritual and heavenly blessings heaped on believers by the God and Father of Christ come from the fatherly affection of the one who is "by consequence the God and Father of all us which are in Christ." Second, God is called the God of Christ because of the covenant made between God and Christ concerning believers. Flowing from this covenant, the *pactum salutis*, and freely given without merit or respect to works of the elect are every spiritual gift pertaining to the salvation of the soul to include knowledge of God, acknowledgment of sin, faith and repentance, any effects of faith, and the intention of or any good work itself.[58] These spiritual blessings are bestowed in time to those who were chosen from eternity before any matter of the created world existed, much less any work or workings could exist. "For the decree of the creation of the world, was subservient as a means to

---

[57] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 110; *Expositio Analytica,* 358: "Neque egreditur Deus extra se, as quaerendum causa propositi, seu operationis suae, sed omina operatur ex consilio, seu ex libera sapientistimaque sua voluntate…ex mero est libero beneplacito Dei, qui operator omnia bona ex consilio voluntatis suae: Merito ergo celebranda est ejus gratia."

[58] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 107-108; *Expositio Analytica*, 350-351. The covenant between the Father and Son is identified as *foedus redemptionis* in its first mention in the verse and *ex foedere inter Patrem & Christum* in the second.

bring to pass the already decreed salvation of the elect: Therefore he has chosen us of grace, and not for any fore-seen works."[59]

Continuing into the second chapter, Dickson emphasizes that there is no recovery from the common state of being dead in sin but by grace. The grace of the covenant between the Father and Son whereby whatever Christ did or suffered in the name and place of the elect, as well as whatever Christ received for the redeemed, are reckoned theirs in God's account. "It is of grace that in the payment of the agreed-upon price of our Redemption, life in Christ (who was raised from the dead) should be adjudged to bee given to us."[60] By the covenant of redemption, in Christ's resurrection and ascension the redeemed arise and ascend "in a judicial way" with him. The rights obtained by Christ for the redeemed are given them in the covenant between God and the church, allowing those believing in Christ to reckon his resurrection and ascension rightfully theirs.[61]

Other occasions to teach the *pactum salutis* come in Colossians with regard to God the Father and Christ as the author and efficient cause of salvation. In Colossians 1:14-20 Dickson extols both the solidity of the foundation of redemption on the excellencies of Christ and speaks of angels added to Christ as "surplusage" in the covenant of redemption for the use of his church, serving as ministering spirits for the use of the redeemed. In the comments on 2:15 the technical term is not given but Christ obtains freedom from "the prison of darkness, ignorance, sin and death" by the

---

[59] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 108.

[60] Dickson, Eph. 2:5, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 113.

[61] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 113; *Expositio Analytica*, 366. In 2:5 the term for the covenant between God and the Mediator is *pacto redemptionis* while in 2.6 it occurs three times as *foedere* with the covenant between Christ and the church *foedere salutis inter Deus & Ecclesiam.*

covenant with the Father.[62] Again with the emphasis on salvation by grace alone Dickson states on 2 Timothy 1:9-10 that Christ covenanted with the Father for his elect before all time and afterwards in time paid the price of redemption, while in Titus 1:2 the truth of hope of eternal life promised by God results from God having covenanted with his Son before the world was made in the covenant of redemption.[63] Although the technical terminology is not present, Dickson, on Philippians 2:7-11, speaks of the voluntary covenant made by Christ to take on the yoke of the law and the dominion of Christ eventually to be acknowledged by all.[64]

4.2.5 Exposition of the Evangel According to Matthew

Use of the term covenant of redemption occurs more frequently in this commentary than in any other by Dickson, beginning with the explanation given of the title, *The New Testament, or Covenant of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

> The whole Bible is commonly called by the name of Old and New Testament, or Covenant: one word signifying both *Covenant* and *Testament*, as it were *A Testamentary Covenant*. The reason why the holy Scriptures written before and since Christ came, are called by the name *Covenant*, is, because the Covenant *of Redemption between* the Father and the Son for purchasing of Salvation, and saving graces to the Elect; and the *Covenant* of Grace made with the Church through Christ, for application of all purchased graces leading unto salvation, are the sum and substance of the whole Bible.[65]

---

[62] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 136, 140: "For Angels are added to Christ as surplusage in the Covenant of Redemption (*foedere redemptionis*), for the use of his body, that is, the Church, that they might bee ministering spirits for the use of the redeemed ones."

[63] Dickson, 2 Tim.1:9, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 171: "Yet Christ the designed Mediatour, the second person of the Trinity, subsisted from eternity, who covenanted with his Father, for us his Elect, before all time, and afterwards in time paid the price of our Redemption"; Titus 1:2, 179: "That the original of this Truth is most Ancient, inasmuch as God hath promised eternal life, not onely in the beginning of the world, preaching it to our first Parents in paradise, but also covenanting with his Son (designed to bee our Mediatour) about it before the world was made, in the Covenant of Redemption." *Expositio Analytica*, 546-54, 568, refers to "*in foedere redemptionis*" in 2 Tim.1:9 and Titus 1:2.

[64] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 127-128; *Expositio Analytica*, 413: "Tertius gradus humiliationis in eo est, quod cum jam homo factus effet, nec nisi ex pacto volunatario ad manendum in terra, vel jugum legis (meris hominibus impositum) subeundum obligatus fuerit."

[65] Dickson, *Matthew*, A.

Having prefaced his commentary, Dickson explains the appropriateness of *Testament* in the context of this paction. The Son having undertaken to lay down his life as the price of redemption disposes to the children of the promise by legacy what he has purchased. Dickson's language will also frequently refer back to the significance of the covenant regarding the mutually voluntary aspect that respects the equality of the members of the Trinity and is seen early in stating Christ's genealogy. "*The book of the generation of JESUS CHRIST*, such a man as is true God also, and worthy to be called, in the most proper and strict sense, Jesus the true *SALVATOR* and *DELIVERER* of men from sin and wrath; which still properly taken, belongeth only to him who is almighty God, and *JESUS* in effect."[66]

Accounts of the baptism of Christ and the institution of the Lord's Supper provide other occasions for specifying the covenant of redemption. Identifying in 3:17 what he considers a most clear revelation of "the glorious mystery of the Trinity" Dickson finds "the Covenant of Redemption laid open to us, for *The Son incarnate* offereth here himself Redeemer, and surety for the Elect, to be baptized unto death, *The Father* accepteth the offer and declareth himself well pleased in him."[67]

The institution of the Lord's Supper for the sealing of the covenant of grace to believers follows Christ's delivery of the covenant of grace, which Dickson states had been abundantly confirmed by miracles.[68] Noting that the whole doctrine of the sacrament is not found in any of the evangelists or apologists but collected from all,

---

[66] Dickson, *Matthew*, A, Av.
[67] Dickson, *Matthew*, C2.
[68] Dickson, *Matthew*, Cc4.

Dickson proceeds to Matthew's contribution.[69] To those receiving the cup of Christ's blood it is necessary to declare that it was "appointed of Christ judicially" to make believers sure of their right unto his death, shed blood, and all purchased benefits. "There is a Covenant of Redemption past between the Father and Mediator Christ, wherein Christ was bound to lay down his life, by the shedding of his blood to purchase to the Redeemed remission of sins; This is imported in the words of, The blood of the Covenant for the remission of sins, shewing, that the Son had before promised to pour out his blood for purchasing remission, and the Father had granted remission upon this condition."[70]

Making the connection between the New Testament and the Old Testament, presupposed in the blood of the lambs and other sacrifices, Dickson identifies the twofold method of making the covenant of grace between God and the Church, the old prior to Christ's coming, the new after his incarnation. He also states, although again does not provide the terms *berith* or *diatheke*, that the word in the original signifies and is indifferently used for both *Testament* and *Covenant*. "By the new covenant of righteousness, and life through faith in Christ sealed in the Sacrament, the believer getteth right unto the *covenant of redemption* made between God and Christ, to the behoove of the redeemed; this is imported in the words of *Testament* or *covenant of blood shed*, to satisfie the Father, *for many, for the remission of sins.*"[71]

Another occasion for a discussion of the covenant of redemption presents itself in Matthew 26:39 in Christ's prayer to the Father, asking that the cup might pass from him. Dickson, frequently criticized for casting the bargain of the Father and Son as a

---

[69] Dickson, *Matthew*, Ddv-Dd2v.
[70] Dickson, *Matthew*, Dd2-Dd2v.
[71] Dickson, *Matthew*, Dd2-Dd2v.

cold, mercantile arrangement, does not fail to convey either his sense of the divine love and mercy that pervade this trinitarian work or the weight of divine justice.

> The love that our Lord hath to our redemption, and his special covenant made with the Father, for the paying of our ransome, made him to subject his holy nature and Will to that which otherwise is abhorred; therefore looking to the Fathers will, thus to expiat the sins of the Redeemed, he sayeth, *Nevertheless, not as I will* (in a holy naturall choice) *but as thou wilt*, let it be, I voluntarily doe choose it; that is, according to the condition past between Us, for redemption of the Elect. Let *mee drink this cup*: and heer the merit of sin, the strictness of Divine Justice, the horrour of the wrath of God, with the weight of the curse, the mercy of God towards sinners, and the unspeakable love both of GOD and CHRIST toward the Elect, is to be seen vively set foorth before us in our Lords passion.[72]

In the exposition of 26:42-44, Dickson asserts both the role of mediator as according to both his natures and the role of divine willing in making the decree of redemption a genuine covenant. These are seen in the account of Christ's consent to the will of the Father "that by sufferings measured out to me, as in a cup, the price of Redemption of the Elect shall be payed" with regard to both "the holiness of his humane Nature, so well to be naturally and necessarily sensible of pain and grief, as to be voluntarily patient under it; so well to tremble, and be feared for the wrath of the Creator" and his "pure holy Nature" speaking to the Father from "holy voluntary resolution, subjecting the simple desires of nature to the furthering of the supreme designes of the Creator."[73] Discussing the doctrine contained in these verses, Dickson declares that "such is the love our Lord had to the Redemption of the Elect, that rather than we should not be saved, he chose that the cup of Wrath due to our sins, should kill

---

[72] Dickson, *Matthew*, Dd3v.
[73] Dickson, *Mathew*, Dd4.

him; and therefore no other way of our salvation at this time being possible, love made him submit to the condition, and say, *Thy will be done.*"[74]

Touching on the matter of Christ being surety for the redeemed who cannot defray their own debt and his answering unto justice for them (26:50), Dickson returns to the aspect of surety in 27:26 with God exacting full satisfaction for the sins of the whole elect, according to the "paction of Redemption passed between" the Father and Son. The worthiness of the one who is "surety suffering for us" is to be considered with "the strictness of Divine Justice, which will have sin punished condignly, and will neither quit the sinner without a ransome, nor the Redeemer without full satisfaction and punishment, equivalent to the principall Debters deservings." Here also Dickson presents both the "unspeakable love of God, who giveth his own eternall Son to be the man, who shall pay for the rest of the adopted children" and the love of Christ who gave himself that the elect "might obtain the blessing of righteousnesse and eternal life through him."[75]

4.3 Teaching on the Covenant of Redemption ca. 1649-1660s

4.3.1 *The Summe of Saving Knowledge*

Dickson, in his lengthy commentary on the Westminster Confession of Faith, *Truths Victory Over Error,* walked through the confession holding to the two covenants given in the confession and addressed issues of controversy in a question and answer format. However, in treating the *pactum salutis* in *Summe of Saving Knowledge,* Dickson corrected with his characteristic brevity what would have seemed to him a

---

[74] Dickson, *Matthew*, Dd4v.
[75] Dickson, *Matthew,* Dd4v-Ee, Ffv.

major deficiency in the confession. He explained how the intratrinitarian covenant provides the divine basis of the temporal covenant of grace and provided a longer section on the practical use of the saving knowledge contained in Scripture in which section the covenant of redemption also figures prominently.

It has been often noted that *Summe of Saving Knowledge* generally accompanied printings of the confession of faith and catechisms in Scotland, a regularity which argues for it being considered a suitable statement of orthodoxy by the church of Scotland although it was never "judicially approved."[76] In this document a basic definition of the covenant of redemption is offered with no significant elaboration under Head II concerning the remedy provided for the elect by the covenant of grace in Jesus Christ. The term *Covenant of Reconciliation* is used here for the temporal covenant of grace; *Covenant of Redemption* for the *pactum salutis* elsewhere in this text.

God has revealed in Scripture a way to save sinners by faith in Jesus Christ "by verture of and according to, the tenor of the Covenant of Redemption, made and agreed upon between God the Father and God the Son, in the counsel of the Trinity before the World began." A summary of this agreement follows: God having freely chosen a certain number of lost humanity to life and having given these to the Son appointed Redeemer from eternity; the conditions of the Son's incarnation, obedience under the law as surety and satisfying justice for the elect to his death on a cross for the purpose of ransoming and redeeming all the elect; the purchase of righteousness and eternal life for the elect to be effectively applied to each by way of a covenant of free grace and

---

[76] See Howie, *Biographia Scoticana*, 285; Wodrow, *Select Biographies*, 11; J. Macleod, *Scottish Theology*, 85; Henderson, "Idea of Covenant," 10, and *Burning Bush*, 69-70; MacLeod, "Covenant Theology," 214; Torrance, *Scottish Theology*, 112; Dillistone, *Structure of Divine Society*, 136; Holsteen, "Popularization of Federal Theology," 82-83.

reconciliation with them; the acceptance of the conditions by the Son; the accomplishment of the work of the Son "in all ages since the fall of Adam" according to the bargain made in eternity.[77]

A summary of the covenant of grace includes mention of the *pactum salutis*, linking the two covenants while maintaining a distinction between them.

> It is agreed betwixt God and the Mediator Jesus Christ the Son of God Surety for the redeemed, as parties contractors, that the sins of the redeemed should be imputed to innocent Christ, and he both condemned and put to death for them upon this very condition, that whosoever heartily consents unto the Covenant of Reconciliation offered through Christ, shall by the imputation of his obedience unto them, be justified and hold righteous before God, for God hath made Christ who knew no sin, to be sin for us (saith the Apostle) that we might be made Righteous of God in him.[78]

The accomplishment of the agreement also includes Christ being clad with the threefold office of prophet, priest and king. "Made *Prophet*, to reveal all saving knowledge to his people, and to perswade them to believe and obey the same. Made a *Priest,* to offer himself a sacrifice once for them all, and to intercede continually with the Father for making their persons and services acceptable to him. And made a *King*, to subdue them to himself, to feed and rule them by his own appointed Ordinances, and to defend them from their enemies."[79]

Thus, knowledge of the *pactum salutis* is beneficial for strengthening the faith of a believer, with Christ as God's gift being a witness to the elect of both "the sure and saving mercies" granted to them in the covenant of redemption and of the willingness of

---

[77] Dickson, *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, I5r.
[78] Dickson, *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, K8r.
[79] Dickson, *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, I5v-I6r.

the Father to apply those mercies, bringing each through all manner of difficulties to the promised eternal life.[80]

4.3.2 Commentaries on the Psalms

In the introduction to the commentary on the first fifty psalms, Dickson explains that the scope of the book is not only "to teach us the grounds of divinity for our information, but also to direct us how to apply saving doctrines practically to ourselves, and to make use thereof for reforming of our affections and actions."[81] Teaching on the covenant of redemption is prominent in four Psalms: 2, 22, 40, and 90. Words of comfort in the midst of the persecutions of the church and the miseries of life are offered, along with reassurances to the believer of God's eternal goodwill.

Commenting on Psalm 2, Dickson states that "the decreed agreement betweene God the Father and Son in the Covenant of Redemption" is a reason for the stability of Christ's kingdom;. Christ is named "party contractor in the Covenant of Redemption"; and the first two articles of the covenant of redemption are given. Articles of this covenant stipulate that Christ, the promised seed of woman, Messiah and Savior of the elect, shall not be disowned by the Father, "but in and after his deepest humiliation and sufferings, as he shall be, and remaine really the very Son of God." After his resurrection Christ should continue in the office of mediation and intercession, "and by verture of his payed ransome of Redemption, call for the enlargement of his purchased Kingdome among the Gentiles." Verse nine contains stipulation of a third article of the

[80] Dickson, *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, K4v-K5r.
[81] David Dickson, *First Fifty Psalms*, 1.

covenant, the promise to Christ of full victory over all his and his church's enemies, and one additional use of the term.[82]

The preface to Psalm 22 states that here is "a Prophecy of Christ's deepest sufferings, whereof *Davids* exercise is a Type."[83] Identifying in verses 1-2 the similarities and considerable differences between the two, Dickson points out the magnitude of the incarnate Christ's troubles, "incomparably more" than David's, and the significance of Christ's two natures with regard to the trouble of his soul that "tooke his life from him," the punishment for sin, the wrestling against temptation, and the victory gained in his own strength, "which is one with the strength of the Father." Dickson's sense of the importance of understanding the connection of Christ's dual natures, the works of the Trinity, and the *pactum salutis* is evident in his further explanation of how Christ "being considered as God and man, in one person, entred in the Covenant of redemption with the Father as Mediatour and Surety for men."[84]

Having expressed thanksgiving for the works of God's providence and care of those brought into a covenant with him, Dickson moves into the particular wonderfulness of the covenant of redemption, spoken of by Christ in Psalm 40 and repeated by the apostle in Hebrews 10:5, 6. This includes an account of Christ's threefold offices. Declaring that the covenant between the Father and Son about redemption is "one of the most wonderful things that ever was heard tell of," he again

---

[82]Dickson, *First Fifty Psalms*, 9-12. Dickson explains that Christ's enemies refuse both the salvation offered by and subjection to Christ, and oppose Christ. Christ's church will be weak and unable to help itself against persecution, "yet Christ will own the quarrel; and fight against the enemies thereof himselfe."

[83] Dickson, *First Fifty Psalms*, 116.

[84] Dickson, *First Fifty Psalms,* 118-119. See also 124.

points out that the Son becomes "voluntarily, a very capable, discreet, ready and obedient servant to the Father for us."[85]

Discussing the contrast made between the typical sacrifices and priestly offices that were foreshadows of the full accomplishment to come in Christ (verses 5-8), Dickson shows the relevance and value of both testaments for the church. "In all the Psalms, let David be as the shadow, but let Christ be the substance."[86] The comfort of the enduring quality of the divine covenant is regularly commented on. "The unchangableness of God's loving kindness, and truth of promises made in his Covenant, is a solid ground of assurance that the Lord will not withhold his tender mercies from the afflicted believer; for upon this ground do the parts of his petition run; *Withhold not thy tender mercies from me, and let kindness and truth continually preserve me.*"[87]

The exposition of Psalm 90:2 gives the hallmarks of the covenant of reconciliation completed before the world began, including all conditions of the Redeemer settled, all the elect delivered to the Son, and benefits to the church. "The second comfort of the Believer against the miseries of this short life, is taken from the decree of their Election, and the eternal Covenant of Redemption of them setled in the purpose and counsel of the Trinity for their behoof, wherein it was agreed upon before the world was, that the *Word* to be incarnate, should be the Savior of the Elect."[88] Commenting on God's unchanging purpose and affection toward his people, Dickson asserts that election, the eternal purpose of love, and redemption by the Redeemer teach "from Gods good will to us in time, we may arise to Gods good will to us before time:

---

[85] Dickson, *First Fifty Psalms*, 248-249.
[86] Dickson, *First Fifty Psalms*, 249-255.
[87] Dickson, *First Fifty Psalms*, 253.
[88] David Dickson, *A brief explication of the other fifty psalmes, from ps. 50 to ps. 100* (London, 1653), 332.

and from grace showed to us in time, we may conclude grace and good will purposed toward us, and ordained for us before time."[89]

4.3.3 *Therapeutica Sacra*

The importance of considering this later work is in showing Dickson's fullest treatment of divine covenants within the context of a deliberately practical, "therapeutic," non-speculative treatise in the *loci communes* genre. Originally presented to his divinity students to prepare them for their duties as pastors, 532 pages in three major divisions are devoted to the conscience and matters concerning regeneration with careful definitions and explanations of: what it is; who the regenerate are; the role of divine covenants and how to apply them; impediments to regeneration; confronting doubts plaguing the regenerate person; and addressing a range of issues related to the life and attitudes of the converted.

The first book of the treatise contains the five loci with one chapter for each of the first three. Dickson allocated five pages to the conscience itself, three pages to cases of the conscience generally, and twelve pages to defining and explaining regeneration. Discourse on the divine covenants "relating to everlasting happiness" is the fourth locus, 126 pages with four chapters, a chapter for each covenant and one designated for "further clearing and confirmation of the doctrine about the three covenants, from Jer. 31.and Heb.8."[90] Beginning with an introduction to these particular divine covenants, the covenant of redemption is first, followed by the covenants of works and grace. The fifth locus of 66 pages furthers teaching on the covenants by detailing "the orderly and

---

[89]Dickson, *Other Fifty Psalms*, 332.
[90] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.7.133.

prudent application of these Covenants in general, that thereafter we may descend to speak of application thereof in particular Cases the more clearly."[91] In the category of more specialized applications of divine covenants, meticulous descriptions are given of the multitude of deceits whereby three ranks of unregenerate persons are deluded and impeded from regeneration: those who avoid as far a possible examination of their own consciences lest they be disquieted; those judging themselves according to the law of God but despairing of any remedy; and those making only a slight examination of themselves, following that with a slight pretence upon which they declare themselves absolved, however, such absolution is not allowed by God.[92]

The remainder of the treatise contains 160 pages in the second book and 156 pages in the third. Dickson explains that book two addresses other sicknesses that "tend to obscure the work of regeneration begun" and "foster questions in the regenerat man and make him doubt whether he be regenerat or not."[93] Addressing the fears of a regenerate person who doubts being in a state of grace because of causes "partly natural, partly spiritual, wherein the true convert may be afflicted with both bodily and spiritual distempers; melancholic humors abounding in the body," Dickson stresses showing compassion to the afflicted, careful listening, and making use of the rule of Scripture. He notes both that God has not exempted his children from diseases of the body and Satan's practice of taking advantage of bodily or spiritual distempers to weaken faith and vex the child of God.[94]

---

[91] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.1.1; I.i.i: "Quam instituti nostri ratio postulet, ut agamus de Conscientiae Casibus, seu morbis circa Regenerationem curandis, per foederum divinorum prudentem applicationem, necesse est, ut nonnulla breviter praelibermus."

[92] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.9.162-163.

[93] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.9.162.

[94] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, II.30.369-375.

In the third book other cases and sicknesses of the conscience are identified that tend to deceive the regenerate person "about his present condition, wherein he is, without calling his state into question at the first."[95] Here Dickson deals with concerns such as the outward exercise of religion, worship of God, where a true convert might find his heart far from God and feel unfit to worship, wondering if it is better to forbear for a time than continue in the outward exercise and risk hypocrisy.[96]

Clarity of terminology being necessary for orderly teaching, Dickson specifies conscience as "it examineth and judgeth of our selves." He considers it "joint-knowledge" because it presupposes that God and humanity know "the obedience, or disobedience, to the rule prescribed to us by Him; partly because Conscience imports, first, our knowledge of the rule; and, next, our knowledge of our behaviour in relation to the rule, and our comparing of these two together, and passing of sentence of our selves answerably."[97]

Healthy and sick consciences are defined, and the troubled soul and conscience are distinguished from one another. "A healthy Conscience is what, which after examination of our wayes, according to the rule of Gods Word, doth justly absolve us, and speaketh peace to us toward God." A conscience may be sick for three reasons. It may be "senseless of its own evils and dangers it is in, and sitteth down securely, and rested without warrant; Or, which is justly wounded, and labours under the sense of its pain; or, which is unquiet upon mistakes and ignorance of making use of the true remedy." The soul comprises all powers and faculties of a person while the conscience is the single faculty of the mind judging "the mans moral ill or well-being." Although

---

[95] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.9.162.
[96] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, III.28.505-508.
[97] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.1.1-2.

either may be troubled, cases of the soul are not the subject matter, but "the sinful diseases of the Conscience" pertaining to the regeneration of those "capable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word."[98]

The cause for disquiet that drove Dickson to address the General Assembly in 1638 on Arminianism remained a going concern, and his directives to young pastors leave no doubt of what he considered dangers of the corruption to the doctrine of regeneration by Satan. By "the native pride of men" fostered by the injection of human free will and the idea that the work of Christ makes conversion merely possible, humanity is deluded into giving the glory for actual conversion either wholly to its idol, free will, or making free will share the glory with God. Dickson insists that when God's Spirit powerfully and effectually moves and turns the human will, he "does not destroy, but perfect the liberty of the *Will*, and raiseth it up from death and its damnable inclination, and maketh it most joyfully and most freely to make choice of this pearl of price, and blesse it self in its choice forever. Therefore, let no man complain of wrong done to mans free-will, when God stops its way to hell, wisely, powerfully, graciously and sweetly moveth it to choose the way of life."[99] In order to correct these errors of the doctrine of regeneration, the full explanation of divine covenants concerning eternal salvation is set out.

