

The Quest for the Restoration of the Covenant and the Glory of Magistracy: Zurich and the Dutch Second Reformation

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Samevatting

Die Pogings tot Herstel van die Verbond en die Nadere Reformasie in Nederland

Die eerste sistematiese uiteensetting van die reformatoriese perspektiewe op die owerheidsamp en -taak was vervat in die *Huisboek (Dekades)* van die Switserse reformator Heinrich Bullinger (1504 - 1575). Die twee belangrikste aspekte van Bullinger se standpunt oor die owerheidstaak het betrekking op die onderskeid tussen die persoon van die burgerlike regeerder en die regeeramp as sodanig, en tweedens, die owerheidsamp gefundeer in die Bybelse verbond.

Alhoewel Johannes Calvyn (1509 - 1564) die belangrikste uitgangspunte van die Zürichse reformasie op burgerlike regering gesistematiseer het, het hy 'n oor-gekondenseerde samevatting daarvan in die vierde boek van sy *Institusie* aangebied. Nie alleen het hy die grondleggende belang van die verbond in die reformatoriese politieke teorie onderbeklemtoon nie, maar hy het ook nie die Bybelse voorwaardes vir bekleding van die burgerlike regeeramp en die rol van die regbank in die publieke sfeer behandel nie. Dit is ironies dat dit nie die méér uitgebreide diskoers oor burgerlike regering was wat in die tydperk na 1550 impak gehad het nie, maar Calvyn se verkorte herformulering, geskei van die verbondsankers daarvan.

In die tydperk van die Nadere Reformasie in Nederland was daar 'n ernstige poging om die idee van die Bybelse verbond en die glorie van burgerlike regering, soos deur Bullinger in die vooruitsig gestel, te herstel.

1. Introduction

The first systematic exposition of the Reformed perspectives on magistracy was contained in the Swiss reformer Heinrich Bullinger's

(1504 - 1575) *Decades* (1549 - 1551)¹, a comprehensive overview of the main points of magisterial office, based on the idea of the Biblical covenant.² The two main points of Bullinger's theses on magistracy concerned the distinction between the person of the magistrate and the office of magistracy, and secondly, magisterial office based on the Biblical covenant.³

Bullinger's views on magistracy and political theology were mostly contained in the second *Decade*, particularly his commentaries on the fifth and sixth precepts of the Ten Commandments.⁴ The lucid style which focussed mostly on matters of a practical nature and his main ideas on magistracy immediately appealed to the hearts and minds of both academics and laymen alike.

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- 1 The full title of this work was *Sermonum Decades quinque, de potissimis Christianae religionis capitibus, in tres tomos digestae, auctore Henricho Bullingero, ecclesiae Tigurinae ministro* (Zurich: 1552). The title of the Dutch translation was *Huys-boeck: vijf decades, dat is, vyftich sermoonen, van de voorneemste hoofstucken der Christelicker religie, in dry deelen gescheyden ... waer by nu van nieuws noch twee andere schoone wercken des seluigen autheurs geuoecht zijn, namelick, van den oorspronck, afcoemst ende voortganck aller dwalingen, die oyt by den heydenen, Joden ende Christenen geweest zijn ende noch hedendaechs ghevonden worden, ende Van de concilien ... uut de Latijnsche in onse Nederduytsche sprake ouergheset, door I.G.* (Dordrecht: 1582). A special word of appreciation is due to J. Wayne Baker who provided me with texts of most of Bullinger's original works.
 - 2 From 1525 onwards, Bullinger expressed himself on fundamental issues of magisterial authority and the role of magistrates in the political sphere. Aspects of his views on magistracy are to be found in his early work *Früntliche ermanung zur Grechtigkeit wider alles verfelschen rychtigen gerychts / beschriben durch Heylrychen Bullinger* (Zurich: 1526) and *De scripturae sanctae autoritate, certitudine, firmitate et absoluta perfectione, deque Episcoporum, qui verbi dei ministri sunt, institutione & functione, contra superstitionis tyrannidisque Romanae antistes, ad Sereniss. Angliae Regem Henrichum VIII. Henrichi Bullingeri Libri duo* (Zurich: 1538).
 - 3 By 1534, the year in which Bullinger published his pioneering work on the covenant (*De testamento sev foedere dei unico & aeterno Henrichi Bullingeri brevis expositio* (Zurich: 1534)), he had already fully integrated his views on magistracy with his theology of the Biblical covenant. In a note, dated the same year, he summarized the main points of his political theology. In the sixth point he concludes that if the magistrate neglects to guard the evangelical truth, dealing only with civil justice and the like, he is impious and less than perfect since he neglects religious matters. See J. Wayne Baker, *Henrich Bullinger and the Covenant: The Other Reformed Tradition* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1980), p. 120
 - 4 *The Decades of Henry Bullinger*, 4 vols., ed. for the Parker Society (Cambridge: 1849 - 1852). The discussion of the fifth precept appears at 2: 267 - 2: 298 (decade 2, sermon V [II: V]), and that of the sixth precept at 2: 298 - 2: 393 (II: V).
 - 5 So, for example, this work was used as a practical work for conducting sermons in the seafaring communities of the Dutch East India Company. See Andries Raath, "Federal Jurisprudence in the Public Sphere of the Early Cape Settlement, 1652 - 1708," *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 30 (Spring, 2000): 87 - 109.

Although John Calvin (1509 - 1564) systemized the main tenets of the Zurich Reformed views⁶ on magistracy, he provided a rather over-condensed summary of these ideas in the fourth volume of his *Institutes*.⁷ Not only did he underplay the foundational role of the covenant in Reformed politics, but he also did not cover the Biblical qualifications for magistracy and the role of the judiciary in the public sphere.⁸ The irony, however, is that it was not the more elaborate Zurich discourse on magistracy that impacted upon the Reformed world of the post 1550's,⁹ but Calvin's abridged restatement separated from its covenantal moorings. In 1563 Zacharias Ursinus (1534 - 1583), a student of Bullinger, in collaboration with Caspar Olevianus (1536 - 1587), produced the *Heidelberg Catechism*, an educational tool for strengthening the Reformed doctrine, and systematically articulating the Reformed faith.¹⁰ In his commentary on the Catechism, Ursinus reverted to the Zurich views of Bullinger on both the covenant (Question 18) and the nature of magisterial office (Questions 101 and 104). At the Synod of Dordrecht (1618/19), the Catechism obtained official recognition as one of the Reformed confessions of faith¹¹ and with the dawn of Reformed pietism, after the Synod of Dordrecht, became one of the foundations of the Dutch

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- 6 This does not imply that, like Bullinger, he did not rely directly – and heavily – on the foundational work of Huldrych Zwingli (1484 - 1531), the founder of the Swiss Reformation.
 - 7 All references to this work are to the 1634 edition (*The Institution of Christian Religion*, translated into English by Thomas Norton (London: Anne Griffin, for Ioyce Norton, and R. Whitaker, 1634).
 - 8 Bullinger deals with the issue of what kind of men ought to be magistrates, and the profile of a good magistrate in *The Decades* at 2: 319 - 322 (2: VI), and with matters pertaining to the functions of judges at 2: 345 - 369 (2: VIII).
 - 9 For the impressive list of works dealing only with magistracy and related matters in Calvin's political theology in the period from 1959 to 1974, see D. Kempff, *A Bibliography of Calviniana 1959 - 1974* (Potchefstroom: Institute for Reformational Studies, 1975), pp. 120 - 124.
 - 10 The popularity of this work is reflected in the fact that within 25 years it was translated into Dutch, Latin, Hebrew, Greek, French, Italian, Polish, English, Lithuanian, Czech and Rumanian. In the Netherlands, the *Heidelberg Catechism* was translated into the Dutch language as early as 1566, and it soon became widely used in the churches there.
 - 11 Although it was adopted by several National Synods during the later sixteenth century, it was finally included by the Synod of Dordrecht, 1618 - 1619, among the "Three Forms of Unity". It soon became one of the most ecumenical of the Reformed catechisms and confessions in that country.
 - 12 Also referred to as the "Further Reformation" ("Nadere Reformatie"), according to Bartel Elshout, *The Pastoral and Practical Theology of Wilhelmus à Brakel. Reformed Experiential Thought, Volume 4* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 1997), p. 7, this represents a rather well-defined period and movement in the history of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, and expresses the common objective of the ministers whose ministries comprise the *Nadere Reformatie*: the further reformation of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands and the entire Dutch nation. The beginning of this period is usually taken to start with the work of Willem Teellinck (1579 - 1629) and

Second Reformation.¹² Foremost was the practical content of the Catechism which provided a valuable connecting point in the quest for piety, and the promotion of an experiential covenantal Reformed theology.

In the Dutch Second Reformation, political theology strove towards restoring the Biblical covenant and regaining the glory of magistracy as envisaged by Bullinger, Ursinus and his pupil David Pareus (1548 - 1622). These endeavors, in a certain sense, cemented the Zurich perspectives on the covenant and the office of magistracy as pillars of Reformed politics, for the same reason that English Puritanism also had the objective “to make the wandrous truths of Scripture, rediscovered in the Reformation; a vibrant reality in the hearts and lives of ministers and parishioners alike, and thus strive for a genuine piety issuing forth from a life of intimate fellowship with God.”¹³

The implications of these developments are twofold: firstly, care should be exercised not to overplay the role, impact and influence of Calvin’s views on politics, contained in Book 4 of his *Institutes*¹⁴ within the Reformed world, and secondly, the Dutch Second Reformation deserves much more attention in Reformed political studies because of its role as a conduit through which the impact of Zurich political theology made itself felt on the European continent.¹⁵

2. The structure of Bullinger’s exposition on magistracy in his *Decades*.

The appearance of Bullinger’s *De Testameto Seu Foedere Dei unico & aeterno* (*The One and Eternal Testament or Covenant of God*) in 1534, almost two years prior to the first publication of Calvin’s *Institutes* in 1536, marked a turning point in Reformed religion, firstly in Switzerland,

end with that of Theodorus Vander Groe (1705 - 1784) (Elshout, *À Brakel*, p. 7). *The Documentatieblad Nadere Reformatie* 19 (1995): 108 describes the Dutch Second Reformation in much wider terms, as being that movement within the Dutch Reformed Church during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which, as a reaction to the declension or absence of a living faith, made both personal experience of faith and godliness matters of central importance. From that perspective, the movement formulated substantial and procedural reformation initiatives, submitting them to the proper ecclesiastical, political, and social agencies, and / or in conformity therewith pursued in both word and deed a further reformation of the church, society and state (cited in Elshout, *À Brakel*, p. 9).

13 Elshout, *À Brakel*, pp. 7 - 8.

14 From Chapter 20.

15 For this reason the Biblical covenant runs like a golden thread through the Reformed theology of the Second Reformation.

and later also throughout Europe.¹⁶ For the first time in Reformed theology, the main tenets of Reformed belief were systemized and arranged according to the idea of the Biblical covenant. From a hermeneutic perspective, the Biblical covenant, to Bullinger, served as the key for interpreting the tenets of Reformed religion. The sermons contained in his *Decades* were directly related to his views on the covenant contained in his *De Testamento*.¹⁷ Even before his perspectives on the covenant reached maturity, the Zurich Reformation produced the basic outline of magistracy, which gradually became closely aligned to the idea of the covenant. These developments were initiated by Zwingli's *Sixty Seven Articles* (1523), *An Exposition of the Articles* (1523), his subsequent work *Divine and Human Justice* (1523), Bullinger's address on Romans (1525) and his *Friendly Exhortation* (1526). The results of these developments in Zurich, were the recognition of the necessity of magisterial office, the binding of the Christian magistrate to the law of God, and the need for magistrates to maintain discipline in the covenanted commonwealth.¹⁸ Through his close contact with Bullinger, Calvin drew heavily on the Zurich ideas on magistracy so that by 1536 he could produce the basic outline of magistracy in his *Institutes*. During the period 1523 to 1526, therefore, the Zurich Reformation produced the theological framework for the development of a strong theory of magisterial office that formed the basis for later Reformed expositions on magistracy, like that of Calvin.

The structure of Bullinger's views on magistracy in his *Decades*, and the summarized restatement of the Zurich views on magistracy in Calvin's later edition of his *Institutes*, provided the Reformed world with a concise view on the office of magistracy and the responsibilities attached to

16 For the impact of Bullinger's covenant theology generally, and his *De Testamento* in particular, see Charles S. McCoy and J. Wayne Baker, *Fountainhead of Federalism: Heinrich Bullinger and the Covenantal Tradition. With a Translation of "De testamento seu foedere Dei unico et aeterno" (1534) by Heinrich Bullinger* (Louisville, KY: Westminster / John Knox Press, 1991) and J. Wayne Baker, "Heinrich Bullinger, the Covenant, and the Reformed Tradition in Retrospect," *The Sixteenth Century Journal; The Journal of Early Modern Studies* 29 (Summer 1998): 359 - 376.

17 According to Baker, *Heinrich Bullinger and the Covenant: The Other Reformed Tradition* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1980), p. 121, the covenant, for Bullinger, was much more than simply a theological device or an organizational principle of his theology. The covenant condition of love was the basis for both personal and social ethics as well as for law, justice, and social policy.

18 The full title of his *Friendly Exhortation* in German reads: *Früntliche ermanung zur Grechtigheit wider alles verfelschen rychtigen gerychts / beschriben durch Heybrychen Bullinger* (Zurich, 1526). All three aspects surface in this later work, see sig. Sii - Sii(v); Aiii(v), Bii - Biv, and Aiv(v).