A succinct declaration of the relationship between the decree and the covenant of redemption, stating also the unity, distinction and equality of the Trinity, comes early in the chapter on the intratrinitarian covenant.

> This covenant of redemption, is in effect one with the eternall decree of redemption, wherein the salvation of the elect, and the way how it shall be

[98] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.1.8-10.
[99] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.3.11-17. See also 1.7.144.

> brought about is fixed, in the purpose of God, who worketh all things according to the counsell of His own Will, as the Apostle sets it down, *Ephes.* I. unto the 15 verse. And the decree of redemption is in effect a covenant, one God in three persons agreeing in the decree, that the second Person, God the Son, should be incarnate, and give obedience and satisfaction to divine justice for the elect: unto which piece of service the Son willingly submitting Himself, the decree becometh a reall covenant indeed.[100]

Although he finds Scripture clearly stating the agreement of the selling and buying of the elect, both souls and bodies, in Acts 20:28, 1 Corinthians 6:20 and 1 Peter 1:18, Dickson offers "for further satisfaction" six proofs found in Scripture of this covenant for redeeming the elect. Forming the first proof are five expressions "which import and presuppose a formal covenant" between the Father and Son, beginning with Ephesians 1:7. Redemption is "a buying of the elect out of sin and misery by blood, shewing that no remission of sin could be granted by Justice, without sheding of *blood*, and Christ undertook to pay the price, and hath payed it." Ephesians 1:14 follows with "the *inheritance* which the elect have promised to them, is called a *purchase*, importing, that the disponer of the inheritance to the elect must have a sufficient price for it." From Acts 20:28 comes the third expression "wherein God *disponer* and God *Redeemer*, are agreed, that the elect shal go free for God the Redeemer's obedience unto the death, who hath now bought them with His blood." The fourth is supplied by two apostles, "in plain terms set down by *Paul*" in 1 Corinthians 6:20 and "*Peter* more particularly expresseth the price of redemption agreed upon, to be not gold or silver, but the blood of the Mediatour Christ, the innocent Lamb of God," in 1 Peter 1:18-21. Fifth, Christ's words in the institution of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper from Matthew 26:28 are, "*This is my blood of the new Testament, which is shed for many, for remission of sins.*" Here Dickson mentions the agreement between the Redeemer and

---

[100] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra,* I.4.23, 25.

God disponer of the ransom payment of blood, the connection to the covenant of grace, and the sealing of the bargain with the elect by the sacrament.[101]

"Such titles and styles as are given to Christ in relation to the procureing of a Covenant of grace and reconciliation between God and us" are evidence of the second proof. These are: Mediator, 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Redeemer, Job 19:24; Surety of a better Covenant, Hebrews 7:22; Reconciliation (καταλλαγη) by way of exchange, the atonement, Romans 5:11; Propitiation, 1 John 2:2 and Romans 3:25.[102] Dickson stresses the dual nature of Christ as Mediator is found in his not only interceding for the procuring of reconciliation by entreaty but by giving himself over to the Father "for paying a compensatory price, sufficient to satisfy Justice," and in the Father's refusal of all ransom that can come "from a meer man, Psal.49.8. But He would have His own co-eternall and only begotten Son to become a man, to take on the yoke of the law, and to do all His will, that He alone might redeem the elect, who by nature are under the curse of the law."[103]

The third proof is that "the eternall decree of God was fixed about the way of Redemption to be fulfilled in time: for *Known unto God were all His ways from the beginning, Acts 15.18.*" Dickson gives the following references pertaining to: the eternal decree of God about the way of redemption to be fulfilled in time, Acts 15:18; discussion of the eternal counsel of God's will, Ephesians 1:9, Luke 22:22, Acts 2:23;

---

[101] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.25-27; I.iv.19. In this section of his Latin text Dickson explains that the inheritance, called purchase, presupposes and imports "pactum seu contractum fuisse inter Deum & Christum initum." The blood of Christ is *sanguis foederis* in Matt 26.28. He concludes with "Hic est sanguis meus novi foederis de Reconciliatione multorum in aeternum: qui, scilicet, effusus est ex foedere Redemptionis aeterno, pro multis, ut Remissionem peccatorum consequerentur, Heb. 31.20."

[102] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.27-28.

[103] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.27, 37. See also I.4.31-32 regarding the Son Mediator coming into the world with the Father's consent and concurrence discharging his office and his power to give life to those who believe in himself, citing John 5.36.

declaration by the Son prior to his incarnation of the decree of his promised kingdom, Psalm 2:7; consent of the persons of the Trinity to the whole scheme of redemption, Proverbs 8:22-32, 2 Timothy 1:9, John 1:2-3, 14; and election, Ephesians 1:3-5, 1 Peter 1:18-20. This proof manifests that "the Covenant (*pactum*) between the Father and the Son, was transacted concerning the incarnation of the Son, and His sufferings, death and resurrection, and all others things belonging to the salvation of the elect."[104]

The levitical priesthood and ceremonies prescribed by God make up the fourth proof. Dickson calls these testimonies, declarations and evidences of a covenant passed between the Father and Son for justifying those believing in the Messiah as an expiatory sacrifice as well as prefigurations, prophecies and pledges of the actual payment of the price of redemption. "And this agreed upon price (because of the perfections of the parties contracters, the Father and the Son) was holden and esteemed as good as payed from the beginning of the World; and the agreed upon benefits purchased thereby to wit, grace and glory, were effectually bestowed on the faithfull before Christs incarnation, as the Psalmist testifies" in Psalms 84:11 and 73:24.[105]

Dickson, declaring again this covenant to be trinitarian rather than bitarian, offers as the fifth proof ratification by the incarnate Christ of all things spoken of in the Old Testament by "the Father and Himself not yet incarnate, and the holy Spirit" concerning salvation of the elect, the price of redemption and the conditions to be performed "on either hand," and the repeating and renewing of this covenant in the New Testament. Citing Luke 2:49, Matthew 3:13-17, John 5:26, 36-37, 39, 8:26, 10:15, 17-18, and Luke 24:25, he asserts that Christ shows "the whole matter so oft as he calleth

---

[104] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.29-30.
[105] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra,* I.4.30-31.

the Father *his* God, and that in respect of the *covenant* past between God and him to be incarnat, and now incarnate indeed."[106]

Although there are "as many articles of the Covenant as there are injunctions, commands and conditions required on the one hand, and promises to fulfill all on the other hand," four are chosen as the sixth proof. These four articles are considered valuable for both confirming the faith of believers about their redemption and refuting the erroneous doctrine of those who "evacuate the Covenant of redemption of the elect." Dickson states that those who teach Christ's death purchased no more than the possibility of salvation and no more grace for the elect than the reprobate suspend "all the fruit of His suffering upon the frail, mutable, inconstant and corrupt *free-will* of men" and allow no more certainty of salvation than perdition. [107]

The four articles of the covenant of redemption are: of the persons redeemed; of the price paid by Christ in the fullness of time for redemption; of the gifts and benefits purchased for and given to the redeemed; and of the ways and means whereby those gifts may be applied, wisely, orderly and effectually, to the redeemed.[108] Under the price to be paid, Dickson discusses "the active and passive obedience" as "but two notions of one thing," comprising the whole course of Christ's incarnate life as a continued course of suffering, and in which suffering he was a free and voluntary agent. The sufferings of the eternal Son made man in both his "body and soul for a season" were "of infinite worth and value."[109] The benefits mentioned are all things belonging to righteousness and salvation which Christ effectively applies to the elect and puts in

---

[106] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra,* I.4.31-32.
[107] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.32-33.
[108] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.33.
[109] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.38-39.

their possession at an acceptable time. Of the gifts, Dickson names three: regeneration or turning a person toward Christ, saving faith, and perseverance.[110]

Dickson states that the argument for the last three gifts does not require his own deliberate treatment. He notes that orthodox divines had written abundantly in their disputations against the foresaid error "because the adversaries take their pretended arguments from the instability of mens will, in the matter of perseverance, and from the freedom and power of mans changeable will in the matter of conversion and saving faith, and from the manner of Gods speaking to the mixed multitude of both called and not chosen, and to them that are both called and chosen." Dickson announces that in proving the matter of the covenant between the Father and Son from five places in Scripture, the issue of these gifts can be settled.[111]

The five passages given are: Isaiah 52:13 to the end of chapter 53; Isaiah 59:20-21; John 6:37-45; John 10:14-30 in concert with Psalm 23; and Psalm 40 "explicat by the Apostle" in Hebrews 10:5-7, 12-14.[112] Resulting from these proofs of the covenant of redemption, Dickson concludes that various matters also follow, either affirmed or rejected. Rejection of universal redemption follows from each passage —God and Christ having bargained for the redemption of "all and every man," or to everyone to whom the gospel was preached—as well as election and redemption for "the foreseen faith or works of the elect redeemed." The texts affirm saving grace, conversion and sanctification infallibly and invincibly coming to pass and being given to the redeemed, and the final perseverance and full salvation of the elect. "Albeit the redeemed believers be in themselves witlesse as sheep, and weak, and ready to be destroyed, and compasted

---

[110] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.56.
[111] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.57-59.
[112] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.59-69.

about with many enemies as sheep among wolves, yet because of the omnipotency of the Father and of the Son, that have taken the care and custody of them, they shall persevere, and it is impossible they should perish or not persevere." [113]

Satisfied with having supplied adequate proofs, Dickson moves to the major purposes of the treatise: providing explanation of the prudent application of divine covenants, both generally and specifically, and of the impediments to regeneration. "In the matter of application, we must, first, look upon Gods effectuall applying and working in the hearers of these covenants, such effects as he hath intended by these covenants to bring to pass: Next, we must look upon the means whereby he ordinarily doth convey and work his intended works in men. And thirdly, we must look upon the prudent way of use making of these means, both Pastors and people for peoples good."[114] Dickson directs pastors to begin the application of saving doctrine with "the law and covenant of works, under the yoke whereof we are all born by nature, children of wrath. And if a man apply that covenant and law to his heart, and subscribe his own dittey and deserved condemnation, then may he turn up his soul to Christ Jesus, the Redeemer, and flye to him for refuge and accept the offer which he makes in his Gospel of a new covenant of grace for pardoning of sin and reconciling unto God in himself the person who is fled unto him." Having applied the first two covenants, then may one "ascend by faith unto the covenant of Redemption, and apply unto himself with Gods allowance all the saving graces purchased by Christ in that covenant."[115] Only then should one look to the covenant of redemption "and there to read his own name, as it

---

[113]Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.61-67.

[114] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.8.148.

[115] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.8.151. See glossary in Baillie, *Letters and Journals*, 588: Dittay: a statement of the charge or charges against the accused person; an inditement.

were, written in the book of life, and to acknowledge that the measure of repentance and faith in Christ bestowed on himself now in experience, hath flowed from that fountain of Gods love and free grace through Christ."[116]

Use of the covenants outside the proper order as is commonly done is fraught with problems and many unfavorable eventualities are given in some detail. Beginning with the covenant of redemption may yield people who will either be satisfied with this covenant whether or not they are elected, or not use the means God has appointed to bring them to repent of their sins and to faith in Christ. "This is a tentation of Sathan, which if they yield unto, it shall lead them either to resolute profanity with *Cain*, or to anxious desperation with *Judas*." Others, making "a leap-year of the covenant of works" and taking no notice of either their own natural sinfulness or the wrath due them, run to a "presumptuous avouching of their faith in Christ" and only pretend to believe the gospel when they have not believed the doctrine of the law.[117]

4.4 Relationship of Covenant of Redemption to the Covenants of Works and Grace

Although his teaching on the covenants became increasing more nuanced over time, a prevailing concern for Dickson was that the matter of salvation for the elect be clearly understood as the work of the Trinity —a work of free grace designed and executed by the invincible power of the Trinity, leaving no opening for human pride in the strength of free will to intrude into or presume to share in the glory that is wholly of God's grace, power and wisdom. Dickson found in Scripture the corrective to the problem in the covenant of redemption, which he formulated, and its relation to the

---

[116] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.8.152.
[117] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.8.151-152.

covenants of works and grace. He was adamant that failure to understand the significant differences between the divine covenants contributes to serious errors within the church, whether between the covenant of redemption and God's covenant of reconciliation with the elect or between genuine and false covenants of works and grace.

In his 1638 speech to the General Assembly Dickson declared that the Scripture gives the existence of the *pactum salutis* in such a way that it is not to be confused with the covenant God makes with humanity concerning salvation. The intratrinitarian covenant is identified as the covenant of redemption, preceding and grounding the covenant of salvation between God and the elect.[118] Instruction on the errors of Arminianism with regard to the covenant of grace being the matter at hand and countering those errors with orthodoxy, Dickson did not include the covenant of works in this discourse.

His commentaries on New Testament epistles presented in a more fragmented fashion the three divine covenants with greater effort given to elucidating the character of and differences between the covenants of works and grace in order to emphasize salvation by grace alone. Teaching on the covenant of redemption occurs less in connection with the two covenants with humanity and more in the context of identifying Christ as the Mediator God-man or election and salvation as the work of God.[119] Later in the Psalms commentaries Dickson would also deliberately teach the intratrinitarian covenant as completed before the world was made, but not in connection with the covenants of works and grace.

---

[118] Dickson, Speech, 158-159.

[119] The exception may be Heb.10:4-9 because of the reference to Psa. 40, although Dickson does not overtly deal with the subject at this time. In the context of Christ's person, work and election see Eph. 1:3-14, 2:5-6; Phil 2:7-8; 2 Tim. 1:9; Heb.1:2, 8-9; elect angels as surplus, Col. 1:20; Christ paying the price of redemption, Col. 2:15; a more ancient truth, Titus 1:2.

The commentary on Matthew contains a scattering of brief teachings on the covenant between the Father and Son as the basis of the testament Christ makes in two ways. Before Christ's incarnation the covenant of grace is presented in "typicall promises under the Law," types and figures of his death; and in clear terms and fulfilling the types of his death by actually laying down his life, fulfilling all the levitical rites and temple figures.[120] The commentary also includes a comparison of the burden of discipline under the covenants of works and grace, identifying the covenant of works and alluding to the covenant of grace. Under the covenant of works humanity lacks the help of a mediator and must rely on natural strength while under the covenant of grace "we have Christ to help us, who worketh all our works in us, and for us. It is an easie yoke in comparison of sin, which maketh a man draw his own ditty unto condemnation." Asserting that renewal and repetition of the ten commandments in the Gospel require "no less perfection to be aymed at in sincerity of obedience, then under the covenant of works: yet the cords that bind on the yoke are not terrour, but love, and that little which is done in faith, and upright obedience, is well accepted."[121]

In *Therapeutica Sacra* the teaching is expanded, with two sorts of covenants of works distinguished, one God-instituted, the other a human-instituted corruption of the true covenant of works.[122] Even within the broad theological community that recognized a strong linkage between God's grace and the law he gave to humanity, there is something lovely in Dickson's understanding the genuine covenant of works to have been in substance a covenant of grace. "The one is true, genuine, and of God's institution, which God made with all men in *Adam*, for perfect obedience unto God's

---

[120] Dickson, *Matthew*, Dd2, Dd2v, Gg.
[121] Dickson, *Matthew*, M2
[122] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.7.134.

Law, out of mans own natural abilities. There is another counterfeit, bastard covenant of works, of man own devising, which a sinner, lying in his sins (unable to do what the Law commands, or suffer what the Law being broken binds upon him) of his own head deviseth, upon other conditions then God hath set, and will have God to take his devised covenant in stead of perfect obedience to the Law, that so he may be justified."[123] This counterfeit covenant made by the carnal Israelites with God in the wilderness and followed by their posterity turned the covenant of grace offered them by God in Christ under the veil of levitical types and ceremonies into a covenant of works of their own framing.

> They turned into an external service of performance only of bare and dead ceremonies, and into a ministry of the letter and death; for they did not take up Christ to be the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believes in him, but did think, that both the moral and ceremonial Law was given unto them of God, to the intent that they should do the external works of the moral Law, so far as they could: and when they transgressed the moral Law, they should fly to the ceremonial Law, and make amends for their faults by satisfying for their sin by the external sacrifice of some clean beast offered to God, or by the washing of their body, and their cloaths.[124]

Not limited to the past, Dickson argues such covenants of works of human design, *foedera spuria*, are devised by humanity lying in sin with conditions other than those set by God so that justification can be achieved apart from perfect obedience to the law. This should not be surprising given the human conscience's natural inclination to seek justification by its own works. He observes that the practice continues today by those who, like the Pharisees of old, would cut short the precepts of the Law by

---

[123]Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.5.82; I.v.48.

[124]Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.5.83; I.v.48. See Karlberg, "Reformed Interpretation of the Mosaic Covenant," 29-30. His critique charging Dickson with misunderstanding the Mosaic Covenant as a punishment for the Israelites' continued misinterpretation of the divine purpose of the law and as a kind of hypothetical covenant that if the Israelites could keep the law, they would live, does not accord with Dickson's explanation here. Dickson does indeed present the Mosaic law in service to the gospel and as grace.

extending it no further than they can keep it, attempting to lengthen their own inherent righteousness and adopting abbreviated rules of righteousness. Dickson includes those who deny the guiltiness of original sin following baptism, categorizing some faults as light or venial, seeking justification by works and sufferings by concocting satisfaction through penance and pilgrimages for the sins of the living and through suffering in purgatory by the dead, or through the merits of deceased saints. These false covenants of works cannot succeed because "God will not admit any other Covenant of works than that which requireth perfect personal obedience."[125]

Holding to the received doctrine of a single covenant of grace, Dickson maintains that while the outward administration of the covenant of grace set down in the Old Testament in its old, dark form differs from the new clear form of the New Testament, the substance is one and the same. The covenant of grace is defined as a contract between God and humanity "procured by Christ upon these terms, that whosoever in the sense of their own sinfulnesse shall receive Christ Jesus offered in the Gospel, for righteousness and life, shall have Him and all the benefits purchased by Him, according to the covenant of Redemption," God being both "his God and the God of his children."[126] He asserts that this covenant is founded on the covenant of redemption, having been purchased by the mediation of the Son in transaction with the Father in the intratrinitarian covenant.[127] In the covenant of grace with the fathers, God repeated the covenant of works in declaring the force of the law for binding the curse of their transgressions, pressed the law on them to be reconciled by the sacrifice of Christ,

---

[125] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.5.83; I.v.48.
[126] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.6.97-99.
[127] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra* I.6.86-99, I.7.133-143.

Lamb of God, they would be reconciled and taught Christ "as the end of the law, for righteousnesse to every one that believed."[128]

There can also be counterfeits of the covenant of grace framed according to human design, illustrated by the Pharisee whose corruption of the covenant involved acknowledging the grace of God for the ability to do good works and the infusion of habits of piety, while exalting himself for having made good use of virtuous habits.[129] Dickson cites other attempts to craft covenants that seem more appealing to humanity, including those who reject the doctrine of gospel that makes infused faith the gift of God by making instead the act of faith by the power of free will the condition of the covenant, and those proposing having mortal sins paid by Christ's temporal sufferings with the sinner paying for venial sins by temporal sufferings in this life and in purgatory.[130]

The Summe of Saving Knowledge also provides a concise discussion of the relationship of the covenants to each other. "The sum of Saving knowledge may be taken up in these four heads. 1. The woeful condition wherein all men are by nature, through breaking of the Covenant of Works. 2. The Remedy provided for the Elect in Jesus Christ, by the Covenant of Grace. 3. The means appointed to make them partakers of this Covenant. 4. The blessings which are effectually conveyed into the Elect by these means."[131]

---

[128] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.7.134-135. This is echoed in *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, 6: "The Covenant in the Old Testament, being sealed with the Sacraments of Circumcision and the Paschal Lamb did set forth Christs death to come, and the benefits purchased thereby under the shadow of bloody sacrifices and sundry ceremonies: but since Christ came, the Covenant, being sealed by the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lords Supper, do clearly hold forth Christ already crucified before our eyes, victorious over death, and the grave, and gloriously ruling Heaven, and Earth for the good of his own people."

[129] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.6.108-109.

[130] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.6.109-110.

[131] Dickson, *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, I4r.

Under the first head Dickson explains that although Adam and Eve were "naturally bound to obey" the Law under pain of death, until God entered into contract with them there was no obligation on his part to reward their service.[132] Dickson gives no suggestion of mutual negotiation or human initiative, but asserts God entered into and delivered the terms of the covenant to the other parties in the contract.

Head II, citing Hosea 13:9, discusses the covenant of grace as the remedy for the problem of humanity being liable to eternal death by the breaking of the first divine covenant, and the covenant of redemption as the cause of the covenant of grace. On the basis of the trinitarian covenant's accomplishment, Christ applies the benefits purchased by himself to the elect by making the elect partakers of those benefits of the "covenant of free grace and reconciliation," through faith in himself.[133] Additional clarification of the relationship between these two covenants is provided in the section detailing warrants and special motives to believe, with the cause of the covenant of reconciliation being "so easily made up betwixt God and a humble sinner fleeing to Christ" found in the covenant of redemption.[134]

Although Dickson does have the believer using the term *bargain* in the context of the covenant of grace, the work of grace does not assign or allot to sinners the task of trying to bargain with God that they might be saved, but rather ensures the elect, who have been convinced by the Holy Spirit of their sin and the righteousness of Christ for them by faith, of the covenant's promises.

---

[132] Dickson, *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, I4v.

[133] Dickson, *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, I5r-v.

[134] Dickson, *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, K8r. "As parties contractors" God and the Son, mediator and surety for the redeemed. agree that "the sins of the redeemed should be imputed to innocent Christ, and he both condemned and put to death for them upon this very condition, that whosoever heartily consents unto the Covenant of Reconciliation offered through Christ, shall by the imputation of his obedience to them, be justified and holden righteous before God."

> Whereupon let the penitent desiring to believe take with him the words, and say heartily to the Lord; Seeing thou sayest, *Seek ye my Face*, my soul answereth unto thee, *thy face, Lord, will I seek.* I have harkened unto the offer of an everlasting Covenant of all saving mercies to be had in Christ, and I do heartily embrace thy offer. Lord, let it be a bargain, *Lord, I believe, help my unbelief*: Behold I give myself to thee to serve thee in all things for ever, the Lord will perfect that which concerneth me. Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever, forsake not the works of they own hands. Thus may a man be made an unfained believer in Christ.[135]

4.5 Particular Issues Raised in the Scholarship concerning Dickson's Theology

4.5.1 Full Participation of the Trinity in the Covenant of Redemption

Critics have claimed that the federal theology propounded by Dickson is seriously flawed by an intratrinitarian agreement that has tritheistic overtones, presents the members of the Trinity as independent parties, and compromises the unity of the works of God both *ad intra* and *ad extra*. These charges do not seem to be in accord with Dickson's writings.

In the doctrine from Matthew 1:20 Dickson includes discussion of the work of the Trinity *ad extra* regarding assurances to Joseph by the angel that the child conceived of Mary is "of the holy Ghost, and this he sayeth not to seclude the operation of the Father and the son, whose work is always one with the work of the Holy Spirit, by whom the Father and the Son do work, whatsoever they work among the creatures, being all three one God, as undivided in essence, so inseparable in action."[136] This is followed in 1:21 by the *ad intra* work of the Trinity as Jesus, to save his people, makes "paction with the Father, in the covenant of redemption."[137]

---

[135] Dickson, *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, Kr.
[136] Dickson, *Matthew*, A3.
[137] Dickson, *Matthew*, A3v.