19 In a number of other works, both prior to and after *The Decades*, Bullinger devoted himself to aspects of magisterial office and magistracy from a covenantal perspective,

magisterial office *coram Deo* (in the face of God), based on the covenant.¹⁹ The main components of Bullinger's views on magistracy in his *Decades* are contained in the following points (with the corresponding references to Calvin's *Institutes*): magistracy is a fatherly office and the magistrate acts as a father or guardian to the people²⁰ (Calvin: the nature of magisterial office is to act as protector and guardian of the laws and the magistrate serves as father of his country²¹); the nature of the honor due to superiors is to worship, esteem and do reverence²² (Calvin: to think most honorably of their office, to honor, revere and esteem their office²³); the

e.g. his *De Testamento* of 1534; *In omnes apostolicas epistolas, divi videlicet Pauli XIII., et VII. canonicas, commentarii Henrychi Bullingeri, ab ipso iam recogniti, & nonnullis in locis aucti.* 2 vols. (Zurich: 1537); *De scripturae sanctae autoritate, certitudine, firmitate et absoluta perfectione, deque Episcoporum, qui verbi dei ministri sunt, institutione & functione, contra superstitionis tyrannidisque Romanae antistes, ad Sereniss. Angliae Regem Henrychum VIII. Henrychi Bullingeri Libri duo.* (Zurich: 1538); *Von rechter buoss oder besserung dess sündigen menschens: Ouch von der grossen Gottes Barmhertzigkeit/ die er gnaediglich allen armen sünderen bewysen wil/ dry Predginen Henrychen Bullingers über die zwey letsten capitel des heiligen propheten Jone/ Zürich im October des 1552. jars gethon.* (Zurich: 1553); *Summa Christenlicher Religion. Darinn uss dem wort Gottes / one alles zancken und schaelten/ richtig und kurtz/ anzeigt wirt / was einem yetlichen Christen notwendig sye zuo wissen / zuo glauben / zuo thunen und zuo lassen / ouch zuo lyden / und saeligklich abzuosterben: in X. Artickel gestelt / durch Henrychen Bullingern.* (Zurich: 1556); *Festorum dierum Domini et servatoris nostri Iesu Christi Sermones ecclesiastici, Henrycho Bullingero auctore.* (Zurich: 1558); *Bericht Wie die so von waegen unsers Herren Jesu Christi und sines heiligen Evangeliums / jres glaubens ersuocht / unnd mit allerley fragen versuocht werdend / antworten und sich halten moegind: beschriben durch Henrychen Bullingern.* (Zurich: 1559); *Ieremias fidelissimus et laboriosissimus Dei propheta, expositus per Henrychum Bullingerum, ministrum Ecclesiae Tigurinae, Concionibus CLXX.* (Zurich: 1557-1561); *Epitome temporum et rerum ab orbe condito, ad primum usque annum Iothan regis Iudae: in qua praecipue attinguntur, quae pertinent ad sacras literas illustrandas, & ad veram antiquamque religionem & eius certudinem, progressum item, & mutationem, cognoscendam. Una cum VI. tabulis Chronicis, a temporibus Iothan usque ad excidium urbis Hierosolymorum deductis, potissimum pertinentibus ad Expositionem Danielis Prophetae, auctore Henrycho Bullingero Tigurinae ecclesiae ministro.* (Zurich: 1565); *Isaias excellentissimus Dei propheta, cuius testimoniiis Christus ipse Dominus et eius apostoli creberrime usi leguntur, expositus Homilijs CXC. quibus non tam sensus Prophetiae redditur, quam usus & fructus eius in Ecclesia Christi, ostenditur, auctore Henrycho Bullingero, Tigurinae Ecclesia ministro.* (Zurich: 1567); *Bullae Papisticae ante biennium contra Sereniss. Angliae, Franciae & Hyberniae Reginam Elizabetham, & contra inclytum Angliae regnum promulgatae, refutatio, Orthodoxaeque Reginae, & universi Regni Angliae defensio, Henrychi Bullingeri. S.* (London: 1571).

20 *The Decades* 2: 268 (II: 5).

21 *The Institutes* Book 4, Chapter 20, Section 24 (4.20.24), Book IV, p. 745 (IV: 745).

22 *The Decades* 2: 269 (II: 5).

23 *The Institutes* 4.20.22 (IV: 744).

24 *The Decades* 2: 269-270 (II: 5).

25 *The Institutes* 4.20.32 (IV: 748 - 749).

honor of God goes before that of the magistrate²⁴ (Calvin: obedience to rulers is never to lead us away from obedience to God²⁵); the magistrates are also referred to as gods in the Bible²⁶ (Calvin: God stands in the assembly of the magistrates, called gods²⁷); subjects are not to speak evil of their rulers and act like seditious rebels²⁸ (Calvin: subjects may not put forth their hands against the rulers and vindicate right²⁹); both public and private peace and tranquility belong to the duties of magistrates³⁰ (Calvin: civil government prevents the public peace from being disturbed and provides that each man may keep his property safe and sound³¹); the magistrate may kill in executing the power of the sword³² (Calvin: rulers are avengers unto wrath and they do not bear the sword in vain³³); magistracy is the power or authority awarded by God³⁴ (Calvin: magistracy signifies a mandate of rulers invested with divine authority³⁵); there are three kinds of magistracies or governments of commonwealths: the monarchy, aristocracy and democracy³⁶ (Calvin: the diversity of forms of government are aristocracy, democracy and tyranny³⁷); subjects owe obedience to magistrates³⁸ (Calvin: the people have to obey the magistrate³⁹); magistracy is very necessary and cannot be missing among men⁴⁰ (Calvin: magistracy (government) provides that a public manifestation of religion may exist among Christians, and that humanity be maintained among men⁴¹); a distinction has to be made between the office which is the good ordinance of God, and the evil person that does not rightly execute that good office⁴² (Calvin: some unjust magistrates are so alien to the office of magistracy, they discern no appearance of the image of God which ought to have shone in the magistrate⁴³); the oppressed under tyrannical princes must recall their sins and pray that God

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- 26 *The Decades* 2: 279 (II: 5).
 27 *The Institutes* 4.20.29 (IV: 747 - 748).
 28 *The Decades* 280 (II: 5).
 29 *The Institutes* 4.20.28 (IV: 746 - 747).
 30 *The Decades* 2: 298 (II: 6).
 31 *The Institutes* 4.20.3 (IV: 733).
 32 *The Decades* 2: 307 (II: 6).
 33 *The Institutes* 4.20.10 (IV: 737 - 738).
 34 *The Decades* 2: 309 (II: 6).
 35 *The Institutes* 4.20.4 (IV: 733 - 734).
 36 *The Decades* 2: 309-310 (II: 6).
 37 *The Institutes* 4.20.8 (IV: 735 - 736).
 38 *The Decades* 2: 311 (II: 6).
 39 *The Institutes* 4.20.4 (IV: 733 - 734).
 40 *The Decades* 2: 312 (II: 6).
 41 *The Institutes* 4.20.3 (IV: 733).
 42 *The Decades* 2: 314 (II: 6).
 43 *The Institutes* 4.20.24 (IV: 745).
 44 *The Decades* 2: 316 (II: 6).
 45 *The Institutes* 4.20.25 (IV: 745).

will draw his oppressed people out of their mischief⁴⁴ (Calvin: wicked kings are the Lord's wrath upon the earth and is a curse from God⁴⁵); sometimes God stirs up valiant men to displace tyrants, and set God's people at liberty⁴⁶ (Calvin: God sometimes intervenes by unwitting agents and delivers his oppressed people⁴⁷); the care of religion belongs to the magistrate⁴⁸ (Calvin: let Christian princes and magistrates be ashamed if they do not apply themselves to religion⁴⁹); the offices of the magistrates and of the ministers must not be confounded⁵⁰ (Calvin: spiritual and civil government must not be mingled because they have a completely different nature⁵¹); the magistrate is a law with life⁵² (Calvin: law is a silent magistrate, the magistrate is a living law⁵³); laws are good, profitable, necessary, and not to be broken⁵⁴ (Calvin: good laws can piously be used before God, and be rightly administered among men⁵⁵); the law of Moses is not to be enforced upon kingdoms and countries, because those seem to be the best laws, which, according to the circumstances come nearest to the precepts of the Ten Commandments and the rule of charity⁵⁶ (Calvin: whatever laws shall be framed to the law of God (Ten Commandments⁵⁷), directed to that goal, bound by that limit, there is no reason why we should disapprove of them, however they may differ from the Jewish law, or among themselves); let law forbid all uncleanness, wantonness, lightness, sensuality, and riotousness⁵⁸ (Calvin: laws that give honor to thieves, permitting promiscuous intercourse, are not to be regarded as laws⁵⁹); judgments are not abrogated among Christians⁶⁰ (Calvin: Christians may use the law courts, but without hatred and revenge⁶¹); let every nation or city retain still their penalties and order of punishing, unless it smacks of rigor and extreme cruelty⁶² (Calvin: although all laws tend to the same end, they do not agree on the manner of punishment, nor is this necessary or

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- 46 *The Decades* 2: 318 (II: 6).
47 *The Institutes* 4.20.30 (IV: 748).
48 *The Decades* 2: 323-324 (II: 7).
49 *The Institutes* 4.20.9 (IV: 736 - 737).
50 *he Institutes* 4.20.1 (IV: 732).
52 *The Decades* 2: 329 (II: 7).
53 *The Institutes* 4.20.14 (IV: 740).
54 *The Decades* 2: 341 (II: 7).
55 *The Institutes* 4.20.14 (IV: 740).
56 *The Decades* 2: 342 (II: 7).
57 *The Institutes* 4.20.16 (IV: 741).
58 *The Decades* 2: 343 (II: 7).
59 *The Institutes* 4.20.15 (IV: 740 - 741).
60 *The Decades* 2: 345 (II: 8).
61 *The Institutes* 4.20.17 (IV: 741 - 742).
62 *The Decades* 2: 355 (II: 8).
63 *The Institutes* 4.20.16 (IV: 741).
64 *The Decades* 2: 370 (II: 9).

expedient⁶³); war belongs to the right of the sword, which God has given to the magistrate⁶⁴ (Calvin: natural equity and the nature of the office dictate that princes must be armed not only to restrain the misdeeds of private individuals by judicial punishment, but also to defend by war the dominions entrusted to their safekeeping⁶⁵); taxes and tributes are due to the magistrate⁶⁶ (Calvin: tributes and taxes are the lawful revenues of princes, which they may chiefly use to meet the public expenses of their office⁶⁷).

There are, however, also some differences between Bullinger's views in his *Decades* and Calvin's condensed version thereof in his *Institutes*: firstly, Calvin's version is more systematic than that of Bullinger, due to the fact that *The Decades* was the result of a series of sermons on the tenets of the Reformed religion, and not an academic treatise, like Calvin's *Institutes*. So, for example, aspects pertaining to the same issue are dealt with under different headings (and even different sermons) and matters dealing with the office of magistracy, in particular, are scattered over various sections in the *Decades*.⁶⁸ Secondly, the absence of a strong view of the Biblical covenant, with the accompanying emphasis on man's duties and responsibilities in history, does not provide Calvin with the same strong theory of political resistance than that of Bullinger and the Zurich Reformation. Thirdly, Calvin's *Institutes* does not cover key-aspects of magistracy to the same degree as Bullinger's *Decades*, whilst a number of important themes were completely left out, for example the election of magistrates⁶⁹, who ought to choose them⁷⁰; what kind of men ought to be chosen to be magistrates, and the profile of a good magistrate⁷¹; judgment and the office of the judge⁷²; revenge⁷⁴ and punishment⁷³; whether it is lawful for a magistrate to kill⁷⁵ the guilty; wherefore, when, how, and what the magistrate must punish, etcetera.

The result of Calvin's succinct outline is, however, a rather over-condensed and incomplete Reformed version of magistracy; rather

65 *The Institutes* 4.20.11 (IV: 738 - 739).

66 *The Decades* 2: 370 (II: 9).

67 *The Institutes* 4.20.13 (IV: 739 - 740).

68 E.g. aspects pertaining to the nature of the office of magistracy (*The Decades* 2: 268 (2: V)); the offices of magistracy and ministers of religion are not to be confounded (*The Decades* 2: 329 (2: VII)); the offices of judges are described (*The Decades* 2: 346 (2: VIII)); Christians may fill the office of magistrate (*The Decades* 2: 385 (2: IX)).

69 *The Decades* 2: 318 (2: VI).

70 *Ibid.*, 2: 318 (2: VI).

71 *Ibid.*, 2: 319 (2: VI).

72 *Ibid.*, 2: 345 (2: VIII).

73 *Ibid.*, 2: 345 (2: VIII).

74 *Ibid.*, 2: 345 (2: VIII).

75 *Ibid.*, 2: 345 (2: VIII).

superficial and abstract, but, nevertheless, useful as a basis for discourse on magistracy and Reformed politics. Much more depth and lucidity on these issues, however, can be gleaned from Bullinger's *Decades*. However, through Calvin's schematic overview, the Zurich covenantal political perspectives shaped the views of generations of Reformed authors and permeated political systems throughout Europe, England and Scotland.

3. Zacharias Ursinus and the *Heidelberg Catechism* on magistracy: the road to the political views of the Second Reformation

The Heidelberg Reformation reflects a deep sense of piety, supported by what G.W. Niven calls a sort of “priestly solemnity”⁷⁶, and above all based on a Reformed theology “always earnestly and solemnly practical”⁷⁷. Nowhere is it more clearly manifested than in the answer to the sixth question of the *Heidelberg Catechism* – Did God create man wicked and perverse?: “By no means; but God created man good, and after his own image, in righteousness and true holiness, that he might rightly know God, his Creator, heartily love him, and live with him in eternal happiness, to glorify him and praise him”⁷⁸. In a certain sense a fundamental feature of the Heidelberg Reformation is the focus on man's responsibility towards God (to glorify and praise him) and towards his fellow man and his maintaining society⁷⁹. This duty towards mankind is closely related to the purpose of man's creation, namely to preserve society in the human race, which again is subordinate to the manifestation of God; for if men did not exist, God could not have those to whom he might reveal himself⁸⁰, and the mutual participation in the duties, kindness, and benefits which we owe each other; which again contributes to the preservation of society; for it is necessary to the continuance of the human race that peace and mutual intercourse exist among men.⁸¹

The concern for man's social duties and responsibilities, knit together within the covenant between God and man, based on the standards of piety contained in God's law, are nowhere clearer articulated than in the works of the Heidelberg Reformers. Zacharias Ursinus (1534 - 1583), the brilliant student of Bullinger, and close associate of the Zurich Reformation, pre-eminently reflects this concern for human society and

76 Introduction to *The Commentary of Dr. Zacharias Ursinus on the Heidelberg Catechism* (transl. From the Latin by G.W. Williard) (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, undated reproduction of the 1852 edition), xvii.