Commenting on Matthew 3:17 Dickson declares that the baptism of Christ not only reveals the mystery of the Trinity by distinguishing all three members while "remaining One infinite and undivided," but lays opens the covenant of redemption. Specification of the agreement between the Father and Son should not be cited as proof of exclusivity, for "the residence of the Holy Ghost" and the heavenly glory shining upon the newly baptized Christ testify to the Father's good pleasure and acceptance of the offer by the Mediator to be both redeemer and surety for the elect.[138] Examples of Dickson's understanding of *opera Dei ad intra/ad extra* are also found in his teachings on blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, sin against God being sin against all the persons of the Godhead,[139] and the significance of baptism in Matthew 28.

> There are three persons in the God-head distinct one from another in order of subsistence and Operation, the Father, the Sonne, and the Holy Ghost, for so beareth the text. These three are one GOD undivided in Essence and Operation, equall and one in Authority and Power, their Name and their exercise of Authority is one; for it is said, *Baptizing them* not in the names, but in *the Name of the Father, Sonne and Holy Ghost*. The Covenant of Grace on both sides is made for cleansing and putting away sinne, according to the way and order prescribed by GOD, in whose Name *Baptisme* or sprinkling with water, for assuring Disciples of remission of sinnes through CHRIST, and obliging them to study Holiness, is given and taken.[140]

Regeneration, in *Therapeutica Sacra*, is "the work of Gods invincible power and meer grace, wherein, by His Spirit, accompanying His Word, He quickeneth a redeemed person lying dead in his sins, and reneweth him in his mind, will and all the powers of his soul; convincing him savingly of sin, righteousness and judgment, and making him heartily embrace Christ and Salvation, and to consecrate himself to the service of God

---

[138] Dickson, *Matthew*, C2.
[139] Dickson, *Matthew*, Nv.
[140] Dickson, *Matthew*, Hhv.

in Christ, all the days of his life."[141] In the context of the intratrinitarian covenant, Dickson rejects the idea that the Father is the only member of the Trinity offended by sin or that the covenant is limited to the first two members of the Godhead.

> When we name the Father as the one party and His Son Christ as the other party in this covenant, we do not seclude the Son and holy Spirit from being the party offended; but do look upon the Father, Son and Spirit, one God in three Persons, as offended by mans sin; and yet all three contented to take satisfaction to divine justice for mans sin in the Person of the Son, as designed Mediatour, to be incarnate. Whereby the Son is both the party offended as God, one essentially with the Father and holy Spirit; and the party contractor also, as God designed Mediatour personally for redeeming man, who with consent of the Father and holy Spirit, from all eternity willed and purposed in the fullness of time, to assume the humane nature in personall union with Himself, and for the elects sake to become man; and to take the cause of the elect in hand, to bring them back to the friendship of God and full enjoyment of felicity for evermore.[142]

Dickson reaffirms this thought in his third collection of evidence for the intratrinitarian covenant, linking the eternal decree of God fixing the way of redemption to be fulfilled in time, Acts 15:18, with the principle expressed in Ephesians 1:9 that whatever God does in time, he does according to the eternal counsel of his own will. Commenting on Psalm 2:7, he notes, "presupposing therefore the decree of God, of sending His eternal Son into the World, to become a man and suffer, and thereafter to reign for ever, we must also necessarily presuppose the consent of the Son, making paction with the Father and Spirit, fixing the decree and agreement about the whole way of Redemption, to be brought about in time."[143]

Description of the specific roles of the Father and Son given in *Summe of Saving Knowledge* also identifies those roles as made and agreed upon in eternity within the

---

[141] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.3.10.

[142] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.24. See also Gal. 3:19-20 and Eph.1:11, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 99,110; commentary on Psa. 90, *Other Fifty Psalmes*, 332.

[143] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra,* I.4.29. See also commentary on Psalm 2, *First Fifty Psalms*, 7-14.

counsel of the Trinity, and must therefore include the Holy Spirit. Under the second head the sum of the covenant of redemption includes the roles of the Father and the Son, and the condition of the agreement. The fourth head specifies that all the saving graces purchased to the elect by Christ are applied in the power of his Spirit.[144]

Contra Bell, Dickson's sophisticated trinitarian delineations that declare the oneness of the triune God in essence and maintain the orthodox distinctions between the persons of the Godhead regarding the works *ad intra* and *ad extra* cannot be categorized as "nearly tritheistic." Similarly, Morris' objection to the agreement seemingly between two independent parties in *The Summe of Saving Knowledge* must be dismissed given Dickson's teaching on the unity and work of the Trinity that clearly does not exclude the Holy Spirit.

Loonstra's idea that Dickson separates the covenant of redemption and atonement from the decree of incarnation can be refuted by examples throughout Dickson's teaching, whether his early sermons, the commentary of Psalm 2:7-8 detailing the whole work of redemption, or *Therapeutica Sacra*. "The Covenant of Redemption past between the Father and the Son, is by way of an eternall decree of the Trinity, comprehending all and whatsoever belongeth to Redemption. In the decreeing of which decree, there is not a first nor a last, but a joint purpose of God to bring about and accomplish all the heads and articles of the Covenant, each in their own due time, order and way appointed."[145] Additionally, Dickson would have considered limiting the covenant of redemption to matters of election a compromise of the radical equality of

---

[144] Dickson, *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, 15r, 17r.
[145] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.33-34. See also I.4.30.

the members of the Trinity with respect to the other components of the work of redemption.

4.5.2 Covenant/Contract Confusion

Major objections to the three-covenant system of Reformed orthodoxy are found in the dual charges by its detractors that such a system confusing covenant with contract diminishes or fails to adequately account for the love of God with respect to lost humanity, and by overly emphasizing the decrees of God, the love of God ceases to be the primary motivating factor in the work of redemption.[146] Offering a more sustained focus on Dickson, Holsteen claims that the covenant of works is not only the bedrock of Dickson's theology but all his thinking is founded on this covenant.[147] Holsteen depicts Dickson's three covenants as a series of legal agreements in which the solution to the human condition resulting from "a failure to meet the legal standard imposed on the federal head, Adam," is the salvation that comes primarily from God's contractual obligation rather than his grace.[148]

Frequently behind the charges, and only sometimes acknowledged, is the perceived offense of limited atonement and the assumption taken from modern theologians like Albrecht Ritschl and Barth that love is the primary divine attribute, not to be balanced with justice.[149] On the other side of this modern scholarship, however,

---

[146]Knappen, *Tudor Puritanism*, 395; M'Crie, *Confessions of the Church*, 70-73; Bell, *Calvin and Scottish Theology*, 104-107; Torrance, "Covenant Concept," 225-243; Torrance *Scottish Theology*, 63, 111, 119.

[147] Holsteen, "Popularization of Federal Theology," 135.

[148] Holsteen, "Popularization of Federal Theology," 187-189.

[149]Richard A. Muller, "The Covenant of Works and the Stability of Divine Law in Seventeenth-Century Reformed Theology: A Study in the Theology of Herman Witsius and Wilhelmus à Brakel" *Calvin Theological Journal* 29 (1994): 75-101. There is also similarity in Holsteen's criticism to Torrance's distaste for limited and penal substitutionary atonement.

Mullan states that attributing legalism to the federal theology of the 1630s is inaccurate and finds instead an "experiential religion focused on Christ *pro me* and the response of the heart."[150]

There is no evidence of Dickson being discomforted by either the terminology or the concept of covenant/contract, and little ground for speaking of his definitions as primarily legal in nature. He does not moreover develop covenant and contract as separate categories though indications of differences in the mechanics of the various covenants can be found. Thus, while Dickson's understanding of the work of redemption does entail a strong legal sense, suggestions that legality dominates, overwhelms, pushes aside, or upstages grace cannot be supported by a careful reading.

Rather than portraying a God who only relates to creation through the medium of legal covenants or contracts, the covenants define how humanity stands in relation to its Creator and express the stability of an immutable God in dealings with his mutable creatures. The covenant of redemption is the foundation of God's free grace and love for his church, and revelation of the covenant makes this love known. "The certainty and ground of the believers assurance that this righteousness and salvation is made fast unto him, is the truth of God, and faithfulness of God, obliging himself to make good this way of justification and salvation by the Covenant of redemption made between the Father and the Son our Mediatour, as in the promises of the Covenant of grace as set down in Scripture, which can no more disappoint the believer, then the truth and faithfulness of God can fail."[151]

---

[150] Mullan, *Scottish Puritanism*, 195.
[151] Dickson, *First Fifty Psalms*, 251-252.

Dickson does not propose that the Godhead needs some contractual obligation to stabilize the *ad intra* agreement or ensure that its *ad extra* work will be carried out. The unity and distinctness of the persons of the Trinity presented in the first chapter of Hebrews are asserted, from the work of creation and its preservation to salvation. "The Father vpholdeth all, so doeth the Sonne. 2. What Hee doeth, Hee doeth as Omnipotent GOD, by His Word, without trouble or burden. As Hee spake, and all was done; So Hee but commandeth, and all standeth fast."[152] The stability of the work of salvation is found in Christ who is "Constant, and immutable; and can not change his purpose of loue, to his called Ones, whatsoever changes befall them."[153] In his exposition of Galatians 3 Dickson observes that even among men a ratified covenant confirmed by will and testament can not be made void, much less a divine covenant established after the manner of a will. The covenant between God and Abraham "for uniting all the faithful, both Jews and Gentiles, into one seed, Christ" is God's absolute promise, "which, as it were, obligeth God promising, that he cannot change it."[154]

It is unlikely that Dickson would find any coherence to the argument that confusion exists between covenant and contract or agree that his teaching presents a meager love of God. Instead, the understanding of "the whole ocean of grace" opened in the free and gracious giving of benefits by this covenant-making God is presented along with his fatherly affections to those chosen by him to be made holy, the price of their salvation having been covenanted and paid for by Christ.[155] Additionally, Christ "of his own free love hath brought upon himself this necessity, of communicating

---

[152] Dickson, *Short Explanation of Hebrewes*, 8.
[153] Dickson, *Short Explanation of Hebrewes*, 15.
[154] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 98.
[155] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 108.

himself to us unworthy wretches, who stirred up this desire of us in himself; who himself hath the power to satisfie this his own desire, and who by degrees fulfills his desire of sanctifying us, and induing us with Faith, and will proceed to fulfill it, till hee hath performed all things necessary to the perfection of salvation, and that in all the faithful, the greatest and least."[156]

Other expressions attest to Dickson's understanding of the love of God and contradict charges of his having portrayed the Father as a harsh, unloving Judge who must be overcome by the loving Son who mediates. Regarding the Father, "in the price of Redemption payed, as in a mirror we may see, how greatly the Lord hateth sin; how great His love is to the world in sending his Son Christ amongst us." Writing of Christ's love, Dickson declares that "had it not been for love to save our souls, He could not have yielded his human nature to endure, or bear it."[157] Psalm 23 is "the expression of the prophet's confidence in God's grace, wherein from the settling himself in the belief of our covenantal relation between God and him, he draweth sundry comfortable conclusions and confirmations of faith from it, concerning the Lord's furnishing every necessary good thing to him."[158] Dickson points out that love is the reason for the righteousness offered through faith in John 3:16 and for the Lord lovingly calling us "off this crooked and unhappy way." He also mentions "the loving request of God and Christ" regarding the offer of perpetual reconciliation through Christ and the Father's love of the Son standing as Mediator making him in his Office "the *receptacle of love and grace and good will*, to be conveyed by him to believers in him."[159]

---

[156] Dickson, *Exposition of Pauls Epistles*, 109, 112. See Eph. 1:3, 23.
[157] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.55, I.4.50.
[158] Dickson, *First Fifty Psalms,* 131.
[159] Dickson, *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, 111v, K4r, K8r, K10v.

In the context of God's justice and love existing together as the Father pours out wrath on Christ, Dickson explains that "these two can well consist in God, in whom affections do not war one with another, not fight with reason, as it falleth forth among men; for the affections ascribed unto God, are *effects* rather of his holy will toward us, then properly called *affections* in him; and these effects of Gods will about us, do always tend to our good and blessednesse at last, however diverse one from another in themselves."[160]

4.5.3 Election

What Dickson would have to admit, without abashment or hesitancy, is that he does not understand Scripture, in either the Old or New Testament, to teach a love of God that embraces all lost humanity in a doctrine of universal atonement, but a special redeeming love of God limited to the elect. Clear statements specifying this redeeming love and mercy for the elect on the basis of God's good pleasure are a consistent theme in his works. The elect are a particular society, "separated from the perishing worldes and consecrated, as devoted soules, unto GOD'S use, as holie Vessels of Honour";[161] a "number severed out, in Gods speceall purpose, from the race of mankind, and advanced above the state of nature, to the estate of Grace and Glorie" not for inherent reasons or on the basis of forthcoming good works, but "for his free Grace and good purpose who helped to make the man, then to put the saule in him, and then to put such and such graces in his saule, and restoir what was fallen in him."[162] The elect are

---

[160] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.45.

[161] Dickson, *Short Explanation to Hebrewes,* 208-209, 213. See also *Hebrewes,* 106, 109; Psa. 2, 40 & 90.

[162] Dickson, Speech, 157.

"written in the book of life, in regard God hath comprehended them in his speciall love, no less distinctly and unchangeably, then if he had their names written in a catalogue, or book." "Such as Christ hath redeemed, he loved them infinitly, and counted them dearer to him than his life."[163]

The promise of God to be God to his people refers to "the redeemed, and designed heirs"; "the elect only, these that were to be saved only"; the "chosen society of the Israel of God and of Christs family, *the house of Judah*, which is the tribe of Christ," explaining that in Hebrews the Apostle "doth extend these promises unto the covenant between God and the elect, to be gathered under the Evangel unto Christ, out of Jews and Gentiles."[164] Continuing the thought of God purposing to make a covenant with those of his choosing, Dickson finds the church of Christ under the gospel to be included in the names of Israel and Judah.

> Partly because Israel hath the priority of all other people in God's covenant; and partly, because all the Christian Church of the Jews and Gentiles is comprehended under the name of the house of *Judah*, which is Christs tribe, whereof he came, who is the prince and head of all believers and confederate persons, reconciled to God; and partly because the Israelites or Jews have this prerogative above all other people and nations on earth, that of that race of people, the posterity of *Abraham, Isaac* and *Jacob*, there shall be in all ages some elected persons.[165]

> Both the making and way of making a covenant with man, dependeth absolutely on God either to make a covenant or not, to make what covenant he pleaseth to make, upon what conditions he pleaseth, and with what persons he pleaseth to make his covenant. No man ever preveened God, desiring him to make a covenant, but God did preveen all men, he preveened *Adam* once before his fall, and again by preaching the Gospel in his audience after the fall, he preveened the fathers in the wilderness, he preveened his posterity, that have lived or shall

---

[163] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.34; I.4.36. See also I.3.10; *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, Head II referencing Hos. 13:10 and the second warrant to embrace Christ, I5r, K6r-K6v.

[164] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.7.134. Demonstration by comparison occurs widely in the chapters on the covenant of grace and in additional confirmation of the doctrine of the three covenants.

[165] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.7.139.

> live in the latter dayes, promising to make a covenant with those who were not come into the world, but were to come long after the promise.[166]

Dickson rejects the legitimacy of the doctrine that Christ died for all humanity, "that albeit he hath not purchased righteousness and life eternal determinatly to any man, yet he hath purchased by this universal redemption, power to every mans free-will, to believe in Christ and persevere in his obedience, without any speciall operation of the holy Spirit in one more than another." He also declares that the so-called universal grace is properly "*universall unrenewed nature*, common to every man."[167]

The concept of a universal conditional redemption based on any conditional decree of God regarding the rest of humanity in which everyone who shall believe in Christ would be saved as opposed to the decree and covenant of redemption concerning the invincible conversion, perseverance, and salvation of the elect Dickson also rejected as inconsistent with the covenant of redemption. Although no names are mentioned here, it is likely that Dickson is addressing the views widely attributed to Cameron and Amyraut and held by the divines at the French academy at Saumur.[168]

> There is a vast difference between a *conditionall decree* of God, and a *decree* for bringing about Gods purpose, by offering peace unto men *upon a condition*. A conditionall decree presupposeth, that God is not resolved what to do about them to whom he shall make offer of peace upon condition, but that he doth suspend the determination of his own will, till the offer be made, and the man hath refused or accepted of the condition propounded unto him; which sort of decree cannot be in God, to whom are known all his own works, and all mens works from the beginning, Acts 15.18. and *who doth all things according to the determinat counsell of his own will, Ephes. 1.11.* But a decree to offer peace,

---

[166] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.7.143.

[167] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.6.122.

[168] Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, vol. 1, 480-483, mentions the disturbance caused in continental Reformed churches by the doctrine of hypothetical universalism developed by Amyraut as a follow on to Cameron's views, noting publication of various texts treating the subject, the first in 1634, with three national synods of France, convened in 1637, 1645, 1659, to consider Amyraut's orthodoxy. Owen's work *Salus Electorum* published in 1647 names the divines of Saumur as following a new method devised by Cameron of Christ's death being conditional for some. Other treatises reporting objections to the new doctrine include those by Bridge in 1667 and Broun in 1695.

> upon condition of believing in Christ, is a wise mean both of hiding and executing his own secret decree, and puting the persons to whom he makes the offer unto tryall... The one way determineth man, as God willeth; the other way determineth God, as man willeth.[169]

Dickson observes that the pride of Adam's posterity in conceiving that "they can believe and obey God, if he shall be pleased to reveal his will to them" is not inconsistent with the covenant of redemption: pride, however, reaches the wrong conclusion. The intratrinitarian covenant was not made for the saving of every person, therefore it was not God's purpose to reveal his gospel to or effectively call any but the elect. The offer of the gospel would be presented "to all indifferently where God should send his messengers" by the preaching of the gospel.[170]

4.6 Conclusion

Dickson used the doctrine of the *pactum salutis* in 1638 to refute Arminianism, rejected by the Synod of Dort and opposed by the Scottish church, and to support Reformed confessional orthodoxy against the characterization of this doctrine as speculative in nature. Although Baillie reported that Dickson's novel use of the doctrine for the purpose of refuting the errors of Arminianism had been conceived earlier and delivered in sermons, this address seems to be the earliest extant public presentation of Dickson's formulation of the doctrine. Contra claims that this doctrine is inherently speculative, in locating his most extensive treatment of the doctrine in a treatise on the healing of consciences, Dickson joined a number of his colleagues whose discussions of the covenant of redemption were placed within works on a variety of practical topics.

---

[169]Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.6.125-126.
[170]Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.6.126-127.

Such deliberate placements argue against the likelihood that these proponents of the *pactum salutis* would have considered the doctrine speculative.

Taking issue publicly with the Arminians over the years was not, for Reformed confessionalists, a matter of cataloging differences in the formulations of the system of covenants, but specifying how the Arminians' failure to understand the intratrinitarian covenant in particular "as done and endit before ever there was a word of it in the world"[171] threatened to infect the church with errors that compromised God's sovereignty and power in the work of salvation. Despite less obvious and frequent repudiation of the federal theology of Cameron and Amyraut, it should not be supposed that Dickson was unaware or unconcerned about their errors. As part of his confuting Arminianism, Dickson had already rejected the idea of God speaking conditionally, as if God had made no determination but waited to see what would happen. However interesting it might be, an attempt to measure the impact on Scottish theology of controversies within the French church in comparison with those in the Dutch church is not within the scope of this study.

Dickson insisted that the language of Scripture presupposes and states the *pactum salutis,* even though the covenant is not named. Frequent statements as to payment of the price of redemption and satisfaction for the elect are particularly significant for Dickson's argument, for the accepted payment requires prior agreement of the price between the seller and buyer. The covenant of redemption made in eternity is the foundation of the whole work of salvation, "in effect one with the eternall decree of redemption, wherein the salvation of the elect, and the way it shall be brought about

[171] Dickson, Speech, 158.

is fixed, in the purpose of God."[172] Particularly throughout his descriptions of this covenant and the proofs offered in support of the doctrine in *Therapeutica Sacra*, Dickson left no doubt that he found Scripture teaching Christ as mediator according to both his divine and human natures and the *pactum salutis* testifying to the triune God and "the co-eternall and co-essentiall Son of the Father."[173]

His emphasis on the practical use of knowing the decree of redemption and the *pactum salutis* as one is equally evident. Revelation of this covenant furthers knowledge of and gratitude for the radical graciousness and voluntary mercy of the triune God. "The certainty and ground of the believers assurance that this righteousness and salvation is made fast unto him, is the truth of God, and faithfulness of God, obliging himself to make good this way of justification and salvation by the Covenant of redemption made between the Father and the Son our Mediatour, as in the promises of the Covenant of grace is set down in Scripture, which can no more disappoint the believer, then the truth and faithfulness of God can fail."[174]

Dickson insisted that the covenant of redemption and the power of God revealed in Scripture also left no room for doubting the certainty of the successful completion of the work of redemption, or allow any room for the possibility for the self-congratulations of human pride from the use of free will, foreseen faith and works, or grant the possibility of failure because of human mutability. Rejection of universal redemption and any conditional decree of God regarding the identity of the redeemed also follow from the covenant of redemption.

---

[172] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.25.
[173] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.4.24.
[174] Dickson, *First Fifty Psalms*, 251-252.

The *pactum salutis* is the first divine covenant. However, in the order of applying saving doctrine to sick consciences the starting point is the covenant of works. Beginning the instruction of redemption with this covenant does not confirm Dickson's passion for a new theological construct nor indicate a priority of law over grace. The order is in keeping with the first use of the law to bring a sinner to repentance and faith in Christ. In the covenant of grace with the church, the covenant of redemption is brought to real accomplishment.

CHAPTER 5
THE *PACTUM SALUTIS* IN LATER BRITISH WORKS

5.1 Accounts of the *Pactum Salutis* from the 1650s

Following Dickson's efforts and in the wake of Coccieus' *Summa doctrinae de foedere et testamento Dei* published in 1648, the covenant of redemption became a major doctrinal issue in Britain. More extensive treatments of divine covenants are found from the 1650s, some containing lengthy discourses on the covenant of redemption and sometimes coming, not surprisingly, from authors with personal connections to Dickson such as Rutherford and James Fergusson, whose commentaries of Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians have been attributed to Dickson's instigation.[1] Patrick Gillespie is named as a colleague of Dickson at the University of Glasgow and a member of the commission for the public affairs of the kirk during Dickson's tenure on that committee.[2]

A text published in 1651 by John Brinsely focuses on various aspects of the doctrine of Christ's mediatorship, at length examining three views of the role of Christ's natures in his office. He notes Osiander as the proponent of Christ as mediator only according to his divine nature. The opinion that Christ is mediator according to his human nature belongs to "Bellarmine himselfe, and most of the Doctours of the Church of Rome," despite acknowledging Christ as both God and man, with Bellarmine's term "Deus Humanatus" included in the discussion. Brinsely declares the third way of

---

[1] James Fergusson, "To the Reader," *A brief exposition of the epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians* (London, 1659), A5r. See also David Dickson and George Hutcheson, "To the Reader," *A brief exposition of the epistles of Paul to the Philippians and Colossians* by James Fergusson (Edinburgh, 1656), A3-A4v; Wodrow, "Short Account of the Life of the Author," in *Commentary on the Psalms*, xxiv; Henderson, *Religious Life*, 25; Macleod, *Scottish Theology*, 85-86 and Clauson, *Scottish Hermeneutical Method*, 130, add Alexander Nisbet's commentaries on 1 and 2 Peter (1658) to the list.

[2] Howie, *Biographia Scoticana*, 285; Holfelder, "Gillespie, Patrick (1617-1675)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10737, accessed 28 July 2005].

viewing Christ's mediatorship as "the old and right way: Wherein the true C*atholicks*, the Orthodox professours of all ages have walked. And that is not to *divide the natures* of Christ in the office and work of his Mediatorship, but to put them together; attributing it to his whole person . . . Thus is he said to be a *Prophet*, a *Priest*, a *King*; all as God and man."[3]

Brinsley's treatise contains scattered references to the first covenant between God and Adam, the covenant of works, and "the gospel-covenant," the covenant of grace, noting that Christ was called to his office before time, predestinated from all eternity and invested in his office in time from the fall of Adam.[4] However, in providing scriptural testimonies to the satisfaction that Christ makes, he makes brief mention of "a mutual compact and agreement betwixt the Father and Sonne about this way of *Reconciliation, viz.* by way of *satisfaction*" found in Isaiah 53, yet his emphasis is heavily on the Father having imposed this way of satisfaction and the Son having submitted to it, as surety undertaking and discharging for the elect the required satisfaction for sin.[5] Even as Brinsley stresses the Father having called the Son to the mediatorship and the office having been received by the Son, he insists that although Scripture attributes the work of reconciliation to the first person of the Trinity, the "two other *Persons* are thereby not excluded from any concurrence in this work; not so, as it is in all other Actions and Operations *ad extra*, (as they are called,) works done out of themselves, they are *Indivisa*, Common to all the three Persons; so is it here. The *calling*

---

[3] John Brinsley, *Two treatises: the one, handling the doctrine of Christ's mediatorship: wherein the great gospel-mystery of reconciliation betwixt God and man is opened, vindicated and applied* (London, 1651), 203-205, 212-213.