77 *Ibid.*, xvi.

78 *Ibid.*, at 27.

79 *Commentary of Ursinus* at p. 29.

80 The reference here is to Psalm 22: 23: “I will declare thy name unto my brethren”.

81 *Ibid.*, at 29.

piety, based on the covenant. In his answer to Question 18 of the Catechism, dealing with the mediatorial work of Christ in the covenant between God and man, Ursinus states that a covenant is a mutual contract, or agreement, between two parties, in which the one party binds himself to the other to accomplish something upon certain conditions, “giving or receiving something, which is accompanied with certain outward signs and symbols, for the purpose of ratifying in the most solemn manner the contract entered into, and for the sake of confirming it, that the engagement may be kept inviolate”.⁸² From this general definition of a covenant, Ursinus proceeds to a definition of the Biblical covenant, being a “mutual promise and agreement, between God and men, in which God gives assurance to men that he will be mercifully to them, remit their sins, grant them a new righteousness, the Holy Spirit, and eternal life by and for the sake of his Son, our Mediator”.⁸³ On the other hand, men bind themselves to God in this covenant that they will exercise repentance and faith, or that they will receive with a true faith this great benefit which God offers, and render such obedience as will be acceptable to him.⁸⁴ This agreement, or reconciliation, is called a covenant, because God promises man certain blessings, and demands from us in return our obedience.

In his exposition of the nature of this covenant, Ursinus follows the model set by Bullinger in his *De Testamento*.⁸⁵ The Hebrew term *berith*, which the Septuagint always translated into Greek as *diatheke* and the Latin writers rendered as *testamentum*, signifies the inheritance that results from a will (*testamentum*)⁸⁶ (Ursinus: a testament is the last will of a testator, in which he, at his death, declares what disposition he wishes to be made of his goods or possessions⁸⁷). From *testor*, which means “I make a will”, comes *testator*, “one who makes a will”, and it is in this meaning that Christ used the word in his letters to the Hebrews (9: 15 - 17)⁸⁸ (Ursinus: it is called a *testament*, because this reconciliation was made by the interposition of the death of Christ, the testator, that it might be ratified (Hebrews 9: 15 - 17)⁸⁹). *Berith* is derived from *barah*, that is, “he made a pact” or “he entered into a covenant”⁹⁰ (Ursinus: the Hebrew word *Berith*,⁹¹ signifies only a covenant, and not a testament). The covenant is entered

82 Ibid.

83 Ibid.

84 Ibid.

85 Heinrich Bullinger, *De Testamento Seu Foedere Dei unico & aeterno Henrychi Bullingeri brevis Expositio* (Zurich: Christopher Froschauer, 1534) (Transl. by Charles S. McCoy & J. Wayne Baker as *A Brief Exposition of the One and Eternal Testament or Covenant of God in Fountainhead of Federalism*, pp. 99 - 138.

86 At p. 101 (Bullinger’s text fol. 2b).

87 *Commentary* 97.

88 *Fountainhead*, p. 102 (3a).

89 *Commentary*, p. 97.

into solemnly and with special ceremonies, and conditions⁹² (Ursinus: this is called a covenant, because God promises to us certain blessings, and demands from us, in return, our obedience, employing also certain ceremonies for the confirmation thereof⁹³). Bullinger's *De Testamento* sets out the one and eternal testament or covenant of God, which both the prophets, inspired with the divine spirit, and the apostles, commissioned by the Son of God, explained by writing entire books⁹⁴ (Ursinus: this covenant is one in substance, but twofold in circumstances; or it is one as it respects the general conditions upon which God enters into an engagement with us, and we with him, and there is but one covenant, because the principal conditions, which are called the substance of the covenant, are the same before and since the incarnation of Christ⁹⁵) etcetera.

In brief, Ursinus follows Bullinger by stating the mediatorial work of Christ as being central to the covenant; the covenant being the same before and since the incarnation of Christ, and both covenants in the Old and New Testaments agreeing in (1) having God as their Author and Christ as the Mediator; (2) in the promise of grace concerning the remission of sins, and eternal life granted freely to such as believe by and for the sake of Christ.⁹⁶ In the *Larger Catechism*, Question 30: Where then do you get your hope of eternal life?, Ursinus answers: "From the gracious covenant which [is] newly established with those who believe in Christ".⁹⁷ This leads Ursinus to his definition of the covenant in Question 31 of the *Larger Catechism*: "It is the reconciliation with God gained by the mediation of Christ in which God, because of Christ, promises those who believe in him that he will always be a gracious father and will give them eternal life. They in turn respond to him by accepting his blessings in true faith and, as is fitting for thankful and obedient children, by glorifying him forever. And both parties publicly confirm this mutual promise by visible signs which we call sacraments", having, in essence, the same components as his views on the covenant in the *Heidelberg Catechism*.

90 *Fountainhead*, p. 103 (3b).

91 *Commentary*, p. 97.

92 *Fountainhead*, p. 103 (4b).

93 *Commentary*, p. 97.

94 *Fountainhead*, p. 103 (4a - 4b).

95 *Commentary*, p. 98.

96 *Commentary*, p. 99.

97 English translation by Fred H. Klooster and John Medendorp ("The Covenant. Exerpts from the Larger Catechism of Zacharias Ursinus" at <http://www.markers.com/ink/zucovenant.htm>).

Man's faithful performance of his duties in the covenant also includes his obedience to and execution of the requirements of God as set out in the Ten Commandments.⁹⁸ This also encompasses man's obedience to the human authorities instituted by God. In dealing with the required obedience to the offices of authority instituted by God, Ursinus, in his answer to Question 104 – What does God require in the fifth commandment?, includes all authorities under the titles of father and mother referred to in this commandment: “That I show all honor, love and fidelity, to my father and mother, and all authority over me and submit myself to their good instruction and correction with due obedience; and also patiently bear⁹⁹ with their infirmities, since it pleases God to govern us with their hand”.

The reasons of man's obedience to the second table, to Ursinus, is necessary so that (1) God himself may be worshipped by this obedience and that our love to him may be manifested by the love which we cherish towards our neighbor on God's account; (2) that our conformity with God may be made manifest by the love which we have towards our neighbor; (3) that human society may be preserved, which was formed and constituted by God for the praise and glory of his name.¹⁰⁰ This commandment, therefore, does not merely require that we honor and respect our parents, but all who are in authority over us; and requires, also, on the other hand, obedience not merely from children, but from all inferiors, of whatever rank or grade. The obedience required by this commandment comprehends three parts: (1) the proper virtues of superiors, or those who are placed in authority; (2) the proper virtues of¹⁰¹ inferiors, or those who are in subjection; (3) the virtues common to both.