[4] Brinsley, *Doctrine of Christ's Mediatorship*, 42-43, 53.

[5] Brinsley, *Doctrine of Christ's Mediatorship*, 62-65.

of Christ to this office of Mediatorship it was the concurrent Act of all the three Persons."[6]

The covenant language in the gloss of Leigh's system of divinity concerning the offices of Christ is more specific than it had been in his earlier texts. "The Father having been offended with us, and finding the way of his justice shut against us by our sins, made a Covenant with the Sonne that he should undertake it, and appointed it to be done by the way of taking on our flesh, resolving that the Person should be the raiser up of the lost and fallen man to happiness and felicity." Leigh continues to explain that Christ's death was "an act of obedience unto his Fathers will, or to the agreement between his Father and him. Matth.26.54. Joh.10.18 & 17.4. Phil 2.8. As there is a Covenant of grace between God and us, so there was a Covenant of redemption between God and Christ."[7]

Rutherford's close friendship and familiarity with Dickson's writings makes similarities in terms and content not unexpected, yet his work clearly manifests the style of its author and not a cloning of Dickson. Several chapters of Rutherford's lengthy treatise are devoted to the covenant of suretyship or redemption and to distinguishing the *pactum salutis* from a covenant of grace and reconciliation made with sinners. Included in the explanation of how not every mutual agreement of the Trinity *ad extra* can be classified as a covenant is Rutherford's discourse on the Son's consent to the pay "the ransome of satisfaction" and of "the bargain of love closed and subscribed before

---

[6] Brinsley, *Doctrine of Christ's Mediatorship*, 33-37.

[7] Edward Leigh. *A systeme or body of divinity: consisting of ten books. Wherein the fundamentals and main grounds of religion are opened: most of the controversies between us, the Papists, Arminians and Socinians discussed and handled. Several scriptures explained and vindicated from corrupt glosses* (London, 1654), 405, 415.

witnesses from eternity."[8] Dickson is referenced regarding: the elect, God knowing those he gave to the Son and the Son knowing those whom he ransomed; the covenant of redemption and its necessity appearing "in that salvation is taken off free-will, and the slippery *yea*, and *no*, of free-will in the Covenant of Works"; the right of one in covenant with God to the promises, Christ having "the first right as man"; and "the Fathers compact with the Son" from Dickson's commentary of Psalm 2.[9]

In his commentary of Philippians 2:6-11, Fergusson stresses Jesus Christ's equality with the Father and his voluntary submission to all that the Father had enjoined for the redemption of the elect. "Such was the love both of the Father, Joh. 3.16. and of the Son, Joh. 15.13. to man's salvation, that for bringing it about the Father appointed the Son to die; and the Son willingly became obedient to the Father, even to death." The *pactum salutis* is mentioned here specifically in the context of Christ's humiliation and exaltation. "The Lord Christ having abased himself to the lowest degree of misery, which he engaged to undergo for our Redemption, was afterwards (and that by virtue of the Covenant of Redemption, see *Isa.* 53.10.) exalted by the Father, to the highest pitch of divine glory; so he maketh his exaltation depend upon his humiliation, the one as the necessary consequence of the other."[10] Dickson's terminology is also found in Fergusson's discussion of God's gracious dealings in Galatians 3, giving *covenant*, or *paction* and *agreement*, and presenting the covenant of redemption as part of the

---

[8] Samuel Rutherford, *The covenant of life opened: or, a treatise of the covenant of grace, containing something of the nature of the covenant of works, the sovereignty of God, the extent of the death of Christ, the nature & properties of the covenant of grace: and especially of the covenant of suretyship or redemption between the Lord and the Son Jesus Christ, infants right to Jesus Christ, and the seal of baptism: with some practicall questions and observation* (Edinburgh, 1654), 305-307.

[9] Rutherford, *Covenant of Life*, 324, 325, 326, 330.

[10] Fergusson, *Philippians*, 39-44.

doctrine of the gospel that Paul was engaged in establishing among the Ephesians in 1:3.[11]

Arrowsmith writes of the covenant of redemption in connection with election and the eternal decree, with reference to Ephesians 1:4, Matthew 25:34, Hebrews 13:10, 2 Timothy 1:9, Matthew 12:18, and John 17:2. In this context Arrowsmith also cites Dickson and quotes his Latin commentary on Titus 1:2. "That in this transaction there passed promises from the Father to the Son in the behalf of himself and all his members. And that this is *the grace which was given us in Christ Jesus*, these the *Promises* of eternal life before the world began, spoken of in the forecited places to *Timothy* and *Titus*: upon the latter whereof I meet with the same Gloss from a Reverend Scotish writer, whose name and words are here presented in the Margine."[12]

In probably the most massive treatise on God's covenants, Roberts writes of God as "the most free unlimited Agent" who is pleased to deal with his church and people by way of covenants, his condescension wonderful.[13] Discussing the names and natures of divine covenants in Scripture, Roberts declares of *diatheke* that "upon

---

[11] Fergusson, *Galatians*, 140; *Ephesians*, 4.

[12] Arrowsmith, *Armilla Catechetica*, 283-284. See margin note: "Promisit vitam aeternam, non tantum initio mundi praedicando eam primis parentibus in paradiso, sed etiam paciscendo de ea ante conditium mundum cum Filio designato mediatore nostro in foedere redemptionis. David Dicion Exp sit. Analytic. In Tit.1.2"

[13] Francis Roberts, *Mysterium & medulla biblorum. The mysterie and marrow of the Bible viz. God's covenants with man, in the first Adam, before the fall: and in the last Adam Iesvs Christ, after the fall: from the beginning to the end of the world: unfolded & illustrated in positive aphorisms & their explanations. Wherein the general nature, several kinds, gradual discoveries, sanctions and administrations of all Gods holy covenants, from first to last, throughout the whole scriptures; together with all their particular terms, occasions, author, foederates, matter, form, end, properties, agreements, disagreements, and many other their noted excellencies are largely and familiarly expounded: the blessed person and office of Jesus Christ, the soul of all the covenants of faith and sole mediator of the new covenant, is described: many choice fundamental points of Christianity, are explained: sundry practical questions, or cases of conscience, are resolved: divers puzzling controversies about the present truths are positively stated and determined: many obscure and difficult scriptures are occasionally elucidated: and, in all, the great supernatural mysterie of the whole sacred Bible, touching Gods most wise, gracious, merciful, righteous, plenary, wonderful, and eternal salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ through faith, sweetly couched and gradually revealed in his covenant-expressures in all ages of the church, is disclosed and un-veiled (London*, 1657), 6-8.

diligent search I find that this is the only word by which the Apostles and Holy Penmen in the New Testament render the Hebrew word *berith*," translated sometimes as covenant, sometimes testament. As to the Latin words *foedus, pactum* and *testamentum,* Roberts indicates little interest in being drawn into wrangling over them. "I insist not upon them, because they are not in the Scripture-Originals." The general nature of a divine covenant is "Gods gratious agreement," God alone the author between himself and his people who must accept, or not, the covenant and its terms as God is pleased to propound.[14]

Roberts readily employs covenant of works for the first covenant, and names various covenants of promise from the Old Testament "made and confirmed in Christ only Promised and to be exhibited in the flesh afterwards." He favors the designation covenant of faith over the more usual covenant of grace because these "are Denominations nearest to the Scriptures own Expressions, *viz. The Law of works*, and *The law of Faith. Rom. 3.27.* which for sense and substance, what are they else, but the Covenant of works, and the Covenant of Faith," and finds his terms more accurate with respect to the conditions of each covenant.[15]

Included in the substance of the covenant of faith, the matters "covenanted and agreed upon in that blessed & heavenly Transaction betwixt God the Father and Iesus Christ the last Adam, touching the Recovery of his seed; are in Order of Nature Antecedaneous to the other betwixt God and his Seed, as the Foundation thereof." Distinct from God's covenanting jointly with Christ and his seed, these previously agreed upon issues are identified as either the matters covenanted and promised to

---

[14] Roberts, *Mysterium & Medulla*, 10-13.
[15] Roberts, *Mysterium & Medulla,* 61.

Christ by the Father, including the investiture of Christ as Mediator to his threefold office with the accompanying assistance, encouragement and protection to the complete success of the work, or those stipulated to the Father by Christ. Of those things promised to his Father, Roberts notes especially Christ "cheerfully and faithfully to accept, undertake and discharge this Mediatory office imposed upon him by the Father, in order to the Recovery of his Seed, the Elect," and "fully to depend and rely upon his heavenly Father for Acceptance, Assistance and Protection in the Exercise of his office, notwithstanding extreamest oppositions, deepest difficulties and distresses."[16]

Published in 1661, Obadiah Sedgwick's treatise was intended to refute the view that there is no covenant between God and the believer, but only a covenant between God and Christ through which all good is brought to believers, and to convince the reader that there is an everlasting covenant between God and the believer. As part of his argument, Sedgwick contents himself to outline the intratrinitarian covenant "touching on the whole businesse of mans salvation" and to distinguish it from the covenant of grace made with believers, it being "tedious to speak all that might be said concerning this high Covenant." Because of the *pactum salutis* Christ is called "the Covenant; I will give thee for a Covenant of the people," citing Isaiah 49:8. Regarding the revelation of the promise of God concerning the hope of eternal life, Titus 1:2 is mentioned.[17]

As further support, Sedgwick shows that all things making up a covenant passed between the Father and Son, listing six things on the Father's part. The Father designed

---

[16] Roberts, *Mysterium & Medulla*, 79-86.

[17] Obadiah Sedgwick, *The bowels of tender mercy sealed in the everlasting covenant, wherein is set forth the nature, conditions and excellencies of it, and how a sinner should do to enter into it, and the danger of refusing the covenant-relation. Also the treasures of grace, blessings, comforts, promises and priviledges that are comprized in the covenant of Gods free and rich mercy made in Jesus Christ with believers* (London, 1661), 3.

and sealed Christ to the office of mediator, John 6:27; promised Christ the Spirit in abundant measure, Isaiah 11:2, 42:1, John 3:34; promised assistance, Isaiah 42:6; promised success, Isaiah 53:10, 55:5; promised dominion and sovereignty, Isaiah 40:10; and promised to glorify Christ, John 17:5. For his part, Christ consented to undertake "the will and work of his Father," Isaiah 50:7, 9 and 49:5. Sedgwick also declares that this covenant, "shown to be personally considered," is also mystically considered with Christ as the head of his church.[18]

Briefly noting that *berith* signifies covenant and that it is a high honor and special favor to be in covenant with God, Sedgwick states that the covenant lets God's people know what to expect from God as a declaration of the good which he will bestow, and also serves as their rule and direction. He observes that some distinguish the covenant God makes with his people as twofold: *foedus absolutum*, as either God's promise to Noah not to drown the world again or the promise to give faith and perseverance to his elect; and *foedus hypotheticum*, a gracious promise on God's part with an obligation on the part of his people. The *foedus hypotheticum* is also twofold: *foedus nature*, *foedus operum* or *pactum amicitia* described as prelapsarian, made with Adam as "a publick person" and his posterity; and *foedus gratiae,* or *pactum reconciliationis,* "sometimes stiled the Covenant of life," with life restored, promised and settled by the covenant and "no life for a sinner out of it."[19]

In a collection of ten sermons, Bridge considers various aspects of covenants. "The New Covenant of Grace Opened" emphasizes the aspect of mutuality in divine covenants and offers a contrast between the law and gospel, the old covenant with

---

[18] Sedgwick, *Bowels of Tender Mercy,* 3-4.
[19] Sedgwick, *Bowels of Tender Mercy*, 5-7, 9.

Moses as its mediator and the new with Christ as mediator. Observing that it has always been God's way to deal with humanity by the most suitable, honorable, amicable and friendly way, by covenant, he states that "no sooner was man made, but God entered into covenant with him." This first covenant was followed by covenants entered into with "the World by Noah," Abraham, and the Jews at Sinai. Describing a law as "properly a command with penalty," a covenant is "that mutual agreement between God and Man whereby God the Father doth ingage himself to show kindness, grace and mercy, to Christ and to his Seed."[20] Bridge, citing Isaiah 42, Psalms 40 and 89, speaks of an agreement between the Father and Christ, repeating the Father's undertaking to show kindness, grace and mercy to Christ and his seed and, Christ's commitment to the work of Mediator and obedience to the Father for himself and his seed.[21]

Bridge also distinguishes the new covenant of which Christ is surety from the covenant made with Adam in the state of innocency when God dealt "in the way of Supremacy and of Righteousness," and seemingly from the covenant made with the Jews in the time of the Old Testament. Granting that out of free grace and love God was pleased to condescend to enter into the covenant with Adam, the new covenant is of great compassion with mention of the promise, but not the threatening of the first covenant. Announcing disagreement with Cameron's formulation of three distinct covenants, Bridge states the Jews in the time of the Old Testament were saved by the same covenant as believers in his own day, indicating that the covenant with the Jewish

---

[20] William Bridge, *Christ and the covenant. The work and way of meditation. Gods return to the soul, or nation; together with his preventing mercy. Delivered in ten sermons, (viz.)1. Christs personal excellencies, the object of our love. 2. Christ crucified, the object of our faith. 3. The new covenant of grace opened. 4. Christ the mediator of the new covenant. 5. The way and spirit of the new covenant, or New Testament. 6. The blood of sprinkling. 7. The sweetness and profitableness of divine meditation. 8. The work and way of this mediation. 9. Gods return to the soul and nation. 10. Preventing mercy* (London, 1667), 56-58.

[21] Bridge, *Christ and Covenant*. 58-59.

church joined the covenant of works in a subservient way to the covenant of grace, but in some fashion that to Bridge's mind does not result in a third, distinct covenant.[22]

Two works published in 1674 contained expositions on the *pactum salutis*: Samuel Petto's treatise on the differences between the old and new covenant and Owen's Hebrews commentary. Focusing on the covenant of grace, Petto states at the beginning that "there are many Scriptures which give clear intimations of such a *federal transaction* between God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son, in order to the recovery and everlasting Salvation of Sinners: even where we do not find the very notion or name of it. Thus *Isa.* 53.10,11,12." Petto affirms this mutual agreement, adding Isaiah 42:6; John 6:27 and 10:17, 18; Hebrews 5:4, 5 and Psalm 40:7, 8. These passages "together amount to or make up a Covenant between them; for what more can be necessary unto? Here we have the matters or things promised *viz.* all that conduce to the compassing the great end of salvation."[23]

However, Petto insists that there is no evidence in Scripture of making the intratrinitarian covenant of suretyship a separate covenant from that of grace and reconciliation, instead there is one covenant of God's grace. "*The Covenant of grace was made or established not only with us, but joyntly with Jesus Christ and us in him so as both are within one and the same Covenant.* For the great transactions with Jesus, yea even the giving and sending of him, and his accepting the office of a Redeemer and undertaking for us, these are all of grace, as well as what is promised to us through him,

---

[22] Bridge, Ch*rist and Covenant*, 61-65.

[23] Samuel Petto, *The difference between the old and new covenant stated and explained: with an exposition of the covenant of grace in the principal concernments of it* (London, 1674), 2-3. Petto also participates in the *berith* discussion, defining *berith* properly as either a mutual contract or agreement between two parties or a single promise made without stipulation or figuratively as "a bare Divine promise as in Gen. 9.9, 10" with every living creature, "many of which were incapable of contracting with God, or of making any stipulation. So Covenant is taken for a bare sign or seal of it. Gen.17.10." It may also refer to a part of the covenant, as the moral law was part of the old covenant (ibid.,5).

therefore the *Covenant of grace*, must take in all that conduceth (otherwise than by a meer Decree) to our restoration and eternal Salvation."[24]

Regarding the first covenant with Adam and his posterity, Petto finds the terms *covenant of amity* or *of nature* insufficient to fully encompass the reality of the covenant of works, "seeing the promised life therein was to be by working." He rejects as well the characterization that the "mount Sinai dispensation was a Covenant of Works to Israel," identifying it instead as "one member" of the covenant of grace.[25]

Although mention of the *pactum salutis* trails through Owen's writings, the most concentrated, technical treatment is found under the topic of the priesthood of Christ in his commentary on Hebrews. He declares that the personal, eternal transactions of the Trinity were "carried on *per Modum Foederis,* by way of Covenant, Compact and Mutual Agreement between the Father and Son. For although it should seem that because they are single Acts of the same Divine Understanding and Will, they cannot be properly Federal, yet because those Properties of the Divine Nature are acted distinctly in the Distinct Persons, they have in them the Nature of a Covenant." Owen insists that there was such a covenant between the Father and Son regarding the work of the Son's mediation and calls it the covenant of the Mediator or Redeemer, distinguishing it from both covenants that God entered into with humanity. The first covenant whereby "God created Man in and under the Terms and Law of a Covenant, with a Prescription of Duties and Promise of Rewards, is by all acknowledged." Another, "commonly called

---

[24] Petto, *Difference between Old and New*, 18-19.
[25] Petto, *Difference between Old and New*, 14, 16-17.

the *Covenant of Grace"* was entered into after the fall and contains the explanation of the particulars agreed upon by the Father and Son in the *pactum salutis*.[26]

In support of his argument for the intratrinitarian transaction to be considered properly as a covenant, Owen provides his treatment of *berith/suntheke/diatheke/foedus* issues, identifying various sorts of covenants and again showing no inclination to separate covenant, compact, agreement. Observing that properly a covenant must be made between distinct persons and stating that he had proved distinctions between the Father and Son elsewhere, Owen affirms the eternal transactions to be "*Federal*, or had in them the Nature of a Covenant" and points out substantial evidence of the eternal transaction in Scripture. The expression "of being a God to any One is declarative of a *Covenant*, and is the Word whereby God constantly declares his Relation unto any, in a Way of a Covenant, *Jer. xxxi*.35 & *xxxii* 38. *Hos. ii*.23." The transaction is proposed by way of counsel, or the Father and Son taking counsel together for the accomplishment of the designed end.

The radically voluntary aspects of this covenant include: concurrence of the will of the Father and Son that the covenant might be voluntary; discourse on God being absolutely free in matters of engaging in the salvation to be accomplished in Christ and exercise of his authority in the commission and commands given his Son. The Son

---

[26] John Owen, *Exercitations on the epistle to the Hebrews, concerning the priesthood of Christ. Wherein, the original, causes, nature, prefigurations, and discharge of that holy office, are explained and vindicated. The nature of the covenant of the redeemer, with the call of the Lord Christ unto his office, are declared. And the opinions of the Socinians about it are fully examined, and their opposition unto it refuted. With a continuation of the exposition the third, fourth, and fifth chapters of the said epistle to the Hebrews* (London, 1674), 49-50. "The Father and Son do enter into a Holy Mutual Agreement concerning the Recovery and Salvation of the Elect in a way of Grace. This we place as the *Matter* of this Covenant, the things contracted and agreed about. The distinction of the parts of it, into the Persons and Things, the Order and Respect in it of OneThing unto Another, are not of our present Consideration. The Explanation of them belongs unto the Covenant of Grace which God is pleased to enter into with Believers by Jesus Christ" (ibid.,57).

undertakes voluntarily both assumption of humane nature and obedience to the Father, and consents to dispose of things in the absolute power of the Father "to do good to Mankind, to bring them to enjoyment of Himself" and to assume humane nature "unto what End He pleased." God is also absolutely free in the matter of the covenant to save sinners "by Ways and Means suited unto the Manifestation of the Glory of God" by way of grace and manifesting that glory.[27]

In 1675 Thomas Brooks declares his assent to the existence of "the high and glorious Transactions of the Father and Son in the Covenant of Redemption" and sets out a lengthy support in his treatise on the secrets, mysteries and rarities of divine love.[28] Stating the premise that God commonly deals with humanity by way of covenant, Brooks provides examples of the covenants made at creation, with Noah, Abraham, and at Sinai, but insists that all humanity is either under a legal covenant of works or an evangelical one of grace. The legal covenant was made in innocency, the second since the fall is the same in substance though differently dispensed. Noting that a right notion of covenant is conducive to understanding God's covenants, Brooks begins by acknowledging that as covenant is generally known in English to signify a mutual promise, bargain and obligation, so do *berith* and *diatheke* indicate a "solemn

---

[27] Owen, *Exercitations on Hebrews*, 50-58.

[28] Thomas Brooks, *Paradice opened, or the secrets, mysteries, and rarities of divine love, of infinite wisdom, and of wonderful counsel, laid open to publick view. Also, the covenant of grace, and the high and glorious transactions of the Father and the Son in the covenant of redemption opened, and improved at large, with the resolution of divers important questions and cases concerning both covenants. You have further, several singular pleas, that all sincere Christians may safely and groundedly make to those ten scriptures in the Old and New Testament, that speak of the general judgment, and of that particular judgment, that must certainly pass upon them all after death. With some other points of high importance, that tend to the peace, comfort, settlement and satisfaction of all serious sincere Christians. To which is added a sober and serious discourse, about the favorable, signal and eminent presence of the Lord with his people in their greatest troubles, deepest distresses, and most deadly dangers* (London, 1675).

compact or agreement, between two chosen parties, or more; whereby with mutual, free and full consent; they bind and oblige themselves one to another."[29]

Presenting an account of the dialog between the Father and Christ regarding the "compact, covenant and agreement" touching the business of salvation, Brooks defines the covenant of redemption as "a federal transaction, or mutual stipulation that was betwixt God and Christ from everlasting, for the accomplishment of the work of our Redemption, by the mediation of Jesus Christ to the eternal honour, and unspeakable praise of the glorious grace of God." Also called a bargain, it concerns "the conversion, sanctification and salvation of the Elect, through the death, satisfaction and obedience of Jesus Christ, which in due time, was to be given to the father."[30] Stating that there are "many choice Scriptures, which give clear intimation of such a federal transaction between God the father and Jesus Christ," Brooks provides ten as proof: Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 42:6; Isaiah 49:1; Isaiah 52:13, 14; Isaiah 53; Isaiah 59:20, 21; Zachariah 6:12, 13; Psalm 40:6-8; Psalm 89:28; and Zachariah 9:11.[31]

A statement of how the covenant of redemption differs from the covenant of grace is the first of Brooks' eight propositions in further support of the existence of the *pactum salutis,* with five differences given to prove the distinction. The covenants differ in: the confederates, with the Father and Son in the covenant of redemption, God and believers in the covenant of grace; the requirements, God requiring Christ to "suffer, shed his blood, die and make himself an offering for our sins," while requiring believers to "believe and embrace the Lord Jesus"; and in the promises God makes to Christ and

---

[29] Brooks, *Paradice Opened,* 1-3. Brooks admits that although the name for the prelapsarian covenant God made with Adam is not given in Scripture, the thing is, as evidenced by comparing Scripture with itself (ibid.,11).

[30] Brooks, *Paradice Opened,* 66-68.

[31] Brooks, *Paradice Opened,* 69-97.

to believers. The fourth and fifth differences have to do with the relationship of the two covenants and the preeminence of the *pactum salutis*. The covenant of redemption secures the covenant of grace, "for what God promised to us, he did before the foundation of world, promise to Jesus Christ." The covenant of redemption is "the very basis or bottom" of the covenant of grace.[32]

Published in 1677, the second part of *The Ark of the Covenant Opened* by Patrick Gillespie is a 478 page treatise on the covenant of redemption as the foundation of the covenant of grace. He declares at the outset that "there is a Covenant betwixt God and Christ; though the name of this mysterious transactions, which we call the Covenant of Redemption and Suretiship, be not found in Scripture, in so many words (which may be among the reason why most Writers have been silent about the thing); yet the thing it self being so evidently held forth in the Scripture."[33] Early in the text Gillespie mentions views on a covenant between God and Christ not in harmony with his own, particularly that of the Socinians who study Scripture to void the suretyship of Christ while not denying the existence a covenant wherein Christ is surety according to their understanding of the concept. He also remarks on the Antinomians' denial of a covenant of grace, but their acknowledgement of a covenant between God and Christ, and Arminius' views on the topic found in *Oratio de Sacerdotio Christi*. Regularly

---

[32] Brooks, *Paradice Opened*, 97-98.

[33] Patrick Gillespie, *The ark of the covenant opened: or, a treatise of the covenant of redemption between God and Christ, as the foundation of the covenant of grace. The second part. Wherein is proved. that there is such a covenant. The necessity of it. The nature, properties, parties thereof. The tenor, articles, subject-matter of redemption. The commands, conditions, and promises annexed. The harmony of the covenant of suretiship made with Christ, and the covenant of reconciliation made with sinner: wherein they agree, wherein they differ. Grounds of comfort from the covenant of suretiship* (London, 1677), 1.

references in harmony with his own are made to treatises on the covenant by Rutherford, Bulkeley and to Cocceius' *Summa.*[34]

Gillespie cites Isaiah 59:20, 21 and Psalm 89 as the first two proofs of the covenant of redemption. His third proof taken from Scripture, showing explicitly "all the essentials and requisites for making up a formal Covenant" between God and Christ though not speaking explicitly of it by name, is argued by way of syllogism. "Where all things necessarily required unto the essence and being of a Covenant for matter and form, are to be found; there must be a Covenant. But betwixt God and Christ in the matter of our Redemption, all things necessary unto the essence of a Covenant are to be found: Therefore there must needs be a Covenant betwixt God and Christ about the work of Redemption, which we call the *Covenant of Suretiship or Redemption.*" The essentials and requisites of a covenant Gillespie identifies from Scripture are the consent and agreement concerning the work of redemption between God and Christ that amount to a paction from Zechariah 6:13, with the business "plotted, consulted and concluded" from John 6:40, Hebrews 10:9, John 10:18, and Isaiah 53:10.[35]

Although "clear vestiges" of the proposals made by the Father concerning his will and the Son's consent and agreement are found in Psalm 110:1, Psalm 2:7-8 and Acts 13:13, Gillespie notes the difficulty lies in making "it appear, that these Proposals belong to the eternal transaction and Covenant of Redemption." This difficulty is answered in part by his observation that whatever is revealed in Scripture regarding the work of redemption had been between the Father and the Son long before Christ's

---

[34] Gillespie, *Ark of the Covenant*, 1-2.
[35] Gillespie, *Ark of the Covenant*, 2-7.

incarnation and therefore must pertain to intratrinitarian transactions in the counsel of God's will from eternity.[36]

The fourth proof of the covenant is taken from Christ's offices, employments, powers, trusts and covenant-relations to the Father and his people coming not by nature, but by condescension, divine appointment and agreement, all proving the existence of a covenant or compact between the Father and Son. Christ is mediator by "condescension and agreement," king by covenant, prophet and teacher by appointment, and priest by divine appointment in "the way of agreement and consent." Similarly the trusts, powers and authorities that came by divine appointment and Christ's own voluntary yielding were not by nature or necessity "repugnant to his own consent," but by covenant.[37]

Gillespie also provides three reasons for why the work of redemption needed a covenant between the Father and Son, noting first that "it might suffice that God decreed, and plainly revealed that the satisfaction which his justice will have for sin, and which Christ has given, was agreed betwixt them by a Covenant," infinite wisdom having deemed it necessary. Second, divine wisdom having determined the respective necessity of "the Gospel-dispensation" similarly called for the necessity of a covenant of suretyship for redemption. The third reason draws from the non-essential nature of the offices, employments and relations sustained by Christ and not "belonging to him by any natural, absolute, or immutable necessity." "The work of Redemption performed by Christ, was such as could not be undertaken and performed without a Covenant; for it required commanding and obeying, sending and going, asking and receiving, working and rewarding, all which import, and suppose superiority and inferiority, or

---

[36] Gillespie, *Ark of the Covenant*, 6-8.
[37] Gillespie, *Ark of the Covenant*, 20-23.

subordination, which could not be betwixt the Father and Son, who is equal with God, Phil. 2.6, unless that by Agreement, Compact, Consent and Covenant, the Son of God had humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death on the Cross, Phil.2.8."[38]

The latest text in this collection by Broun of Wamfrey, *Life of Justification* published in 1695, refutes various formulations of universal redemption. Among these formulations is the view that Christ died conditionally for any who would believe and Broun links all Arminians and Cameron in agreement that "Christ did not purchase faith for any: and that as to all (say some) or as to the most part (say others) Christ hath only procured a Possibility of Salvation."[39] Broun identifies as "semi-Arminians, the followers of Camero" and, in addition to universal redemption, notes "an Universal Predestination conditional; which expression *Amerald* used untill the Synods in *France* did disswade him therefrom."[40]

Affirming that the Scripture is "full & plaine, in holding forth a Covenant betwixt Jehova, and the Mediator, a transaction concerning man: or the purposes of God concerning the salvation of Man, in way of a mutual compact; both for our better understanding of that solide grounde of our Peace & Hope, & for the confirming of our staggering & weak faith," Broun directs his readers to Dickson's *Therapeutica Sacra* and Rutherford's work on the covenant for complete treatments of the doctrine.[41]

---

[38] Gillespie, *Ark of the Covenant*, 33-34.

[39] Broun, *Life of Justification,* 529.

[40] Broun, *Life of Justification*, 559, 561.

[41] Broun, *Life of Justification*, 529-531. "And though the full explication & confirmation hereof, would, I judge, fully undermine & destroy the rotten grounds of *Socinians* and *Arminians*, and of all, who are for the *Diana* of *Freewill*, and enemies to the Grace of God; yet I cannot digresse thereunto here; and shall only referre such, as would see the same confirmed, unto Mr. *Dicksons Therapeutica Sacra,* & Mr. Rutherfords book upon the *Covenant*. Taking it therefore for granted, till what is by these Worthies said anent it, be confuted; and finding that *Arminius* himself in his *Orat. De Sacerdotio Christi,* saith, there

5.2 Conclusion

While it cannot reasonably be alleged that Dickson is the source of the doctrine of the *pactum salutis* or sole pattern for the published expressions of the doctrine that appeared from the mid-seventeenth century in British literature, his influence is found in texts that are noticeably similar in terminology and content. Several authors do specifically acknowledge his teaching, quoting from or citing Dickson's commentaries and deferring to his texts as the standard to consult on the doctrine of the *pactum salutis*, or continue his practice of using this doctrine to refute various opinions of the work of redemption, most notably attributed to Arminians, Amyraut, and Socinians, that were deemed unorthodox. There are also several documents that follow Dickson in continuing the argument for recognizing the existence of the intratrinitarian covenant based on the language of Scripture that reveals, describes or presupposes this covenantal relationship between the Father and Son.

---

was a Covenant betwixt the Lord & Christ, I shall but shortly inferred therefrom, That it is repugnant to reason, to say, that the result of that Eternal Transaction: and the whole intended by it, was only to procure a meer Possiblity of Salvation."

CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSION

Is the federal theology of Dickson an example of departure from the Reformers and Scripture or development of doctrine? Can the criticisms of federal theology as resulting from poor exegesis stand? How did Dickson view Scripture and its relation to the formulation of doctrine? Regarding the relatively recent covenant/contract controversy, can the charges of definitions both careless and rooted in secular society, and excessive emphasis on legality that compromises the understanding of God's love and grace be validated? Is Dickson's formulation of the *pactum salutis* a speculative construct or is it, in the context of the methods and patterns of pre-critical exegesis, drawn from what is revealed in Scripture?

As this study has shown, Dickson's formulation of the *pactum salutis* did not come as an isolated phenomenon, but within the tradition of a theological community asserting that the source of the concept of divine covenants as well as the language indicating and describing them properly came from Scripture, either by direct statement or by good inference and within the context of a generation receptive to and intently involved in exploring the topic of divine covenants.[1] Ample evidence exists that the British theological community from the late sixteenth through the seventeenth century, in dialog with their continental counterparts, maintained the unity of the Old and New Testaments and, as consequences of the return *ad fontes* and exegesis, recognized the existence of divinely established covenants between God and humanity regarding

[1] Denying the novelty or want of sound exegetical basis for the idea of federal theology see Beardslee, von Rohr, Stoeffler, Kevan, Bierma, Kline, van Asselt, Badcock, van Vliet, Lee, Beach, Muller.

salvation. Efforts to grasp the significance of the deliberately covenantal language, including determination of the relationship of *berith* and *diatheke,* and the appropriate use of *foedus, pactum* and *testamentum,* were integral to the exegetical process and in establishing an adequate technical language and definitions, as were related issues of rightly understanding the whole work of redemption, the coequality of the members of the Trinity, the Son as mediator according to both natures, and his subordination to the Father.

Lee's general observation of the loss of technical precision found in Beza's treatment of divine covenants as a result of the shift to the vulgar languages from Latin and his noting this pattern in English language texts leads to his suggestion that the use of less precise terminology may have had a detrimental effect on federal theology. Dickson and his colleagues, who apparently wrote more extensively on the topic than Beza, did not rely on Latin terms to bear the weight of either the identification or significance of divine covenants. Their writings in English during the seventeenth century reflect both extended attention given in a variety of genres to the matter of divine covenants that resulted in the development of the doctrine and concentrated efforts to make knowledge of this doctrine equally accessible to those unschooled in Latin. These efforts included carefully structured arguments for the existence of the three divine covenants, fuller definitions of the covenants, placement of the covenants in the context of their relationship to one another, and discovery of practical benefits of the doctrine. Therefore, if it seems to Lee that a downfall of the doctrine of the *pactum salutis* occurred at some point, the use of English rather than Latin would not seem to be sufficient to account for that and other factors should be considered as more viable

contributors. The prolonged impact of the Enlightenment with the accompanying passion for self-determination and autonomy, the appeal of reason over revelation, and a lessening of appreciation for an authoritative text would suggest that no small amount of charm would be found in the offering of a more culturally palatable, inoffensive deity than the sovereign, personally involved, triune God proclaimed in federal theology.

Zaret has correctly identified widespread use of market economy's contract terminology among Puritan clerics to discuss relationships with God. McCoy and Baker have pointed out use of federal terminology by theological and political writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, noting that Bullinger and Rutherford were primarily religious leaders who dealt as well with the political implications of federal theology.[2] Certainly, the language of federal theology is both earthly and heavenly. Building on the common cultural understanding of covenant or contract as a reliable basis for human relationships, and allowing for additional factors when testament is meant, provided a ready analogy for teaching the concept of the even greater constancy of a divinely instituted and maintained covenant. However, it has been shown that the definitions of the era recognized that there are differences between human contracts and divinely established covenants. There was clearly an analogy between them, not an identity.

This language issue is not whether human language is applicable to God, but is part of the ongoing dialog of Christianity and culture, and faithfully preaching the gospel and engaging society. Luther was adamant about the conjunction of the realities of daily life and living in faith—writing in 1519 on marriage, and in the 1520s on the responsibilities of civil authority for maintaining schools, the permissibility of fleeing a

[2] McCoy and Baker, *Fountainhead of Federalism*, 12.

deadly plague, and insisting that life was to be lived in God's world, not cloistered.[3] H. Richard Niebuhr directed attention to this issue, considering what strategies could be employed for "Christians living with Christ in their cultures." Observing that many of Jesus' "most radical statements" pertain more to the awareness of God's rule in the life and events of this world than the coming kingdom, Niebuhr affirmed that Christians "are forever being challenged to abandon all things for the sake of God; and forever being sent back into the world to teach and practice all things that have been commanded them."[4] James M. Gustafson draws us into issues of practical morality, among those health care and medical research in the context of considering what it is that God is enabling and requiring us to be and do.[5] To live in the world and faithfully engage society requires the use of language that resonates in the streets as well as in the pews.

Despite scholarship generating the impression that the practice of equating covenant with contract reflects a confused or exegetically derelict theology, it is difficult to imagine that attempts well after the fact to remedy these perceived deficiencies by offering redefinitions of terms would have been welcomed or perceived as necessary by Dickson, or his colleagues, none of whom were offended by the connection. Careful reading of Dickson's works manifests continuation of the commitment to Scripture as divinely inspired, authoritative, and clearly having priority

---

[3]Martin Luther, "A Sermon on the Estate of Marriage," and "The Judgment of Martin Luther on Monastic Vows," trans. James Atkinson in *Luther's Works*, vol. 44, ed. James Atkinson (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 7-14, and 251-400; "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany That They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools," trans. Albert T. W. Steinhaeuser in *Luther's Works*, vol. 45, ed. Walther I. Brandt (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1962), 347-348; "Whether One May Flee from a Deadly Plague," trans. Carl J. Schindler in *Luther's Works*, vol. 43, ed. Gustav K. Wienke (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968), 117-138.

[4]H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951), 22, 29.

[5] James M. Gustafson, "Allocation of Biomedical Research Funding," *Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective*, vol. 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 253-277.

in the formulation of doctrine, whether expressed in statements of his exegetical method, the exegesis itself, his polemics, or matters of practical piety. Dickson gave no indication of being discomforted by either the terminology or concept of covenant or contract. He did not develop covenant and contract as separate categories, though some difference in the mechanics of the various covenants between *foedus/pactum*, covenant/bargain can be found in his writings.

This study has shown that among Dickson's predecessors the concept of an agreement between the Father and Son regarding the work of redemption in the context of the decree and counsel of the Godhead had been found in Scripture, testifying to the fact that intratrinitarian deliberation for this purpose was not in principle regarded as outlandish or dangerously innovative. Vos' caution should be remembered: in tracing the development of doctrine one should be careful not to attach undo importance to a name, or conclude prematurely that the lack of a later formulation demonstrates absence of the doctrine. "Stock phrases usually do not appear at the beginning, but only at the end of a development."[6]

Within British circles prior to 1638 there had been recognition of distinct deliberations of God in terms of covenanting in the language of Scripture, and this action had been spoken of as a covenant, sometimes considered as part of the covenant of grace. Further contemplating the consequences of these divine deliberations, theologians, in concert, began to recognize the elements of what would become the doctrine of the *pactum salutis*. However, even with the theological community's exegetical efforts and the sustained focus on the significance of the voluntary element of the Son's particular work in redemption, the ramifications of this contractual

[6] Vos, *Redemptive History*, 248.

relationship and its distinct formulation as a separate covenant expressing the will and works of the Trinity *ad intra* and foundational to the works *ad extra* are not readily apparent before Dickson's address to the General Assembly of the Scottish kirk in 1638.

In this speech Dickson's formulation of the *pactum salutis* appears as the earliest clear, most concise statement of the doctrine that became accepted as orthodoxy, with the promise of a written version of the doctrine to follow. Drawing together the components of the *pactum salutis* that might also have been found elsewhere in fragmented fashions in the literature or heard in sermons, his arguments for the *pactum salutis* contain both the specifics of the definition and its exegetical foundation in Scripture. Here also are clear statements of why the church must know of this doctrine and some demonstration of the doctrine's practical value.

Dickson identified the covenant of redemption as sufficiently confirmed by two biblical passages, Isaiah 52-53 and John 6, and pointed out that the covenant of redemption made before time was not the same as the covenant God made with the elect through the mediator Christ, and preceded the latter covenant of grace and salvation. Contra the sovereignty of human free will in conjunction with a conditional decree suggesting indecision on God's part, only the possibility of salvation, and an uncertain future, Dickson affirmed that the covenant manifests God's sovereignty and power regarding both election and God's effectual working of salvation, and declared its value as a refuge for the soul against all Arminian doubts.

In the covenant of redemption all the particulars of redemption, including the price of redemption to be paid by the redeemer, the length of the redeemer's captivity to death, special election, the gifts and graces purchased for the elect and the time and

means of bestowing those gifts had all been determined and agreed upon between the first and second persons of the Trinity. The mediator had been assured of success and all power in heaven and earth given him to bring the undertaking to conclusion, from persuading and converting all those given to him by God, to leading them through temptations, fears and failings, and finally bringing them to peace.

Charges as to the dubious nature of the *pactum salutis*,[7] its inappropriate mercantile, contractual language[8] or an overemphasis on the legal that elevates law over gospel[9] brought by later theologians seem overwrought, as though these vocabularies were generated by and the exclusive terminologies of federal theology, instead of part of its vocabulary. In some cases accompanying these charges are statements by the critics indicating their offense of the doctrine of limited atonement. Dickson consistently rejected the doctrine of universal redemption and would not have empathized with the critics' discomfort. He frequently asserted that Scripture does not teach in either Old or New Testaments that the love of God includes all lost humanity in a doctrine of universal atonement, but instead, teaches a special redeeming love of God limited to the elect.

For Dickson in both the Old and New Testaments, from the Hebrew *berith* to the Greek *diatheke*, with the significances of *foedus*, *pactum* and *testamentum*, ἔγγυος, *sponsor*, and *sponsio, μεσιτης, mediator*, *redeemer*, and *redemption*, the covenantal/contractual language is evident, revealed not concocted. Had the language of Scripture not been the basis of his doctrine of the *pactum salutis*, he might have had

---

[7] See Rolston, Robertson, Beckwith, Strehle, Jinkins, and Klempa.

[8] Among others: Morris, M'Crie, Dillistone, Brown, T. F. Torrance, Knappen, Bell, J. B. Torrance, Jinkins, Klempa, and Wong.

[9] See Weir, Holsteen.

reason to be concerned about the image contractual terminology conveyed. While not giving indication of any personal anxiety arising from fear that the employment of language having an equally secular context would result in a misconception of God's grace and its relationship to humanity, Dickson may have provided methodical treatment of the subject to allay such fears and limit the likelihood of misunderstanding such a vital concept.

Missing in the midst of the critics' distress over the language of the covenant and mutual contract is recognition of other sets of imagery inextricably connected to federal theology. The Son in his threefold office is: prophet, to reveal all saving knowledge to his people and persuade them to believe; priest, offering himself a sacrifice and interceding continually with the Father; and king, "to subdue them to himself, feed and rule them by his own appointed Ordinances, and to defend them from their enemies."[10] Furthermore, the language used by Dickson does not work the way his critics claim. The charge of a cold, mercantile contract with the impression of the members of the Trinity haggling over the terms of this covenanted endeavor for the salvation of the elect as though there were differences to be ironed out cannot be reconciled with Dickson's teaching. God is not portrayed as a stern lawgiver who only relates to creation through the medium of legal covenants or contracts and must be mollified by Christ the Mediator. For Dickson the price of redemption shows the largeness of God's mercy and the severity of divine justice, revealing "how greatly the Lord hateth sin; how great His love is to the world in sending his Son Christ amongst us . . . how great the dignity and excellency of our Lord the Redeemer is."[11]

---

[10] Dickson, *Summe of Saving Knowledge*, 16r.
[11] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, 1.4.55.

Nor is it likely that Dickson would have found any coherence to the argument that the federal theology he taught presented a meager love of God where legality is contrived, dominates, overwhelms, pushes aside, or upstages grace. His understanding of the work of redemption does entail a strong legal sense that is both embedded in Scripture and found running strongly and clearly through tradition. A covenantal relationship is legal by nature. The divine covenants define how humanity stands in relation to its Creator, express the constancy of those relations, contain directives as to what is due to God and to others, and reveal the whole work of redemption as undertaken with certainty, to be brought to conclusion by the power of the triune God.

Dickson attributed the covenantal dealings of God with his reasonable creatures to God's good pleasure. God freely obliges himself to humanity in the manner most suited both to his own glory and human felicity and "no violence is used upon the will of man, whether them that perish, or of them that are saved."[12] Dickson also refused to view the covenant of works as an unwanted step-child. In presenting the covenant of works as a real help for Adam to keep the law and a prop to help him stand firm, he extended the sense of the gracious nature of the covenant of works and how suited it was to Adam in his state of innocency.

The covenant of grace is both unilateral and bilateral, without confusion. The duties of the redeemed are neither conditions nor installment payments to stay on God's good side. Also, Dickson's federal theology manifests continuation of the dialog regarding the roles of law and gospel, upholding the tradition of the law of God as the continuing rule of righteousness, reiterating its uses in revealing sin and confronting sinners, while rejecting human efforts to keep the law as the means of achieving

[12] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.7.144.

righteousness. Imputed righteousness and the gift of infused faith are affirmed without qualification.

Similarly, criticisms portraying the covenant between the Father and Son as doubtful[13] and limited to an agreement between the first two members of the Trinity or tritheistic can not be sustained. Dickson's teachings on the unity and distinctions of the Trinity and the works *ad intra* and *ad extra* are within the bounds of orthodoxy. He anchored the work of redemption in the triune God, excluding no member, ensuring its constancy, and guarding it against intrusions of human pride that would attempt to encroach upon the glory of God. Perhaps even more significantly, although the voluntary participation and distinct responsibilities of the Godhead had been part of Reformed doctrine, the doctrine as formulated by Dickson also identified the implications of the Son as mediator according to both natures as matters of divine coequality. He made it clear that in the intratrinitarian covenantal relationship the radical equality of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and the voluntary nature of the work of redemption that might appear to be called into question by a decree of redemption are upheld with regard to all persons of the Trinity, *ad intra* and *ad extra*. Dickson found in the Son's willing submission to the service of the decree, the decree became a true covenant of redemption.

The contexts in which Dickson's treatments of divine covenants were regularly located indicate his regard for the practical value of the knowledge of divine covenants. His exhortations to his students to learn well were not directed toward academic jousting, but practical piety, so that in their preaching and teaching they might use the knowledge to instruct the church in right doctrine and refute the erroneous, offer

[13] See Rolston, Strehle, Jinkins.

comfort and assurance, heal sin-diseased consciences, and recognize the contributions of false doctrines to spiritual illnesses. Locating his most extensive treatment of federal theology in the comprehensive treatise on healing sick consciences bears witness to Dickson's higher regard for the practical benefits of this doctrine in service to the gospel than either its polemic or strictly academic value, and his conviction that the remedy for every sickness of conscience "must be grounded on the doctrine of salvation set down in Scripture; which doctrine must first, be known and believed by the party diseased, before he can receive benefit thereby."[14]

Whatever reasons one might have to quibble with the legal language and theology of Reformed federal theology in general and the formulation and significance of the intratrinitarian covenant by Dickson in particular, to contend that the theology is overly speculative with a fixation on the legal aspects that results in a diminished regard for the role the love of God plays in the whole scheme of redemption is to miss a crucial point. Perhaps the most succinct phrasing of the significance of the covenant of redemption has been provided by Dickson's friend Rutherford. "It is not an act of Law, nor of Justice, to give, or find out a satisfier, but an act of love, grace and infinite wisdom."[15]

Dickson's contributions to the establishment of the doctrine of the *pactum salutis* are significant and numerous, placing him prominently in the trajectory of the development of federal theology. By the end of the seventeenth century the intratrinitarian covenant seems to have been widely distributed and well received with Dickson's terminology, *the covenant of redemption*, an accepted, though not standard,

---

[14] Dickson, *Therapeutica Sacra*, I.8.150.
[15] Rutherford, *Covenant of Life*, II.v.286.

term among British Puritans. His work demonstrates the doctrine's biblical basis and emergence through exegetical efforts, its practical value to the proclamation of the gospel, its capacity to comfort the elect and strengthen faith, and its use in refuting doctrines that persist in extolling human sovereignty over God's. The body of Dickson's teaching on the covenant of redemption continues to proclaim the whole work of salvation and the imputed righteousness of Christ as *sola gratia, sola fide, soli Deo gloria.*

APPENDIX 1

Dickson's six Proofs from Scripture of the Covenant of Redemption given in *Therapeutica Sacra* I.4

1. Five expressions: redemption, Ephesians 1:7; inheritance, Ephesians 1:4; God as disponer and redeemer agree, Acts 20:28; the price of redemption, 1 Corinthians 6:20 and 1 Peter 1:18-20; payment of blood and sealing of the bargain, Matthew 26:28.

2. Titles given Christ: Mediator, 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Redeemer, Job 17:24; Surety, Hebrews 7:22; Reconciliation, Romans 5:11; Propitiation, 1 John 2:2.

3. The eternal decree of God fixed from eternity: Acts 15:18; Ephesians 1:9; Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23; Psalm 2:7 and John 1:14; John 1:2-3; Proverbs 8:22; 2 Timothy 1.9; Ephesians 1:3-5 and 1 Peter 1:18-20.