With particular reference to the duties of magistrates, Ursinus identifies the following responsibilities: (1) to require from their subjects obedience, and external propriety according to both tables of the Decalogue; (2) to enforce the precepts of the Decalogue, by defending those who yield obedience to it, and punishing such as are disobedient; (3) to enact certain positive laws for the maintenance of civil order and honor of the state, and

98 See *Commentary*, p. 99. In Question 36 of his *Larger Catechism*, Ursinus deals with the difference between the Law and the Gospel. The Law contains the Covenant of nature established by God with man in creation; that means, it is known by man from nature, it requires perfect obedience of us to God, and it promises eternal life to those who keep it but threatens eternal punishment to those who do not. The Gospel, however, contains the covenant of grace; that means, although it exists, it is not known at all from nature; it shows us Christ's fulfillment of that righteousness which the law requires and its restoration in us through Christ's Spirit; and it promises eternal life freely on account of Christ to those who believe in him (translation by Klooster and Medendorp).

99 *Ibid.*, p. 574.

100 *Ibid.*, p. 575.

101 *Ibid.*, pp. 575 - 583.

which contribute to the obedience which the law of God requires; (4) the execution of the laws which they prescribe from time to time.¹⁰²

In opposition to the duties of magistrates, Ursinus identifies two extremes: the first is remissness, being a want of proper attention to their duties, which shows itself, either in not requiring from their subjects obedience to the whole Decalogue; or in not enacting such things as are necessary for the preservation and order of civil society; or in not defending the innocent from the wrongs which may be inflicted upon them; or in not enforcing, or punishing too lightly those who violate the law of God, or such positive laws as have been enacted from time to time; secondly, magistrates may act tyrannous, which consists either in demanding from their subjects what is unjust or not punishing those who sin; or in punishing them more severely than the offence which they have committed calls for.¹⁰³

The virtues proper to inferiors, or such as are in subjection, embody the following duties: (1) reverence to those who are in authority; (2) love to those who are authority in view of the office they fill; (3) obedience to what those in authority command by reason of their office; (4) gratitude to superiors, and (5) moderation and forbearance.¹⁰⁴ The virtues which are, according to Ursinus, common to superiors and inferiors, or to those who are in authority and in subjection, entail: (1) universal justice, which shows itself in obedience to all the laws pertaining to us in our respective callings; (2) particular distributive justice, which is a virtue preserving a just proportion in the distribution of office; (3) “laboriousness”, diligence and fidelity in discharging man’s duties; (4) love; (5) gratitude; (6) gravity; (7) modesty, and (8) equity.¹⁰⁵

The office of magistracy, to Ursinus, is a glorious institution, instituted by God for the well-being of mankind and comes to expression in man’s obeying God’s commandments pertaining to the duties required under the fifth precept of the Ten Commandments, and in manifesting the virtues required of both the rulers and the subjects, and shunning the vices which are opposed to these virtues, immediately stripping the office of magistracy of its glory and refusing God the honor due to him, in so far as the office itself is a reflection of the glory of God. By performing that which God requires in the fifth commandment, the glory of magistracy comes to full manifestation, realization and revelation in society.

102 Ibid., p. 578.

103 Ibid., pp. 578 - 579.

104 Ibid., p. 579.

105 Ibid., pp. 580 - 583.

4. David Pareus' forty aphorisms on magistracy

The Catechism was met with a “free, full response”¹⁰⁶, not only in the Palatinate, but also in other countries. “It was”, writes J.W. Niven, “as though the entire Reformed Church heard, and joyfully recognized, her own voice in the Heidelberg Catechism”.¹⁰⁷ He adds: “No product of mere private judgment or private will, could have come thus into such universal factor”.¹⁰⁸ The construction of the whole, in its uncommon simple, beautiful and clear style, with a freshness of “a sacred religious feeling”¹⁰⁹, breathing through its entire execution and the “pathos of a deep toned piety”¹¹⁰, flowing like an under current, through all its teaching, from beginning to end, reflecting “a peculiar character of dignity and force”¹¹¹, must surely have exerted a wide and penetrating influence well beyond the authority it enjoyed in the Palatinate. Also the support it drew from scholars like David Pareus (1548 - 1622), who took upon himself the task of actively promoting the work of Ursinus¹¹², contributed substantially to the popularity¹¹³ of the Catechism enjoyed before and after the Synod of Dordrecht.

Combining Bullinger's foundational views on magistracy with Calvin's systematic summary in his *Institutes*, Pareus produced forty aphorisms on magistracy, added to Ursinus's *Corpus Doctrinae Christianae*¹¹⁴, a commentary on the Catechism, incorporated in ten studies of Pareus done

106 Introduction to the *Commentary*, p. xvi.

107 Ibid.

108 Ibid.

109 Ibid., p. xvii.

110 Ibid.

111 Ibid.

112 Christopher J. Burchill, “On the Consolation of a Christian Scholar: Zacharias Ursinus (1534 - 83) and the Reformation in Heidelberg,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 37, (October 1986): electronic version (at <http://www74.homepage.villanova.edu/christopher.burchell>), unpaginated, calls Pareus the “closest disciple” of Ursinus.

113 At the Synod of Dordt, Ursinus's most influential work was commended as “an accurate summary of the orthodox Christian doctrine”. His work also impacted upon the English world. Because David Pareus had advocated calling rulers to account for their actions, in 1622, authorities at Oxford were ordered to search private and public libraries and bookshops, and burn every copy of his work. Similar orders were carried out at Cambridge (<http://www.lib.siu.edu/cni/letter.w2.html>). Pareus's commentary on Revelations was translated into English in 1644 (*A commentary upon the divine Revelation of the apostle and evangelist, Iohn by David Pareus ...; and especially ... upon the 20th chapter; is observed by the same author against the Millenaries, translated out of the Latine into English, by Elias Arnold. Amsterdam: Printed by C.P. 1644.* Microfilm. Ann Arbor, Mich. University Microfilms, 1971. 1 microfilm reel; 35mm. (Early English books, 1641-1700; 349: 23)).

114 *Corpus Doctrinae Christianae ... Explicationes Catecheticae ... Davidis Parei. Acc. Miscellanae Catechetica, superiorem ed., diligenter recognita magisque disposita.* (Bremen typis Villerianis: 1623).

from 1592 to 1617 at Heidelberg, all on the controversies of the Reformed Church.¹¹⁵ All the main tenets of Bullinger's views on magistracy are to be found in Pareus's aphorisms¹¹⁶: man is subject to a twofold government, firstly, spiritual, pertaining to man's inward nature, and secondly, governing the body externally and securing modesty and honesty among men.¹¹⁷ Man is also subject to civil governance, because the need for civil magistracy is not less than man's need for bread, water, sun, and air, in so far as it provides man with modest and honest living in the face of God and among themselves.¹¹⁸ It ensures that all idolatry, blasphemy and abuse of God's name are prevented, and that public peace and tranquillity among men is maintained.¹¹⁹ The doctrine of civil magistracy is divided into three parts: firstly, the authority of the magistrate; secondly, the laws of the magistrate, and thirdly, those subject to the office of magistracy.¹²⁰ Magistracy is a godly ordinance, expressly stated by the Apostle Paul in Romans 13: 1, 4: "For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God", and the magistrate is a minister of God to you for good, for God awarded magistrates with authority prudently and attentively to govern on his behalf (e.g. Moses, Jehoshaphat, the judges, etc.).¹²¹ Magistrates are called gods and Scripture testifies in many places that magistracy is a holy office. Against the Anabaptists, Pareus quotes the words of Christ in Luke 22: 25: "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who have authority over them are called 'Benefactors' ..."¹²², because we all stumble in many ways (James 3: 2).¹²³ The magistrate is a minister of God to you for good. There is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God (Romans 13: 1),¹²⁴ and men must submit themselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution: whether to a king as the one in authority, or the governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right (1 Peter 2: 13, 14).¹²⁵ Because rulers are the

115 This was added in a second part (240 pages): "Miscellanae catechetica in quibus praeceptui articuli Religionis Christianae inter evangelicos reformatos & heterodoxus controversi perspicui explicantur", the last controversion bearing the title: "Epitome Arminianisme sive Examen quinque articularum ministrorum Remonstrantium in Belgico".

116 "Aphorismi Doctrinae Orthodoxae Reformatorum Ecclesiarum, Articulus XI. De Magistratu Civili".

117 Aphorism I., p. 70. Hereafter only the number of the aphorism and the page number will be cited.

118 II., pp. 70 - 71.

119 III., p. 71.

120 IV., p. 71.1

121 V., p. 71.

122 VII., p. 72.

123 VIII., p. 72.

124 XI., p. 73.

125 Ibid.

servants of God, men must pay taxes to whom taxes, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, and honor to whom honor is due. Magistrates do not bear the sword in vain (Romans 13: 4)¹²⁶, and as the keepers of the law have the duty to maintain law and justice, honesty, peace and concord, to promote the well-being of their subjects and act as a threat to evil.¹²⁷ The law is the breath of the Republic and magistracy is the living law, etc.¹²⁸

In his promotion of Ursinus's commentary on the Catechism, Pareus largely systemized Bullinger's views on magistracy and refined Calvin's systematical approach to magistracy,¹²⁹ Pareus played an important role in popularizing the contents of the Catechism, so that at the time of the Synod of Dordrecht it had gained considerable influence, both on the European continent and in Great Britain.¹³⁰

5. The *Heidelberg Catechism* and the Dutch Second Reformation

From Heidelberg the Catechism was introduced into the Netherlands through the services of the faithful, zealous chaplain of Frederick II, Peter Datheen. The provincial Synod in 1574 decided to use this catechism, and in 1578 the General Synod did likewise. The Synod of Dordt in 1618 / 1619 approved of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, and it soon became the most ecumenical of the Reformed catechisms and confessions.¹³¹ Jacobus Trigland (1583 - 1654), one of the Dutch divines at the Synod of Dordt, declared that he had recalled and stated on numerous occasions that the British theologians exceedingly praised the Catechism and declared that neither their own nor the French churches possessed such an outstanding catechism; that the authors of this document had been singularly inspired by the Holy Spirit, and in the formulation of the contents, had surpassed

126 XIV., p. 74.

127 XV., p. 74.

128 XXIII., p. 78: "Leges esse animam Reipublica: & Magistratum esse vivam legem".

129 The success of Pareus's work (and that of Ursinus) was largely the result of the eclectic way in which diverse elements from the work of Bullinger and Calvin were adopted and adapted into a brief schematic whole.

130 Although Pareus played an important role in furthering the Reformed views of Bullinger and Calvin, the possibility is not excluded, according to Christopher Burchill, that Pareus was also influenced by Martyr, through the influence of Martyr's Zurich lectures.

131 For a more comprehensive overview of the impact of the Heidelberg Catechism on the Dutch population, see Johannes Van Der Kemp, *De Christen Geheel en Al Het Eigendom van Christus in Leven en Sterven ...* (The Christian Totally the Possession of Christ in Life and Death) (Rotterdam: Philip Losel, 1745), Introduction, and Johan Barueth, *De Leere der Waarheid Vervat in den Heidelberschen Catechismus* (The Doctrine of Truth Contained in the Heidelberg Catechism) (Dordrecht: Abraham Blussé en Zoon, 1777, Historical Overview.

themselves.¹³² Trigland also added that all members at the Synod were united in their resolution that the Catechism provided a very useful and well-constructed abridged version of the orthodox Christian religion, suitable for instruction of both young and old.¹³³ Also Hieronymus van Alphen, the Dutch Reformed theologian testified to the fact that the Catechism was followed, not only in the Palitinate, but throughout Germany and virtually the whole of Switzerland and by all the Dutch churches.¹³⁴

Besides the commentary by the author of the Catechism, Ursinus, and the first commentary by Bastingius, the first hundred years after the composition of the Catechism, more than a hundred commentaries on the Catechism were produced.¹³⁵ It is understandable, therefore, that authors addressing the phenomenon of increasing secularism and rationalism, would appeal to the covenant and Biblical piety, and the role thereof as stated in the Catechism.¹³⁶ With the rise of the Dutch Second Reformation, appeals to the Biblical covenant and piety formed the main thrust to restore and promote the Reformed faith in the Netherlands. Dutch authors from the Second Reformation generally appealed for the restoration of the glory of magistracy, based on the covenant and the pious life standards of both rulers and subjects.

A typical example of the works reflecting an experiential Reformed faith appealing to the covenant and piety, is the work *Practicale Mengelstoffen*¹³⁷ (1757), dealing with the deterioration of the Reformed faith in the church and society in the Netherlands, by the Dutch author Jeremias Hollebeek (1689 - 1775). In the preface to the reader the author appeals to the Dutch nation for the restoration of the Reformed faith and fighting the decay in the Dutch Reformed Churches and in civil life, pointing out the threats of God's judgments and the sad state of the church and the civil state. To his work on the sins of the Dutch nation, as causes

132 Jacobus Trigland, *Kerckelycke Geschiedenissen ...* (Church Histories) (Leiden: Adriaen Wyngaerden, 1651), p. 1145 (a).

133 Ibid. For the permeating influence of the Catechism in the Reformed Churches of France, England and Germany, see Trigland at p. 360.

134 See Barueth, *De Leere der Waerheid ...*, Historical Overview.

135 Ibid.

136 Barueth, *ibid.*, states that the Catechism was generally accepted in the Dutch Churches, not as a "rule of faith" but as a "formulary of unity on doctrine".