4. Levitical priesthood providing testimonies of a covenant of redemption: Psalm 84:11 and 73:24.

5. Ratification by the incarnate Christ of those things spoken of himself in the Old Testament and repeated or renewed in the New: Luke 2:49; Matthew 3:13-17; John 5:21, 36, 37, 39; John 8:26; John 10:15, 17, 18; Luke 24:25.

6. Articles of the covenant of redemption with four given as illustration: 1) the persons redeemed: Romans 8:29-30, 33-35; Ephesians 1:7-9; Matthew 1:21, 7:23, 11:25, 26:29; John 3:16, 10:15-16, 26, 17:9; Revelation 5:9; 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9; Isaiah 53; 2 Corinthians 5:15; Hebrews 10:14; Acts 20:28; Titus 2:14; Psalm 147:19, 20. 2) the price of redemption: 1 Peter 1:18; Psalm 49:8; Romans 5:19; Hebrews 10:5-7, 10 regarding Psalm 40; Luke 24:26; John 10:18. 3) the benefits, gifts (naming regeneration, saving faith, perseverance) and graces to be given the redeemed. Five passages are offered as proof of the gifts: Isaiah 52:13 to the end of 53; Isaiah 59:20-21; John 3:37-45; John 10:14; Psalm 40 clarified by Hebrews 10:5-7. 4) the means and ways the gifts and benefits may be "wisely, orderly and effectually" applied to the redeemed: Isaiah 52:13; Acts 17:30; 1 John 3:23; Genesis 18:19; Matthew 28:19-20; John 5:17, 6:38, 8:16, 29, 12:49-50; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 1:8.

Additionally, Dickson argued that five passages from the Old and New Testaments demonstrate the matter of the *pactum salutis* and allow for the refutation of universal redemption, election on the basis of foreseen faith or works, and the affirmation of saving grace, conversion and sanctification infallibly and invincibly coming to pass: Isaiah 52:13 to the end of 53; Isaiah 59:20-21; John 6:37-45; John 10:14-30 with Psalm 23; Psalm 40 clarified by Hebrews 10:5-7, 12-14.

APPENDIX 2
THESES

1. David Dickson's treatment of the *pactum salutis* in the context of the prudent use of divine covenants by pastors for the application of saving doctrine mitigates against views that this doctrine is speculative and regarded more highly for its polemic value.
2. Dickson's campaign to produce concise rather than prolix commentaries attests to both his understanding of Scripture as the plain word of God and the value of commentaries to aid, not obscure the reading of Scripture. (This is in stark contrast to William Attersoll's 1612 commentary on Philemon that included seven pages of explanation to the reader, four pages "of briefe recapitulation of all the doctrines handled at large" in the 506 pages of commentary, and six pages of a table of principal contents of the text.)
3. To teach love as the primary attribute of God is to present a caricature of God and divert humanity from the reality of sin.
4. The covenant of works is not the law: it is fulfilling the law.
5. Use of the syllogism in theological documents should not be considered as the signal of esoteric musings. Syllogisms may well serve to clarify theological issues with practical directness.
6. Support for charging second-century rhetorician Tatian with heresy does not come from his extant writings, but primarily from Irenaeus' censorious pronouncements of Tatian's doctrine and misclassification of *Address to the Greeks* as a flawed apology.
7. Philip Melanchthon's (1497-1560) view of the Ten Commandments as a summary of the moral laws that give commands concerning the right worship of and obedience to God, purity of life, and good works toward our neighbors, and as the eternal rule of God, is in keeping with church tradition.
8. Katharina Schütz Zell (1497/98-1562) exemplifies the Reformation's sense of the priesthood of believers as more than an abstraction by boldly and publicly confronting significant issues in the church.

9. Making theology available in vernacular languages rather than Latin encouraged avid participation in discussion of theological matters by the laity. Examples of this enthusiastic response are discussions of the soul found in the philosophical writings of Margaret Cavendish (1623-1673).
10. Søren Kierkegaard identified as one of the possibilities for offense of the human experience the distinction between the divine and human, demonstrated by God defining the conditions under which humans can come close to God. Knowledge of the *pactum salutis* does not diminish this cause of offense, but contributes to the sense of outraged despair by allowing no possibility for the self-congratulations of human pride with regard to the work of redemption from either the use of free will or foreseen faith and works, or of failure because of human mutability.
11. J. I. Packer argues that theologians are "called to be the church's water and sewage officers" with their job "to see that God's pure truth flows abundantly to where it is needed, and to filter out any intrusive pollution that might damage health." Theologians better serve the church in this undertaking by employing language that operates as a clear channel rather than a Rube Goldberg machine.
12. Consideration of the role of women in the church is more appropriate to discussions of obedience than equal rights or abilities.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Works of David Dickson Consulted

Dickson, David. *A short explanation, of the epistles of Pavl to the Hebrewes.* Aberdeen: Edw. Raban, 1635.

_____. Speech before the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, Session 11, December 3, 1638. In *Records of the kirk of Scotland, containing the acts and proceedings of the general assemblies, from the year 1638 downwards, as authenticated by the clerks of assembly; with notes and historical illustrations by Alexander Peterkin.* Vol. 1. Edinburgh: John Sutherland, 1838.

_____. *Expositio analytica omnium apostolicarvm epistolarvm: seu, brevis introductio ad pleniores commentarios, in vsum studiosorum theologiae: opera Davidis Dicsoni, in Academia Glasguensi theologiae professoris.* Glasgow: Georgius Andersonus, 1645.

_____. *A brief exposition of the evangel of Jesus Christ according to Matthew.* Glasgow: George Anderson, 1647.

_____. *A brief explication of the other fifty psalmes, from ps. 50 to ps. 100.* London, 1653.

_____. *A brief explication of the first fifty psalms.* London, 1655.

_____. *A brief explication upon the last fifty psalms.* London, 1655.

_____. *Therapeutica sacra, seu, de curandis casibus conscientiae circa regenerationem, per foederum divinorum prudentem applicationem. Libri tres.* London, 1656.

_____. *An exposition of all st. Pauls epistles, together with an explanation of those other epistles of the apostles; st. James, Peter, John & Jude: wherein the sense of every chapter and verse is analytically unfolded, and the text enlightened.* London: R. I., 1659.

_____. *Therapeutica sacra; shewing briefly the method of healing the diseases of the conscience, concerning regeneration: written first in Latine by David Dickson, professor of divinity in the colledge of Edinburgh, and thereafter translated by him.* Edinburgh: Evan Taylor, 1664.

_____. *The summe of saving knowledge: with the practical use thereof.* Edinburgh: George Swintoun and Thomas Brown, 1671.

_____. *Truths victory over error. Or, an abridgement of the chief controversies in religion, which since the apostles days to this time, have been, and are in agitation, between those of the orthodox faith, and all adversaries whatsoever; a list of whose names are set down after the epistle to the reader. Wherein, by going through all the chapters of the confession of faith, one by one, and propounding out of them, by way of question all the controverted assertions, and answering by yes, or no, there is a clear confirmation of the truth, and an evident confutation of what tenets and opinions, are maintain'd by the adversaries. A treatise. Most useful for all persons, who desire to be instructed in the true protestant religion, who would shun in these last days, and perillous times, the infection of errors and heresies, and all dangerous tenets and opinions, contrary to the word of God.* Edinburgh: John Reid, 1684.

_____. *Select practical writings of David Dickson.* Vol 1. Edinburgh, 1845.

Dickson, David and George Hutchenson. Introduction to *A brief exposition of the epistles of Paul to the Philippians and Colossians,* by James Fergusson. Edinburgh, 1656.

Other Primary Sources

Ames, William. *Medvlla s.s. theologiae, ex sacris literis, earumque interpretibus, extracta, & methodice disposita per Gvilielmvm Amesivm.* London, 1630.

_____. *The marrow of sacred divinity, drawne ovt of the holy Scriptures, and the interpreters thereof, and brought into method.* London: Published by order from the Honorable House of Commons, n.d.

Amyraut, Moises. *Brief traitte de la predestination et de ses principales dependances.* Saumur: Iean Lesnier, & Isaac Desbordes, 1634.

_____. *Theses theologicae de tribus foederibus divinis.* Theses Salmurienses. 4 vols. Geneva, 1665.

Arminii, Jacobi. *Opera theologica.* Frankfurt: Wolfgangum Hoffmannum, 1635.

_____. *The Works of Arminius.* London edition. Translated by James Nichols and William Nichols. 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996.

Arrowsmith, John. *Armilla catechetica. A chain of principles; or, an orderly concatenation of theological aphorismes and excercitations; wherein, the chief*

heads of christian religion are asserced and improved: By John Arrowsmith, D.D. Cambridge: John Field, 1659.

Attersoll, William. *A commentarie vpon the epistle of saint Pavle to Philemon. Wherein, the apostle handling a meane and low subject, intreating for a fraudulent and fugitiue seruant, mounteth aloft vnto God, and deliuereth sundry high misteries of true religion, and the practice of duties oeconomicall, politicall, ecclesiasticall. As of persecution for righteousnesse sake. Of Christian equity, and moderation. Of Gods free grace forgiuing offenses. Of household gouernment, and priuate possessions. Of the conuersion of sinners, and communion of saints. Of faith, and good workes. Of friendship, and suretiship. Of prayer, and hospitality. Of the gospell, and almes-deedes. Of Gods prouidence. And of the force and fruit of the ministry.* London, 1612.

_____. *The nevv covenant, or a treatise of the sacraments. Whereby the last testament of our lord and sauiour Jesus Christ, through the shedding of his pure and precious blood, is ratified and applyed unto the conscience of euery true beleeuer. Diuided into three bookes 1. Of the sacraments in generall. 2. Of baptisme. 3. Of the Lords Supper. Verie necesssarie and profitable for these times: wherein we may behold the truth it selfe plainly prooued, the doctrine of the reformed churches clearely maintained, the errors of the church of Rome soundly conuinced, the right manner of the receiuing of the comfortably declared and sundry doubts and difficult questions decided,* 2nd ed. London, 1614.

Baillie, Robert. *The letters and journals of Robert Baillie, a. m. principal of the University of Glasgow.* Edited from the author's manuscripts, by David Laing, Esq. 3 vols. Edinburgh, 1841.

Ball, John. *A treatise of the covenant of grace: wherein the graduall breakings out of gospel-grace from Adam to Christ are clearly discovered, the differences betwixt the old and new testament are laid open, divers errours of Arminians and others are confuted; the nature of uprightnesse, and the way of Christ in bringing the soul into communion with himself: together with many other points, both doctrinally and practically profitable, are solidly handled.* London: Simeon Ash, 1645.

Baret, John. *An alvearie, or quadruple dictionarie, containing foure sundrie tongues: namelie, English, Latine, Greeke, and French. Newlie enriched with a varietie of wordes, phrases, prouerbs, and diuers lightsome obseruations of grammar. By the tables you may contrairwise finde out the most necessarie wordes placed after the alphabet, whatsoeuer are to be found in anie other dictionarie: which tables also serue for lexicons, to lead the learner vnto the English of such hard wordes as are often read in authors, being faithfullie examined, are truelie numbered. Verie profitable for such as be desirous of anie of those languages.* London, 1580.

Barlow, John. *An exposition of the first and second chapters of the latter episte of the apostle Paul to Timothie: Wherein the text is logically resolved: the words also plainly explicated; with an easie metaphrase annexed: thence doctrines arising are deduced: and by Scripture, examples, and reason confirmed. All which, for the better understanding, affecting, and retaining of the truth, be with familiar similitudes accompanied. Finally, as the matter would afford definitions, distributions, subdivisions, trials, motives, and directions, which be of speciall use, in their proper order are added.* London, 1632.

Bayne, Paul. *A commentarie vpon the first and second chapters of saint Paul to the Colossians. Wherein, the text is cleerely opened, observations thence perspicuously deducted, vses and applications succinctly and briefely inferred; sundry holy and spirituall meditations out of his more ample discourse extracted. Together with divers places of Scripture briefly explained.* London, 1635.

Blake, Thomas. *Vindiciae foederis: or, a treatise of the covenant of God entered with man-kinde, in the several kindes and degrees of it, in which the agreement and respective differences of the covenant of works and the covenant of grace, of the old and new covenant are discust. The conditions of the covenant of grace on mans part, are assigned and asserted. The just latitude and extent clearly held forth, and fully vindicated. Several corollaries containing many heads of divinity, now controverted, and practical points singularly useful, inferred. In particular the necessity of a constant settled ministry (to bring men into covenant, and to bring them up to the termes of it,) and of schooles, and nurseries of learning, and an orderly call in tendency to it. Infant baptisme in that latitude, as now in use in reformed churches maintained*, 2nd ed. London, 1658.

Bolton, Samuel. *The true bounds of christian freedome: or, a treatise wherein the rights of the law are vindicated, the liberties of grace maintained, and the severall late opinions against the law are examined and confuted. Whereunto is annexed a discourse of the learned Iohn Camerons, touching the threefold covenant of God with man, faithfully translated, by Samuel Bolton, minister of the word of God at Saviours-Southwark.* London, 1645.

Bridge, William. *Christ and the covenant the work and way of meditation. Gods return to the soul, or nation; together with his preventing mercy. Delivered in ten sermons, (viz.) 1. Christs personal excellencies, the object of our love. 2. Christ crucified, the object of our faith. 3. The new covenant of grace opened. 4. Christ the mediator of the new covenant. 5. The way and spirit of the new covenant, or new testament. 6. The blood of sprinkling. 7. The sweetness and profitableness of divine meditation. 8. The work and way of this meditation. 9. Gods return to the soul and nation. 10. Preventing mercy.* London, 1667.

Brinsley, John. *Two treatises: the one, handling the doctrine of Christ's mediatorship: wherein the great gospel-mystery of reconciliation betwixt God and man is opened, vindicated and applied. The other, of mystical implantation: wherein the Christian's union and communion with, and conformity to Jesus Christ, both in his death and resurrection, is opened and applied.* London, 1651.

Brooks, Thomas. *Paradice opened, or the secreets, mysteries, and rarities of divine love, of infinite wisdom, and of wonderful counsel, laid open to publick view. Also, the covenant of grace, and the high and glorious transactions of the Father and the Son in the covenant of redemption opened, and improved at large, with the resolution of divers important questions and cases concerning both covenants. You have further, several singular pleas, that all sincere Christians may safely and groundedly make to those ten scriptures in the Old and New Testament, that speak of the general judgment, and of that particular judgment, that must certainly pass upon them all after death. With some other points of high importance, that tend to the peace, comfort, settlement and satisfaction of all serious sincere Christians. To which is added a sober and serious discourse, about the favorable, signal and eminent presence of the Lord with his people in their greatest troubles, deepest distresses, and most deadly dangers. Being the second and last part of the golden key.* London, 1675.

Broun, John. *The life of justification opened. Or, a treatise grounded upon Gal. 2.11. Wherein the orthodox doctrine of justification by faith, & imputation of Christ's righteousness, is clearly expounded, solidly confirmed, & learnedly vindicated from the various objections of its adversaries. Whereunto are subjoined some arguments against universal redemption.* N.p., 1695.

Bucanus, William. *Institvtions of christian religion, framed out of Gods word, and the writings of the best diuines, methodically handled by questions and answers, fit for all such as desire to know, or practise the will of God.* Written in Latin by William Bvcanvs professor of divuinitie in the Vniuersitie of Lavsanna. And published in English by Robert Hall, Bachelor in Diuinitie, and fellow of Saint Iohns Colledge in Cambridge, for the benefit of our English nation, to which is added in the end the practise of Papists against protestant princes. London, 1606.

Bulkeley, Peter. *The gospel-covenant; or the covenant of grace opened. Wherein are explained; 1. The differences betwixt the covenant of grace and the covenant of workes. 2. The different administration of the covenant before and since Christ. 3. The benefits and blessings of it. 4. The condition. 5. The properties of it.* London, 1646.

Burgess, Anthony. *Vindiciae legis: or, a vindication of the morall law and the covenants, from the errours of Papists, Arminians, Socinians, and more especially, Antinomians.* London, 1646.

Byfield, Nicholas. *An exposition vpon the epistle to the Colossians. Wherein, not onely the text is methodically analysed, and the sense of the words, by the help of vvriters both ancient and moderne, is explayned: but also, by doctrine and vse, the intent of the Holy Ghost is in euery place more fully vnfolded and vrged. And besides, the very marrow of most common-places is aptly diffused throughout the body of this exposition, as the nature of this kinde of teaching would beare. And further, many chiefe cases of conscience are hereresolved. All with conuenient varietie and breuitie.* London, 1615

_____. *The patterne of wholesome words. Or a collection of such truths as are of necessity to be belieued unto saluation, separated out of the body of all theologie, made euident by infallible and plaine proofes of Scripture. And withall, the seuerall vses such principles should be put to, are abundantly shewed.* London, 1618.

Calamy, Edmund. *Two solemne covenants made between God and man: viz. the covenant of workes, and the covenant of grace. Clearly laid open, distinguished, and vindicated from many dangerous opinions; the right knowledge of which will be profitable to all those that have escaped the first, and are confirmed in the second at the sacrament.* London, 1646.

Calvin, John. *Commentarius in epistolam Pauli ad Romanos*, 3rd ed. Edited by T. H. L. Parker. Leiden: Brill, 1981.

_____. *A commentarie vpon the epistle of saint Paul to the Romanes, written in Latine by M. Iohn Caluin, and newely translated into Englishe by Christopher Rosdell, preacher.* London, 1583.

_____. *Institutio christianae religionis, in libros quatuor, nunc primum digesta, certisque distincta capitibus, ad aptissimam methodum: aucta etiam tam magna accessione ut propemodum opus novum haberi possit.* Geneva, 1559. In *Joannis Calvini Opera Selecta.* Edited by Petrus Barth and Guilelmus Niesel. Vol. 3. Munich: C. Kaiser, 1928.

Cameron, John. *Certain theses, or propositions of the learned Iohn Camerons, concerning the three-fold covenant of God with man.* Translated by Samuel Bolton and annexed to *The true bounds of Christian freedome: or a treatise wherein the rights of the law are vindicated, the liberties of grace maintained, and the severall late opinions against the law are examined and confuted,* 353-401. London, 1645.

Canones Synodi Dortdrechtanae. In *The Creeds of Christendom.* Vol. 3, *The Evangelical Protestant Creeds* with translations. Edited by Philip Schaff, 550-597. Harper and Row, 1931. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1998.

Cartwright, Thomas. *Christian religion: substantially, methodically, plainlie, and profitable treated.* London, 1611.

_____. *A commentary vpon the epistle of saint Paule written to the Colossians. Preached by Thomas Cartwright, and now published for the further use of the church of God.* London, 1612.

_____. *A treatise of christian religion. Or, the whole bodie and substance of divinitie.* London, 1616.

Cawdry, Robert. A *table alphabeticall, contayning and teaching the true writing and vnderstanding of hard vsuall English wordes, borrowed from the Hebrew, Greeke, Latine, or French, &c. With the interpretation thereof by plaine English words, gathered for the benefit and help of all vnskilled persons. Whereby they may the more easily and better vnderstand many hard English words, which they shall heare or read in Scriptures, sermons, or elsevvhere, and also be made able to vse the same aptly themselues.* London, 1609.

Chemnitz, Martin. *The "loci theologici" of the reverend and most brilliant man of God, Martin Chemnitz, doctor of sacred theology and one-time most faithful superintendent of the church of Brunswick, in which the "loci communes" of Dr. Philip Melanchthon are clearly explained for the church and properly set forth as the complete body of christian doctrine.* Edited in the name of his heirs, by the labor and effort of Dr. Polycarp Leyser, his successor. Frankfort am Main, 1594. Translated by J. A. O. Preus. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1987.

Cocceius, Johannes. *Summa doctrinae de foedere et testamento Dei.* Amsterdam, 1648.

The confession of faith, together with the larger and lesser catechismes. Composed by the reverend assembly of divines, sitting at Westminster, presented to both Houses of Parliament, 4th ed. London, 1658. Reprint, Glasgow, 1675.

A copie of the covenant, both as it was first formed at Edenburgh by the Generall Assembly and Convention of Estates of Scotland, with the concurrence and advice of the commissioners sent thitherout of England, and as it was after reformed by the lords and commons of Parliament at Westminster. Together with his majesties proclamation prohibiting the taking of it. N.p., 1644.

Cotton, John. *The covenant of Gods free grace, most sweetly unfolded, and comfortably applied to a disquieted soul, from that text of 2 Sam. 23. Ver.5. Also a doctrinall conclusion, that there is in all such who are effectually called, in-dwelling spirituall gifs and graces, wrought and created in them by the Holy Ghost.* London, 1645.

Cowper, William. *Three heavenly treatises, concerning Christ: 1 His genealogie. 2 His baptisme. 3 His combat with Sathan. Together vvith deuout meditations, for christian consolation and instruction.* London, 1612.

_____. *Heaven opened: vvherein the counsaile of God, concerning mans saluation, is yet more cleerely manifested; so that they that haue eyes may come and see the Christian possessed and crowned in the heauenly kingdome.* First, written, and now newly amended and enlarged, by Mr. William Cowper. London, 1619.

_____. *The workes of Mr. Willia[m] late bishop of Calloway: now newly collected into one volume. Whereunto is added a commentary on the reuelation neuer before published. Also an alphabeticall table for the finding out the principall heads contained in eury booke.* London, 1623.

Craig, John. *A short svm of the whole catechisme, wherein the question is propovnded and answered in fewe words, for the greater ease of the common people and children.* London, 1581.

Crispe, Tobias. *Christ alone exalted in fourteene sermons preached in, and neare London, by the late reverend Tobias Crispe doctor of divinity, and faithfull pastor of Brinkworth in Wiltshire.* London, 1643.

Downame, George. *The covenant of grace or an exposition vpon Luke 1.73.74.75.* Dublin, 1631.

Downame, John. *The christian warfare. Wherein is first generally shewed the malice, power, and politike stratagems of the spirituall enemies of our saluation, Sathan and his assistants the world and the flesh; with the meanes also whereby the Christian may vvithstand them and defeate them. And afterwards more speciallie their particvlar temptations, against the seuerall causes and meanes of our saluation, whereby on the one side they allure vs to security and presumption, and on the other side, draw vs to doubting and desperation, are expressed and answered. Written especially for their sakes who are exercised in the spirituall conflict of temptations, and are afflicted in conscience in the fight and sense of sinnes.* London, 1604.

_____. *The summe of sacred diuinitie. First briefly & methodically propounded: and then more largly & cleerely handled and explaned.* London, 1620.

Dunbar, David. *The theological key of the three first covenants, made by God with man, in the severall state of man; obliging man to his law, after a severall formall manner, from the beginning, according to his sacred decree of predestination, fundamentally declared, according to his sacred word and truth.* London, 1646.

Ecumenical Creeds and Reformed Confessions. Grand Rapids: CRC Publications, 1988.

Elton, Edward. *An exposition of the epistle of saint Pavl to the Colossians, delivered in sundry sermons, preached by Edward Elton, minister of Gods word at St. Magdalens Bermondsey, neere London: and now by him published, intending the further good of his charge, and the profit of as many as shall please to reade it.* The second edition, reuised and corrected by the author. London, 1620.

Fenner, Dudley. *The artes of logike and rethorike, plainlie set foorth in the English tounge, easie to be learned and practised: togither vvith examples for the practise of the same for methode, in the gouernement of the familie, prescribed in the word of God; and for the whole in the resolution or opening of certayne partes of Scripture, according to the same.* N.p., 1584.

_____. *Sacra theologia, sive veritas quae est secundum pietatem, ad unicae & verae methodi leges descripta, & in decem libros per Dudleium Fennerum digesta.* London, 1585; Geneva, 1585.

_____. *The groundes of religion set down in questions and answers.* Middleburgh, 1587.

Fergusson, James. *A brief exposition of the epistles of Paul to the Philippians and Colossians.* Edinburgh, 1656.

_____. *A brief exposition of the epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians.* London, 1659.

Finch, Henry. *The sacred doctrine of divinitie, gathered out of the word of God, and comprehended in two volumes. Whereof this first volvme, containeth a description of all that holy doctrine according to the rules of art: with a treatise concerning the olde testament, or the promise. The second is to containe a larger explication of the former doctrines: with a discouerie of the most principall heresies and errours contrary thereunto.* London, 1613.

Fisher, Edward. *The marrow of modern divinity: touching both the covenant of works, and the covenant of grace: with their use and end, both in the time of the Old Testament, and in the time of the New. Wherein every one may clearly see how far forth he bringeth the law into the case of justification, and so deserveth the name of legalist; And how far forth he rejected the law in the case of sanctification, and so deserveth the name of antinomist. With the middle path betwixt them both, which by Jesus Christ leadeth to eternall life.* London, 1645.

Fletcher, Phineas. *Joy in tribulation. Or, consolations for afflicted spirits.* London, 1632.

Forbes, John. *A treatise tending to cleare the doctrine of justification.* Middleburgh, 1616.

Formula consensus ecclesiarum helveticarum reformatarum, circa doctrinam de gratia universali et connexa, aliaque nonnulla capita, 1675. In *Collectio confessionum in ecclesiis reformatis publicatarum,* ed. Hermann A Niemeyer, 729-739. Leipzig: Iulii Klinkhardti, 1840.

Fotherby, John. *The couenant betweene God and man, plainly declared in laying open the first and smallest pointes of christian religion.* London, 1596.

Gillespie, Patrick. *The ark of the covenant opened: or, a treatise of the covenant of redemption between God and Christ, as the foundation of the covenant of grace. The second part. Wherein is proved, that there is such a covenant. The necessity of it. The nature, properties, parties thereof. The tenor, articles, subject-matter of redemption. The commands, conditions, and promises annexed. The harmony of the covenant of suretiship made with Christ, and the covenant of reconciliation made with sinners: wherein they agree, wherein they differ. Grounds of comfort from the covenant of suretiship.* London, 1677.

Goodwin, Thomas. *Christ set forth in his death, resurrection, ascension, sitting at Gods right hand, intercession, as the cause of iustification. As the object of justifying faith. Upon Rom. 8. ver. 43. Together with a treatise discovering the affectionate tendernesse of Christs heart now in heaven, unto sinners on earth.* London, 1642.

Harris, Robert. *The Workes of Robert Harris, bachelor in divinity and pastor of Hanwell, in Oxford-Shire.* Revised, and in sundrie places corrected, and now collected into one volume. With an addition of two sermons, not formerly extant. And also two tables; the one of the texts and doctrines, the other alphabeticall, of the principall matters contained in the booke. London, 1635.

Henderson, Alexander, and David Dickson. *The answeres of some brethren of the ministrie, to the replyes of the ministers and professours of divintie in Aberdene; concerning the late covenant.* Aberdeen, 1638.

Henderson, Alexander, David Dickson and Andrew Cant. *Generall demands concerning the late covenant; propounded by the ministers and professors of divinity in Aberdene: to some reverend brethren, who came hither to recommend the late covenant to them, and to those who are committed to their charge: together with the answeres of those reverend brethren to the said demands: as also the replyes of the foresayd ministers & professors to their answeres.* Reprint, Aberdeen, 1662.

Hieron, Samuel. *The abridgement of the gospell: or the order and covrse of mans saluation, as it is set foorth by Zacharie the father of Iohn Baptist, Luke 1.67.&c. and further opened in ten sermons thereupon: by Sam. Hieron.* London, 1609.

Hooker, Thomas. *The sovles exaltation. A treatise containing the soules vnion with Christ, on 1 Cor. 6.17. The soules benefit from vnion with Christ, on 1 Cor. 1.30. The soules justification, on 2 Cor. 5.21.* London, 1638.

_____. *The covenant of grace opened: wherein these particulars are handled; viz. 1. What the covenant of grace is, 2. What the seales of the covenant are, 3. Who are the parties and subjects fit to receive these seales. From all which particulars infants baptisme is fully proved and vindicated.* London, 1649.

Leigh, Edward. *Critica sacra: or, philologicall and theologicall observations, upon all the Greek words of the New Testament, in order alphabeticall: wherein usually the etymon of the word is given, its force and emphasis observed, and the severall acceptions of it in Scripture, and versions by expositors are set down.* London, 1639.

_____. *A treatise of the divine promises. In five bookes. In the first, a generall description of their nature, kinds, excellency, right use, properties, and the persons to whom they belong. In the foure last, a declaration of the covenant it selfe, the bundle and body of all the promises, and the speciall promises likewise, which concerne a mans selfe, or others, both temporall, spirituall and eternall.* London, 1641.

_____. *Annotations upon all the New Testament philologicall and theologicall: wherein the emphasis and elegancie of the Greeke is observed. Some imperfections in our translation are discovered. Divers Jewish rites and customes tending to illustrate the text are mentioned. Many antilogies and seeming contradictions reconciled. Severall dark and obscure places opened. Sundry passages vindicated from the false glosses of Papists and hereticks.* London, 1650.

_____. *A philologicall commentary, or, an illustration of the most obvious and usefull words in the law. With their distinctions and diverse acceptations, as they are found as well in reports ancient and modern, as in records, and memorials never printed: usefull for all young students of the law.* London, 1652.

_____. *A systeme or body of divinity: consisting of ten books. Wherein the fundamentals and main grounds of religion are opened: the contrary errours refuted: most of the controversies between us, the Papists, Arminians and Socinians discussed and handled. Several scriptures explained and vindicated from corrupt glosses. A work seasonable for these times, wherein so many articles of our faith are questioned, and so many gross errours daily published.* London, 1654.

Livingstone, John. *A brief historical relation of the life of Mr. John Livingstone, minister of the gospel. Containing several observations of the divine goodness manifested to him in the several occurrences thereof.* In *Select Biographies.* Edited for the Wodrow Society, chiefly from manuscripts in the library of the

faculty of advocates. Edited by W. K. Tweedie. Vol.1. Edinburgh: Printed for the Wodrow Society, 1845.

Luther, Martin. "A Sermon on the Estate of Marriage,"1519. Translated by James Atkinson. In *Luthers's Works;* vol. 44, ed. James Atkinson, 3-14. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966.

_____. "The Judgement of Martin Luther on Monastic Vows,"1521. Translated by James Atkinson. In *Luther's Works,* vol. 44, ed. James Atkinson, 243-400. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966.

_____. "To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany that They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools," 1524. Translated by Albert T. W. Steinhaeuser. In *Luther's Works*, vol. 45, ed. Walther I. Brandt, 339-378. Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1962.

_____. "Whether One May Flee from a Deadly Plague," 1527. Translated by Carl J. Schindler. In *Luther's Works*, vol. 43, ed. Gustav K. Wienke, 113-138. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968.

Melanchthon, Philip. *Loci communes rerum theologicarum,* 3rd ed. 1543. Translated by J. A.O. Preus. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1992.

Owen, John. ΘΕΟΜΑΧΙΑ ΑΥΤΕΞΟΥΣΙΑΣΤΙΚΗ· *Or, display of Arminianism: being a discovery of the old pelagian idol Free-will, with the new goddess Contingency, advancing themselves into the throne of the God of heaven, to the prejudice of his grace, providence, and supreme dominion over the children of men; wherein the main errors by which they are fallen off from the received doctrine all of the reformed churches, with their opposition in divers particulars to the doctrines established in the church of England, are discovered and laid open out of their own writings and confessions, and confuted by the word of God.* London, 1642. Reprint, in *The Works of John Owen*, Vol. 10. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1993.

_____. *The principles of the doctrine of Christ: vnfolded in two short catechismes, wherein those principles of religion are explained, the knowledge whereof is required by the late ordinance of Parliament, before any person bee admitted to the sacrament of the Lords Supper.* London, 1645.

_____. *Salus electorum, sanguis Jesu; or, the death of death in the death of Christ: a treatise of the redemption and reconciliation that is in the blood of Christ; with the merit thereof, and the satisfaction wrought thereby: wherein the proper end of the death of Christ is asserted; the immediate effects and fruits thereof assigned, with their extent in respect of its object; and the whole controversy about universal redemption fully discussed.* London, 1647. Reprint, in *The Works of John Owen,* Vol.10. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1993.

_____. *Exercitations on the epistle to the Hebrews, concerning the priesthood of Christ. Wherein the original, causes, nature, prefigurations, and discharge of that holy office, are explained and vindicated. The nature of the covenant of the redeemer, with the call of the Lord Christ unto his office, are declared. And the opinions of the Socinians about it are fully examined, and their opposition unto it refuted. With a continuation of the exposition on the third, fourth, and fifth chapters of the said epistle to the Hebrews.* London, 1674.

_____. Introduction to *The difference between the old and new covenant stated and explained: with an exposition of the covenant of grace in the principal concernments of it,* by Samuel Petto. London, 1674.

Perkins, William. *Armilla avrea, id est, theologiae descriptio mirandam feriem causarum & salutis & damnationis juxta verbum Dei proponens: eius synopsim continet annexa tabula. Editio tertia recognita & aucta. Accesit practica Th. Bezae pro consolandis afflictis conscientiis.* Cambridge, 1592.

_____. *A commentarie or exposition, vpon the fiue first chapters of the epistle to the Galatians: penned by the godly, learned, and judiciall diuine, Mr. W. Perkins.* Cambridge, 1604.

_____. *The arte of prophecying: or a treatise concerning the sacred and onely true manner and methode of preaching.* Translated by Thomas Tuke. London, 1607.

_____. *A golden chaine: or, the description of theologie: containing the order of the causes of saluation and damnation, according to Gods word. A view whereof is to be seene in the table annexed. Hereunto is adioyned the order which M. Theodore Beza vsed in comforting afflicted consciences.* Cambridge, 1608.

_____. *The workes of that famous and worthy minister of Christ, Mr. William Perkins.* 3 vols. Cambridge, 1612-1619.

Petto, Samuel. *The difference between the old and new covenant stated and explained: with an exposition of the covenant of grace in the principal concernments of it.* London, 1674.

Piscator, John. *A learned and profitable treatise of mans iustification. Two bookes. Opposed to the sophismes of Robert Bellarmine, Iesuite.* London, 1599.

Polanus, Amandus. *Partitiones theologicae ivxta naturalis methodi leges conformatae duobus libris, quorum primus est de fide: alter de bonis operibus*, 2nd ed. London, 1591.

_____. *The substance of christian religion, sovndly set forth in two bookes, by definitions and partitions, framed according to the rules of a naturall method by Amandus Polanus, professor of diuinitie.* Translated by E. W. London, 1595.

_____. *A treatise of Amandvs Polanvs, concerning Gods eternall predestination. Wherein both this excellent doctrine is briefly and syncerely deliuered, and many hard places of Scripture are opened and maintained against the corrupt expositions of Bellarmine and other adversaries.* Cambridge, 1599.

Preston, John. *The nevv covenant or the saints portion. A treatise vnfolding the all-sufficiencie of God, mans uprightness, and the covenant of grace, delivered in fourteen sermons vpon Gen.17.1.2. Wherevnto are adioyned foure sermons vpon Eccles. 9.1.2.11.12.*, 2nd ed. London, 1629.

Records of the Kirk of Scotland, containing the acts and proceedings of the General Assemblies, from the year 1638 downwards, as authenticated by the clerks of Assembly; with notes and historical illustrations, by Alexander Peterkin. Vol.1. Edinburgh: John Sutherland, 1838.

Reynoldes, Edward. *An explication of the hvndreth and tenth psalme: wherein the severall heads of christian religion therein contained; touching the exaltation of Christ, the scepter of his kingdome, the character of his subjects, his priesthood, victories, sufferings, and resurrection, are largely explained and applied.* London, 1632.

Roberts, Francis. *Clavis Bibliorum. The key of the Bible, unlocking the richest treasurie of the holy Scriptures. Whereby the 1 order, 2 names, 3 times, 4 penmen, 5 occasion, 6 scope, 7 principall parts, containing the subject-matter of every book of Old and New Testament, are familiarly and briefly opened: for the help of the weakest capacity in the understanding of the whole Bible.* Edinburgh, 1649.

_____. *Mysterium & medulla bibliorum. The mysterie and marrow of the Bible viz. God's covenants with man, in the first Adam, before the Fall: and in the last Adam Iesvs Christ, after the fall; from the beginning to the end of the world; unfolded & illustrated in positive aphorisms & their explanations. Wherein the general nature, several kinds, gradual discoveries, sanctions and administrations of all Gods holy covenants, from first to last, throughout the whole Scriptures; together with their peculiar terms, occasions, author, foederates, matter, form, end, properties, agreements, disagreements, and many other their noted excellencies are largely and familiarly expounded: the blessed person and office of Jesus Christ, the soul of all the covenants of faith, and sole mediator of the new covenant, is described: many choice fundamental points of Christianity, are explained: sundry practical questions, or cases of conscience, are resolved: divers puzzling controversies about the present truths are positively stated and determined: many obscure and difficult scriptures are occasionally elucidated: and, in all, the great supernatural mysterie of the whole sacred Bible, touching Gods most wise, gracious, merciful, righteous, plenary, wonderful, and eternal salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ through*

faith, sweetly couched and gradually revealed in his covenant-expressures in all ages of the church, is disclosed and un-veiled. London: R. W., 1657.

Rollock, Robert. *Qvaestiones et responsiones aliqvot de foedere Dei: deque sacramento quod foederis Dei sigillum est.* Edinburgh, 1596.

_____. *Tractatvs de vocatione efficaci, qvae inter locos theologiae communissimos recensetur, deq; locis specialioribus, qui sub vocatione comprehenduntur.* Edinburgh, 1597.

_____. *Lectvres vpon the epistle of Pavl to the Colossians.* London, 1603.

_____. *A treatise of God's effectual calling: written first in the latine tongue, by the reuerend and faithfull seruant of Christ, Maister Robert Rollock, preacher of Gods word in Edenburgh.* Translated by Henry Holland. London, 1603.

_____. *Select Works of Robert Rollock, Principal of the University of Edinburgh.* Edited by William M. Gunn. 2 vols. Edinburgh: Printed for the Wodrow Society, 1844-49.

Rutherford, Samuel. *The covenant of life opened: or, a treatise of the covenant of grace, containing something of the nature of the covenant of work, the soveraignty of God, the extent of the death of Christ, the nature and properties of the covenant of grace: and especially of the covenant of suretyship or redemption between the Lord and the Son Jesus Christ, infants right to Jesus Christ, and the seal of baptism: with some practicall questions and observations.* Edinburgh, 1654.

_____. *Joshua Redivivus, or Mr. Rutherfoord's letters, divided in two parts. The first, containing these which were written from Aberdeen, where he was confined by a sentence of the High Commission, drawn forth against him, partly upon the account of his declining them, partly upon the account of his non-conformitie. The second, containing, some which were written from Anwoth, before he was by the prelats persecution thrust from his ministery; & others upon diverse occasions afterward, from St Andrews, London, &c. Now published, for the use of all the people of God; but more particularly, for those who now are, or afterward may be put to suffering for Christ & his cause: by a wellwisher to the work, & people of God.* N.p., 1664.

Sedgwick, Obadiah. *The bowels of tender mercy sealed in the everlasting covenant, wherein is set forth the nature, conditions and excellencies of it, and how a sinner should do to enter into it, and the danger of refusing this covenant-relation. Also the treasures of grace, blessings, comforts, promises and priviledges that are comprized in the covenant of Gods free and rich mercy made in Jesus Christ with believers.* London, 1661.

Smith, John. *The mysterie of rhetorique unvail'd, wherein above 130 the tropes and figures are severally derived from the Greek into English, together with lively definitions and variety of Latin, English, scriptural examples, pertinent to each of them apart. Conducing very much to the right understanding of the sense of the letter of the Scripture, (the want whereof occasion many dangerous errors this day) eminently delightful and profitable for young scholars, and others of all sorts, enabling them to discern and imitate the elegancy in any author they read, &c.* London, 1656.

Taylor, Thomas. *A commentarie vpon the epistle of s. Paul written to Titvs....With three short tables in the end for the easier finding of 1. Doctrines, 2. Observations, 3. Questions contained in the same.* Cambridge, 1612.

Trelcatius, Lucas Jr. *A briefe institvtion of the common places of sacred divinitie. Wherein, the truth of every place is proved, and the sophismes of Bellarmine are reprooved.* Translated by Iohn Gawen. London, 1610.

Turretin, Francis. *Institutes of Elenctic Theology.* 3 vols. Translated by George Musgrave Giger and edited by James T. Dennison, Jr. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1992-97.

Two acts of the Parliament of Scotland. I. An act against the covenants. II. An act concerning masters of colledges, &c. London, 1662.

Ussher, James. *A Body of Divinitie.* London, 1645.

_____. *The principles of the christian religion: with a briefe method of the doctrine thereof. Now fully corrected, and much enlarged by the author, James Ussher, archbishop of Armaugh. With his preface thereunto.* London, 1658.

Walker, George. *The manifold wisedome of God: in the divers dispensation of grace by Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament. In the New Testament. In the covenant of faith. In the covenant of workes. Their agreement and difference.* London, 1640.

_____. *The key of saving knowledge, opening out of the holy Scriptures, the right way, and straight passage to eternall life. Or a dialogue wherein the chiefe principles of Christian religion are unfolded for the enabling of christian people, to understand the word of God and to atteine to the true sense and meaning thereof.* London, 1641.

Wilson, Thomas. *A christian dictionary. Opening the signification of the chiefe words dispersed generally through holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, tending to increase christian knowledge. Wherein is annexed, a particular dictionary for the revelation of S. Iohn. For the canticles or song of Salomon. For the epistle to the Hebrewes*, 2nd ed. London, 1616.

Witsius, Herman. *The economy of the covenants between God & man: comprehending a complete body of divinity*. Translated by William Crookshank. 2 vols. London, 1822. Reprint, Kingsburg, CA: den Dulk Christian Foundation, 1990.

Wollebius, Johannes. *Compendium theologiae christianae, accuratâ methodo sic adornatum, ut sit ad ss. scripturas legendas, ad locos communes digerendos, ad controversias intelligendas, manuductio: authore Iohan. Wollebio ss. theologiae doctore, & in Acad. Basil. Profess. Ord.* London, 1647.

_____. *The abridgment of christian divinitie: so exactly and methodically compiled, that it leads us, as it were, by the hand to the reading of the holy Scriptures. Ordering of common places. Understanding of controversies. Cleering of some cases of conscience.* Translated by Alexander Ross. London, 1650.

Zanchi, Jerome. *His confession of christian religion. Which nouue at length being 70. yeares of age, he causea to bee published in the name of himselfe & his family. Englished in sense agreeable, and in words as answerable to his ovvne latine copie, as in so graue a mans worke is requisite: for the profite of all the unlearneder sort, of English Christians, that desire to know his iudgement in matters of faith.* Cambridge, 1599.

Secondary Sources

Armstrong, Brian. *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy: Protestant Scholasticism and Humanism in Seventeenth-Century France*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969.

Asselt, Willem J. van. "Cocceius Anti-Scholasticus?" In *Reformation and Scholasticism: An Ecumenical Enterprise.* Edited by Willem J. van Asselt and Eef Dekker, 227-251. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.

_____. *The Covenant Theology of Johannes Cocceius (1603-1669).* Translated by Raymond A. Blacketer. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2001.

_____. *The Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius (1603-1669)*. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

_____. Introduction to *Reformation and Scholasticism*, ed. Willem van Asselt and Eef Dekker. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.

_____. "*Expromissio* or *Fideiussio*? A Seventeenth-Century Theological Debate Between Voetians and Cocceians about the Nature of Christ's Suretyship in Salvation History." *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 14 (2003) : 37-57.

Asselt, Willem J. van, and Eef Dekker, eds. *Reformation and Scholasticism: An Ecumenical Enterprise.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.

Augustijn, Cornelis. "Wittenberga Contra Scholasticos." In *Reformation and Scholasticism: An Ecumenical Enterprise,* ed. Willem J. van Asselt and Eef Dekker, 65-77. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.

Badcock, Gary D. "The God of the Covenant." In *Covenant Theology: Contemporary Approaches.* Edited by Mark J. Cartledge and David Mills. University of Liverpool Anglican Chaplaincy Lectures 1997-2000. Carlisle, Cumbria and Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster Press, 2001.

Baker, J. Wayne. *Heinrich Bullinger and the Covenant: The Other Reformed Tradition.* Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1980.

_____. "Heinrich Bullinger, the Covenant, and the Reformed Tradition in Retrospect." *Sixteenth Century Journal* 29, no. 2 (1998) : 359-376.

Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics.* Vol. 4.1, *The Doctrine of Reconciliation,* ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988.

Beach, J. Mark. "The Doctrine of the *Pactum Salutis* in the Covenant Theology of Herman Witsius." *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 13 (2002) : 101-142.

Beardslee, John W. III, ed. Introduction to *Reformed Dogmatics. J. Wollebius, G. Voetius, F. Turrentin.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1965.

Beckwith, Roger T. "The Unity and Diversity of God's Covenants." *Tyndale Bulletin* 38 (1987) : 93-118.

Beeke, Joel R. *Assurance of Faith.* New York: Peter Lang, 1991.

Bell, M. Charles. *Calvin and Scottish Theology: The Doctrine of Assurance.* Edinburgh: Handsel Press, 1985.

Bierma, Lyle D. "Federal Theology in the Sixteenth Century: Two Traditions?" *Westminster Theological Journal* 45 (1983) : 304-321.

_____. "Covenant or Covenants in the Theology of Olevianus?" *Calvin Theological Journal* 22 (1987) : 228-250.

_____. "The Role of Covenant Theology in Early Reformed Orthodoxy." *Sixteenth Century Journal* 21, no.3 (1990) : 453-462.

_____. *German Calvinism in the Confessional Age: The Covenant Theology of Caspar Olevianus.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996.

Blacketer, Raymond. "Arminius' Concept of Covenant in its Historical Context." *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis* 80, no. 2 (2000) : 193-220.

Brauer, Jerald C. "The Nature of English Puritanism: Three Interpretations." *Church History* 23 (June 1954) : 99-108.

Bray, Gerald, ed. *Documents of the English Reformation.* Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994.

Brown, W. Adams. "Covenant Theology." In *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings, Vol. 4, 216-224. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959.

Burke, David. "The Covenant in Puritan Thought." In *Evangelism and the Reformed Faith and Other Essays Commemorating the Ministry of J. Graham Miller,* 107-112. Sydney: Christian Education Committee Presbyterian Church of Australia, 1980.

Calderwood, David. *The true history of the church of Scotland, from the beginning of the Reformation, unto the end of the reigne of King James VI. Wherein, besides some touches of the civil state and alteration of affaires, in their due order; there is not only a series of the assemblies, and of the principal of their actings recorded; but also a full and plaine relation of the trials and troubles, which the church did meet with from enemies to the purity of her doctrine, worship, discipline and government; of the several alterations, caused or occasioned thereby; of the many sad and lamentable faintings and backslideings of persons, sometimes eminent in the church; of the faithful contendings of others for the prerogatives of Christ, as the alone head of the church, for the purity of his institutions, and for the liberty and privileges of his church and kingdom, against all the enemies thereof; and particularly against the Erastianisme and prelacy, the two grand enemies of the discipline and government of the church of Christ; and of their sad sufferings upon the account thereof.* N.p., 1678.

_____. *The History of the Kirk of Scotland.* 8 vols. Edited by Thomas Thomson. Edinburgh: Printed for the Wodrow Society, 1842-49.

Chang, Paul Ling-Ji. *Thomas Goodwin (1600-1680) On the Christian Life.* Holmdel, NJ: The Beautiful Gate Ministries, 2001.

Clark, R. Scott. Introduction to *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment*, ed. Carl R. Trueman and R.S. Clark. Carlisle, Cumbria: Paternoster Press, 1999.

Clauson, Marc A. *A Study of Scottish Hermeneutical Method from John Knox to the Early Twentieth Century from Christian to Secular.* Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2004.

Clebsch, William. *England's Earliest Protestants, 1520-1535*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964.

Collidge, John S. *The Pauline Renaissance in England: Puritanism and the Bible.* Oxford: Clarendon, 1970.

De Jong, Peter Y. *The Covenant Idea in New England Theology 1620-1847*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1945.

Dekker, Eef. "An Ecumenical Debate between Reformation and Counter-Reformation? Bellarmine and Ames on *liberum arbitrium*." In *Reformation and Scholasticism: An Ecumenical Enterprise,* ed. Willem J. van Asselt and Eef Dekker, 141-154. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.

Dillistone, F. W. *The Structure of the Divine Society*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1951.

Donaldson, Gordon. *The Scottish Reformation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960.

Dorner, J. A. *History of Protestant Theology particularly in Germany Viewed according to its fundamental Movement and in Connection with the Religious, Moral, and Intellectual Life*. Translated by George Robson and Sophia Taylor. Vol. 2. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1871.

Emerson, Everett H. "Calvin and Covenant Theology." *Church History* 25 (1956) : 136-144.

Eusden, John Dykstra. Introduction to *The Marrow of Theology William Ames 1576-1633*. Translated and edited by John D. Eusden, 1-66. Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1968.

Farthing, John L. "*Foedus Evangelicum*: Jerome Zanchi on the Covenant." *Calvin Theological Journal* 29 (1994) : 149-167.

Fisher, George Park. *History of Christian Doctrine*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911.

George, Timothy. *Theology of the Reformers.* Nashville: Broadman Press, 1988.

Gerrish, B. A. "Biblical Authority and the Continental Reformation." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 5, no. 4 (1957) : 337-360.

_____. "The Confessional Heritage of the Reformed Church." *McCormick Quarterly* 19 (January 1966) : 120-134.

Gilles, Scott A. "Zwingli and the Origin of the Reformed Covenant 1524-7." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 54, no. 1 (2001) : 21-50.

Graafland, Cornelis. *Van Calvijn tot Comrie*. 3 vols. Zoetermeer: Uitgeverrij Boekencentrum, 1996.

Grant, Alexander. *The Story of the University of Edinburgh during Its First Three Hundred Years.* 2 vols. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1884.

Greaves, Richard. "The Origin and Early Development of English Covenant Thought." *The Historian* 21 (1968) : 21-35.

_____. "John Knox and the Covenant Tradition." *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 24 (1973) : 23-32.

_____. *Theology & Revolution in the Scottish Reformation.* Grand Rapids: Christian University Press, 1980.

Green, Lowell C. "Melanchthon's Relation to Scholasticism." In *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment,* ed. Carl R. Trueman and R.S. Clark, 273-288. Carlisle, Cumbria: Paternoster Press, 1999.

Gustafson, James M. *Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective*. 2 vols. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981.

Hagan, Kenneth. "From Testament to Covenant in the Early Sixteenth Century." *Sixteenth Century Journal* 3 (1972) : 1-24.

Hall, Basil. "Calvin against the Calvinists." In *John Calvin*, ed. Gervase Duffield. Appleford, 1966.

Hart, Trevor. "Poetry and Praxis: A Response to Gary Badcock." In *Covenant Theology: Contemporary Approaches,* University of Liverpool Anglican Chaplaincy Lectures 1997-2000, ed. Mark J. Cartledge and David Mills, 85-99. Carlisle, Cumbria and Waynesboro, GA.: Paternoster Press, 2001.

Heal, Felicity. *Reformation in Britain and Ireland.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Henderson, G. D. *Religious Life in Seventeenth-Century Scotland.* Cambridge: University Press, 1937.

_____. "The Idea of Covenant in Scotland." *Evangelical Quarterly* 27 (1955) : 2-14.

_____. *The Burning Bush.* Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1957.

Henderson, Thomas Finlayson. "David Dickson." In *Dictionary of National Biography from the Earliest Times to 1900*, Vol. 5, ed. Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee. London: Oxford University Press, 1949-50.

Heppe, Heinrich. *Geschichte des Pietismus und der Mystik in der Reformirten Kirche, namentlich der Niederlande*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1879.

_____. *Reformed Dogmatics*. Revised and edited by Ernst Bizer. Translated by G. T. Thomson. Reprint, London: Wakeman, 1950.

Hillers, Delbert R. *Covenant: The History of a Biblical Idea*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969.

Hodges, Louis I. "The Doctrine of the Mediator in Classical Scottish Theology from John Knox to James Durham." Ph.D. diss., University of Edinburgh, 1975.

Holfelder, K. D. "Dickson [Dick], David (c. 1583-1662)." In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7614, accessed 28 May 2005].

_____. "Gillespie, Patrick (1617-1675)." In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10737, accessed 28 July 2005].

Holsteen, Nathan. D. "The Popularization of federal theology: conscience and covenant in the theology of David Dickson (1583-1663) and James Durham (1622-1658)." Ph.D. thesis, Aberdeen University, 1996.

Howie, John. *Biographia Scoticana: or, a brief historical account of the lives, characters, and memorable transactions of the most eminent Scots worthies, noblemen, gentlemen, ministers, and others: from Mr. Patrick Hamilton, who was born about the year of our Lord 1503, and suffered martyrdom at St. Andrews, Feb. 1527, to Mr. James Renwick, who was executed in the Grass-market of Edinburgh, Feb. 17, 1688. Together with a succinct account of the lives of other seven eminent divines, and Sir Robert Hamilton of Preston, who died about, or shortly after the revolution,* 2nd ed. Glasgow, 1781.

Jeon, Jeong Koo. *Covenant Theology: John Murray's and Meredith G. Kline's Response to the Historical Development of Federal Theology in Reformed Thought.* Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1999.

Jinkins, Michael. "Theodore Beza: Continuity and Regression in the Reformed Tradition." *Evangelical Quarterly* 64 (1992) : 131-154.

Karlberg, Mark W. "Reformed Interpretation of the Mosaic Covenant," *Westminster Theological Journal* 43, no. 1 (Fall 1980) :1-57.

_____. "Covenant Theology and the Westminster Tradition." *Westminster Theological Journal* 54 (1992) : 135-152.

Kendall, R. T. "The Puritan Modification of Calvin's Theology." In *John Calvin*, ed. W. Stanford Reid. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982.

_____. *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649*. Carlisle, Cumbria: Paternoster Press, 1997.

Kevan, Ernest F. *The Grace of the Law: A Study in Puritan Theology*. London: Carey Kingsgate Press. Reprint, Morgan, PA: Soli Deo Gloria, 1993.

Klempa, William. "The Concept of Covenant in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Continental and British Reformed Theology." In *Major Themes in the Reformed Tradition*, ed. Donald McKim, 94-107. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992.

Kline, Meredith G. "The Exaltation of Christ." *Kerux* 12, no. 3 (1997) : 3-29.

Knapp, Henry M. "Understanding the Mind of God: John Owen and Seventeenth-Century Exegetical Methodology." Ph.D. diss., Calvin Theological Seminary, 2002.

Knappen, M. M. *Tudor Puritanism: A Chapter in the History of Idealism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970.

Kolb, Robert. "Teaching the Text: The Commonplace Method in Sixteenth-Century Lutheran Biblical Commentary." *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 49 (1987) : 571-585.

_____. "The Ordering of the *Loci Communes Theologici*: The Structuring of the Melanchthonian Dogmatic Tradition." *Concordia Journal* 23 no. 4 (Oct 1997): 317-337.

Lee, Brian J. "Biblical Exegesis, Federal Theology, and Johannes Cocceius: Developments in the Interpretation of Hebrews 7:1-10:18." Ph.D. diss., Calvin Theological Seminary, 2003.

_____. "The Covenant Terminology of Johannes Cocceius: The Use of *Foedus, Pactum*, and *Testamentum* in a Mature Federal Theologian." *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 14 (2003) : 11-36.

Leith, John H. *Assembly at Westminster: Reformed Theology in the Making*. Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1973.

Letham, Robert. "The Foedus Operum: Some Factors Accounting For Its Development." *Sixteenth Century Journal* 14, no. 4 (1983) : 457-467.

_____. "Amandus Polanus: A Neglected Theologian?" In *Sixteenth Century Journal* 21, no. 3 (1990) : 463-476.

Lillbeck, Peter A. *The Binding of God.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.

Lim, Won Taek. "The Covenant Theology of Francis Roberts." Ph.D. diss., Calvin Theological Seminary, 2000.

Lincoln, Charles Fred. "The Development of the Covenant Theology." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 100 (Jan 1943): 134-163.

Livingston, James C. *Modern Christian Thought*, 2nd ed. Vol. 1, *The Enlightenment and the Nineteenth Century.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1998.

Loane, Marcus L. *Makers of Puritan History.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980.

Loonstra, Bertus. *Verkiezing, verzoening, verbond: beschrijving en beoordeling van de leer van het "pactum salutis" in de gereformeerde theologie.* 's-Gravenhage: Boekencentrum, 1990.

Lynch, Michael. "Calvinism in Scotland, 1559-1638." In *International Calvinism*, 1541-1715, ed. Menna Prestwich, 225-255. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985.

MacKenzie, J.A. Ross. "The Covenant Theology – A Review Article." *Journal of Presbyterian History* 44 (S 1966) : 198-204.

MacLeod, Donald. "Covenant Theology." In *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology,* ed. Nigel M. de S. Cameron, David F. Wright, David C. Lachman, and Donald E. Meek, 214-218. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993.

Macleod, John. *Scottish Theology in Relation to Church History Since the Reformation.* Edinburgh: The Publications Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, 1943.

Makey, Walter H. *The Church of the Covenant 1637-1651: Revolution and Social Change in Scotland.* Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers LTD, 1979.

McCoy, Charles S. "Johannes Cocceius: Federal Theologian." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 16 (1963) : 352-370.

McCoy, Charles S., and J. Wayne Baker. *Fountainhead of Federalism: Heinrich Bullinger and the Covenantal Tradition.* With Translation of *De testamento seu*

foedere Dei unico et aeterno (1534) by Heinrich Bullinger. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991.

McGiffert, Arthur Cushman. *Protestant Thought before Kant*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1962.

McGiffert, Michael. "The Problem of the Covenant in Puritan Thought: Peter Bulkeley's *Gospel-Covenant*." *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 130 (April 1976) : 107-29.

_____. "William Tyndale's Conception of Covenant." *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 32, no. 2 (April 1981) : 167-184.

_____. "Grace and Works: The Rise and Division of Covenant Divinity in Elizabethan Puritanism." *Harvard Theological Review* 75 (1982) : 463-502.

_____. "The Perkinsian Moment of Federal Theology." *Calvin Theological Journal* 29, no. 1 (1994) : 117-148.

McGowan, Andrew T.B. "Federal Theology as a Theology of Grace." *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 2 (1984) : 41-50.

McGrath, Gavin John. "Puritans and the Human Will: Voluntarism Within Mid-Seventeenth Century English Puritanism as Seen in the Works of Richard Baxter and John Owen." Ph.D. diss., University of Durham, 1989.

McKee, William. "The Idea of Covenant in Early English Puritanism, 1580-1643." Ph.D. diss., Yale, 1948.

McKim, Donald K. "William Perkins and the Theology of the Covenant." In *Studies of the Church in History: Essays Honoring Robert S. Paul on his Sixty-fifth Birthday*, ed. Horton Davies, 85-101. Allison Park, PA: Pickwick Publications, 1983.

McLelland, Joseph C. "Covenant Theology: A Re-evaluation." *Canadian Journal of Theology* 3, no. 3 (1957) : 182-188.

McNeill, John T. *The History and Character of Calvinism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1954.

M'Crie, C. G. *The Confessions of the Church of Scotland and Their Evolution in History*. Edinburgh: Macniven & Wallace, 1907.

McWilliams, David B. "The Covenant Theology of the Westminster Confession of Faith and Recent Criticism." *Westminster Theological Journal* 53 (Spring 1991) : 109-124.

Miller, Perry. *The New England Mind: the Seventeenth Century.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1939.

_____. *Errand into the Wilderness*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956.

Mitchell, Alexander F. *The Westminster Assembly: Its History and Standard.* Baird lecture for 1882. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-School Work, 1897.

_____. *The Scottish Reformation: Its Epochs, Episodes, Leaders and Distinctive Characteristics.* Baird lecture for 1899. Edited by D. Hay Fleming. Edinburgh and London: W. Blackwood and Sons, 1900.

Møller, Jens. "The Beginnings of Puritan Covenant Theology." *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 14 (1963): 46-67.

Morrill, J. S, ed. *The Scottish National Covenant in its British Context.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990.

Morris, Edward D, *Theology of the Westminster Symbols: A Commentary Historical, Doctrinal, Practical on the Confession of Faith and Catechisms and the Related Formularies of the Presbyterian Churches*. Columbus, OH, 1900.

Mullan, David George. *Scottish Puritanism 1590-1638*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Muller, Richard A. "Covenant and Conscience in English Reformed Theology: Three Variations on a 17th Century Theme." *Westminster Theological Journal* 42 (Spring 1980) : 308-334.

_____. "The Federal Motif in Seventeenth Century Arminian Theology." *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis* 62, no. 1 (1982) : 102-122.

_____. *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms: Drawn Principally from Protestant Scholastic Theology.* Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1985.

_____. "The Covenant of Works and the Stability of Divine Law in Seventeenth-Century Reformed Orthodoxy: A Study in the Theology of Herman Witsius and Wilhelmus à Brakel." *Calvin Theological Journal* 29 (1994) : 75-101.

_____. "Grace, Election, and Contingent Choice: Arminius's Gambit and the Reformed Response." In *The Grace of God, the Bondage of the Will*, ed. Thomas R. Schreiner and Bruce A. Ware, 251-278. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995.

_____. *The Unaccommodated Calvin: Studies in the Foundation of a Theological Tradition.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

_____. "The Problem of Protestant Scholasticism – A Review and Definition." In *Reformation and Scholasticism: An Ecumenical Enterprise*, ed. Willem J. van Asselt and Eef Dekker, 45-64. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.

_____. *After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

_____. *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*. 4 vols. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003.

_____. "Toward the Pactum Salutis: Locating the Origins of a Concept." Johannes Cocceius 400th Anniversary Symposium, Utrecht University, June 4, 2003.

Murray, John. *The Covenant of Grace: A Biblico-Theological Study*. London: Tyndale Press, 1954.

National Union Catalog Pre-1956 Imprint. Vol. 143. London: Mansell, 1971.

Niebuhr, H. Richard. *Christ and Culture*. New York: Harper & Row, 1951.

Oberman, Heiko A. *The Reformation: Roots and Ramifications*. Translated by Andrew Colin Gow. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1994.

Packer, J. I. "Introduction: On Covenant Theology." In *The Economy of the Covenants Between God & Man: Comprehending a Complete Body of Divinity* by Herman Witsius. Translated by William Crookshank. 2 vols. London, 1822. Reprint, Kingsburg, CA: den Dulk Christian Foundation, 1990.

_____. *Among God's Giants: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life*. Eastbourne: Kingsway Publications, 1991.

Poole, David N. J. *The History of the Covenant Concept from the Bible to Johannes Cloppenburg: De Foedere Dei.* San Francisco: Mellon Research University Press, 1992.

Preus, J. A. O. Translator's preface to *Loci Communes 1543: Philip Melanchthon.* St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1992.

Priebe, Victor L. "The Covenant Theology of William Perkins." Ph.D. diss., Drew University, 1967.

Rehnman, Sebastian. "Is the Narrative of Redemptive History Trichotomous or Dichotomous? A Problem for Federal Theology." *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis* 80, no. 3 (2000) : 296-308.

_____. "John Owen: A Reformed Scholastic at Oxford." In *Reformation and Scholasticism: An Ecumenical Enterprise,* ed. Willem J. van Asselt and Eef Dekker, 181-203. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.

_____. *Divine Discourse: The Theological Methodology of John Owen.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002.

Reid, H. M. B. *The Divinity Professors in the University of Glasgow: 1640-1903.* Glasgow: Maclehose, Jackson and Co., 1923.

Reid, J. K. S. "The Office of Christ in Predestination." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 1, no. 1 (1948) : 5-19; *Scottish Journal of Theology* 1, no. 2 (1948) : 166-183.

Robertson, O. Palmer. *The Christ of the Covenants.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980.

Rogers, Jack B., and Donald K. McKim. *The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible: An Historical Approach.* San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979.

Rohls, Jan. *Reformed Confessions: Theology from Zurich to Barmen.* Translated by John Hoffmeyer. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1998.

Rolston, Holmes III. *John Calvin versus the Westminster Confession.* Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1972.

Ryken, P.G. "Scottish Reformed Scholasticism." In *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment,* ed. Carl R. Trueman and R. Scott Clark, 196-210. Carlisle, UK: Paternoster Press, 1999.

Schaff, Philip, ed. *The Creeds of Christendom.* 3 vols. Harper and Row, 1931. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1983-98.

Schrenk, Gottlob. *Gottesreich und Bund im älteren Protestantismus vornehmlich bei Johannes Coccejus. Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Pietismus und der heilsgeschichtlichen Theologie.* Gütersloh: Druck und Verlag von C. Bertelsmann, 1923.

Schurb, Ken Ray. "Philip Melanchthon, the Formula of Concord, and the Third Use of the Law." Ph.D. diss., Ohio State University, 2001.

Sinnema, Donald. "The Distinction between Scholastic and Popular: Andreas Hyperius and Reformed Scholasticism." In *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in*

Reassessment, ed. Carl R. Truman and R. Scott Clark, 127-143. Carlisle, UK: Paternoster Press, 1999.

Sommerville, C. J. "Conversion versus the Early Puritan Covenant of Grace." *Journal of Presbyterian History* 44 (S 1966) : 178-197.

Song, Young Jae Timothy. "System and Piety in the Federal Theology of William Perkins and John Preston." Ph.D. diss., Westminster Theological Seminary, 1998.

Spijker, Willem van't. "Reformation and Scholasticism." In *Reformation and Scholasticism: An Ecumenical Enterprise,* ed. Willem van Asselt and Eef Dekker, 79-98. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.

Sprunger, Keith L. *The Learned Doctor Ames: Dutch Backgrounds of English and American Puritanism.* Urbanna, IL, 1972.

_____. *Dutch Puritanism: a History of English and Scottish Churches of the Netherlands in the Sixteen and Seventeenth Centuries.* Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1982.

_____. *Trumpets from the Tower: English Puritan Printing in the Netherlands, 1600-1640.* Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994.

Steele, Margaret. "The 'Politick Christian': The Theological Background to the National Covenant." In *The Scottish National Covenant in its British Context,* ed. John Morrill, 31-67. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990.

Stevenson, David. "The Radical Party in the Kirk, 1647-45." *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 25, no. 2 (April 1974) : 135-165.

Stoeffler, Fred Ernst. *Rise of Evangelical Pietism.* Leiden: Brill, 1971.

Stoever, William K. *'A Faire and Easie Way to Heaven': Covenant Theology and Antinomianism in Early Massachusetts.* Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1978.

Stoute, Douglas A. "The Origin and Early Development of the Reformed Idea of the Covenant." Ph.D. diss., Kings's College, Cambridge, 1979.

Strehle, Stephen. *Calvinism, Federalism, and Scholasticism: A Study of Reformed Doctrine of Covenant.* Bern: Peter Lang, 1988.

Su, Yohahn. "The Contributions of Scottish Covenant Thought to the Discussions of the Westminster Assembly (1643-1648) and Its Continuing Significance to the Marrow Controversy (1717-1723)." Ph.D. diss., University of Glamorgan, 1993.

Taylor, William M. *The Scottish Pulpit from the Reformation to the Present Day*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1887.

Toon, Peter. *The Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism in English Nonconformity 1689-1765*. London: The Olive Tree, 1967.

_____. *Puritans and Calvinism*. Swengel, PA: Reiner Publications, 1973.

Torrance, James B. "Covenant or Contract." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 23 (1970) : 51-76.

_____. "The Covenant Concept in Scottish Theology and Politics and Its Legacy." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 34 (1981) : 225-243.

_____. "Strengths and Weaknesses of the Westminster Theology." In *The Westminster Confessions in the Church Today*, ed. Alasdair I. C. Heron, 40-54. Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1982.

_____. "The Concept of Federal Theology – Was Calvin a Federal Theologian?" In *Calvinus Sacrae Scripturae Professor*, ed. Wilhelm H. Neuser, 15-40. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994.

Torrance, Thomas F. *School of Faith: the catechisms of the Reformed Church*. London: J. Clarke, 1959.

_____. *Scottish Theology: From John Knox to John McLeod Campbell*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996.

Trinterud, Leonard J. "The Origins of Puritanism." *Church History* 20 (1951) : 37-57.

Troxel, A. Craig. "Amyraut 'At' the Assembly: The Westminster Confession of Faith and the Extent of the Atonement." *Presbyterion* 22:1 (1996) : 43-55.

Trueman, Carl R. *The Claims of Truth: John Owen's Trinitarian Theology*. Carlisle, Cumbria: Paternoster Press, 1998.

_____. "Puritan Theology as Historical Event: A Linguistic Approach to the Ecumenical Context." In *Reformation and Scholasticism: An Ecumenical Enterprise*, ed. Willem J. van Asselt and Eef Dekker, 253-275. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.

Trueman, Carl, and R. Scott Clark, eds. *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment*. Carlisle, UK: Paternoster Press, 1999.

Tweedie, W. K. *Select Biographies.* Edited for the Wodrow Society, Chiefly from the Manuscripts in the Library of the Faculty of Advocates. 2 vols. Edinburgh: Printed for the Wodrow Society, 1845-47.

Tyacke Nicholas. *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism c. 1590-1640.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987.

Vallance, Edward. "'An Holy and Sacramentall Paction': Federal Theology and the Solemn League and Covenant in England." *English Historical Review* (Feb 2001) : 50-75.

Visser, Derek. "The Covenant in Zacharias Ursinus." *Sixteenth Century Journal* 18 (1987) : 531-544.

Vliet, Jan van. "Decretal Theology and the Development of Covenant Thought: An Assessment of Cornelis Graafland's Thesis with a Particular View to Federal Architects William Ames and Johannes Cocceius." *Westminster Theological Journal* 63 (2001) : 393-420.

_____."William Ames: Marrow of Theology and Piety of the Reformed Tradition." Ph.D. diss., Westminster Theological Seminary, 2002.

von Rohr, John. "Covenant and Assurance in Early English Puritanism." *Church History* 34 (1965) : 195-203.

_____. *The Covenant of Grace in Puritan Thought.* Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986.

Vos, Antoine. "Scholasticism and Reformation." In *Reformation and Scholasticism*, ed. Willem van Asselt and Eef Dekker, 99-119. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001.

Vos, Geerhardus. "The Doctrine of Covenant in Reformed Theology." In *Redemptive History and Biblical Interpretation: The Shorter Writings of Geerhardus Vos*, ed. Richard B. Gaffin, 234-267. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1980.

Wakeman, Henry Offley. *The Church and the Puritans 1570-1660.* London: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1887.

Walker, James. *The Theology and Theologians of Scotland Chiefly of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.* Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1888.

Wallace, Dewey D., Jr. *Puritans and Predestination: Grace in English Protestant Theology, 1525-1695.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982.

Wallace, Peter J. "The Doctrine of the Covenant in the Elenctic Theology of Francis Turretin." *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 13 (2002) : 143-179.

Weir, David. *The Origins of Federal Theology in Sixteenth-Century Reformation Thought.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.

Wodrow, Robert. "Short Account of the Life of the Author." In *A Commentary on the Psalms by David Dickson 1583-1662 One Time Professor of Divinity at Edinburgh.* Vol.1. London: 1655. Reprint, Minneapolis: Klock & Klock Christian Publishers, 1980.

_____. "Short Account of the Life of the Rev. David Dickson." Originally prefixed to an edition of *Truths Victory Over Error,* 1684. In *Select Biographies.* Edited for the Wodrow Society, Chiefly from Manuscripts in the Library of the Faculty of Advocates, ed. W. K. Tweedie. Vol. 2. Edinburgh: Wodrow Society, 1847.

_____. *The history of the sufferings of the church of Scotland from the restoration to the revolution by the Rev. Robert Wodrow minister of the gospel at Eastwood. With an original memoir of the author, extracts from his correspondence, a preliminary dissertation, and notes, by the Rev. Robert Burns, D.D. F.A.S.E.* 4 vols. Glasgow: Blackie, Fullarton & Co., 1828.

_____. *Analecta, or materials for a history of remarkable providences mostly relating to Scotch ministers and Christians.* Edinburgh: Printed for the Maitland Club, 1842-43.

Wong, David Wai-Sing. "The Covenant Theology of John Owen." Ph.D. diss., Westminster Theological Seminary, 1998.

Woolsey, Andrew Alexander. "Unity and Continuity in Covenantal Thought: A Study in the Reformed Tradition to the Westminster Assembly." Ph.D. diss., University of Glasgow, 1988.

Zaret, David. *The Heavenly Contract.* Chicago: University of Chicago, 1985.