137 The full title reads: *Practicale Mengelstoffen. Eerste Deel. Betreffende het Groot Verval in Neerlands Kerke; Met aenbieding van goede raed tot derselver Behoudnisse* (Diverse Subjects of Practical Nature. First Part. Concerning the Major Decline in the Dutch Churches; With Sound advice for its Salvation) (Leyden: Abraham Kallevier, 1757)

of God's judgments, he also added a brief exposition on the Biblical covenant.¹³⁸ Among the sins of the Dutch nation exposed by Hollebeek, he included the refusal of the political inferiors to show the required honor to their political superiors; their opposition to the laws and ordinances, instituted for their well-being and their abuse, slander and curses because of the taxes imposed for maintaining freedom and religion, and their transgressions of the ordinances of God (Romans 13: 1 - 7).¹³⁹ He also added the sins committed by superior political authorities against their inferiors by suppressing them like king Rehoboam did (1 Kings 12: 14 - 16) or by pronouncing the guilty not guilty and vice versa. How fortunate the country, writes Hollebeek, whose magistrates follow David's virtuous example in Psalm 101.¹⁴⁰ The remedy for the restoration of the Reformed faith among the Dutch people and the glory of magistracy, according to Hollebeek, is situated in the return to the Biblical covenant and the norm of piety contained in the Ten Commandments.¹⁴¹

It was, however, the commentaries on the *Heidelberg Catechism*, by authors such as Joannes Beukelman (1704 - 1757), Alexander Comrie (1706 - 1774), Petrus van der Hagen (1641 - 1671) Johannes van der Kemp (1664 - 1718), Anthonius van der Kemp (- 1680) and Johannes d' Outrein (1662 - 1722) that strongly promoted the Catechism as an authoritative source of instruction during the Second Reformation. Theologians like Gualterus Bodaan ((1637 - 1684), Franciscus Burmannus (1628 - 1679), Bernardus Smijtegelt (1665 - 1739), Wilhelmus à Brakel (1635 - 1711) and Johannes Barueth (1710 - 1782) in their works provide vivid examples of the impact of the upcoming appeals to the covenant and piety during the Second Reformation and the quest to restore the glory of magistracy from a Reformed perspective.

6. The Dutch Second Reformation and the covenant

In a particular sense it can be said that theologically the University of Heidelberg, the oldest of the German universities, the undoubted leader in the first stage of further reform and the creator of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, the document which, even more than Calvin's *Institutes* or Melancthon's *Confessio Augustana variata*, bound the disparate Reformed communities in Europe together, and provided a sound Reformed basis from which the Dutch Second Reformation received its

138 At p. 83.

139 Ibid., p. 87.

140 Containing David's profession of uprightness.

141 See pp. 123 *et seq.*

impetus.¹⁴² With support from the Herborn theologians, strongly advocating the idea of the Biblical covenant, and the work of David Pareus (1548 - 1622), the impact of covenantal theology was immediately felt in the Netherlands. It became the general trend among Dutch authors of the first half of the seventeenth century to appeal to the Biblical covenant and to the restoration of piety in their efforts to further the Reformed faith. Across the board, Dutch authors from the Second Reformation also appealed to the restoration of the glory of magistracy on the basis of the Biblical covenant and pious standards of living of both rulers and subjects.

Gualterus Bo(u)daan's analysis of the Biblical covenant is preceded by an exposition of the creation of man in the image of God – because man was created in God's image, man has a moral duty to love God and his neighbor.¹⁴³ The covenant of works is based on this natural duty of man and the justice of God. The covenant is a compact between two parties to maintain peace with mutual promises and threats to prevent any violations of the covenant. A perfect covenant contains the following elements: firstly, the parties to the covenant; secondly, the conditions on which the pact is concluded, and thirdly, the threats to prevent any breaking of the pact.¹⁴⁴ To Bo(u)daan everything taught by Holy Scripture about the image of God, to which man was created; everything it says about the law and the covenant of works, to which our first parents were subjected, depends on the law.¹⁴⁵ In such a pact and under this covenant of works, Adam and his wife were placed. Also in and through our first parents, mankind was brought under the covenant of works and the law.¹⁴⁶

Besides this covenant of works, the covenant of grace is a pact concluded by the Triune God with fallen and sinful men on the basis of the Testament of grace, providing man with the possibility of forgiveness of sins, salvation etcetera, and concluded on the condition of faith, through love.¹⁴⁷ Only through Christ as Mediator in the covenant of grace can man be saved.¹⁴⁸ In his explanation of the mediatorial work of Christ, Bo(u)daan

142 For the role of Pareus in the preparation of the way to a "Second Reformation", see Burchill, "On the Consolation of a Christian Scholar", (<http://www74.homepage.villanova.edu/christopher.burchell>), unpaginated.

143 *Leere Der Waarheid* (The Doctrine of Truth) (Amsterdam: The Widow of Joannes van Someren, 1685), p. 66. Also his dedication of the work to the congregation of Amsterdam contains an exposition of a few hundred pages, dealing mostly with the Biblical covenant.

144 At p. 77.

145 Ibid., p. 81.

146 Ibid., p. 87..

147 Ibid., p. 185, 186.

148 Ibid., p. 205.

follows the structure of the *Heidelberg Catechism*. In his work on “the two witnesses” (or restoring the truth and service of God in the city of Amsterdam¹⁴⁹), Bo(u)daan appeals to the residents of Amsterdam to disassociate themselves from the atheism of Spinoza and that of many unbelievers that there is no God, as well as the unbelief of political rulers to discern the true God.¹⁵⁰ In typical covenantal fashion, Bo(u)daan discerns the true consolation of believers amidst the prosecution of the true believers, and amidst the fact that kings and magistrates handed their power to the whore of Babylon in order to suppress the Reformed Church, reflected in the writings of the prophets.¹⁵¹

The covenantal focus of the Dutch Second Reformation is also clearly discernable in the works of two of the most widely read authors of this period, namely Bernardus Smijtegelt and Wilhelmus à Brakel. Similar to Bo(u)daan, Smijtegelt also focuses on man who has been created in the image of God and man’s ability to truly know God and serve Him. God entered into a covenant with man, and it was this covenant that was broken by man’s fall into sin and man’s transgression of God’s law.¹⁵² The law of God is also called a “fiery law”, the “tables of the law”, or the “law of works”.¹⁵³ The author of this law is God, in particular the Son of God (Acts 7: 38). Two thousand five hundred and fifty years after the creation of the world; fourteen hundred and seventy four years before the birth of Christ; seven hundred and ten years after the calling of Abraham from Ur of the Chaldeans; fifty days after the Exodus of Israel from Egypt,¹⁵⁴ God gave his law to Moses after the Israelites had purified themselves. God read the law aloud “from his lofty palace” (Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5) amidst thunder and flashes of lightning. Smijtegelt now draws a distinction between the covenant of works, the law and the covenant of grace. The law existed before the covenant of grace because it is also written on the hearts of the Gentiles who are strangers to the covenant of grace.¹⁵⁵ Although the law “demands and urges, curses and cuts”, it provides no

149 Contained in the same work: *Opstandinge Der Twee Getuigen, of Herstelling van Waarheid en Godsdienst binnen de stad van Amsteldam in 't Jaar MDLXXVIII* (Rise of the Two Witnesses, or Restoration of Truth and Religion in the City of Amsterdam in the Year MDLXXVIII) (Amsterdam: The Widow of J. van Someren, 1684), the Preface.

150 Ibid.

151 Ibid.

152 *Des Christens Eenige Troost in Leven en Sterven of Verklaring Over Den Heidelbergschen Katechismus, in Twee en Vijftig Predikatiën* (The Christian’s Only Consolation in Life and Death or Exposition on the Heidelberg Catechism, in Fifty Two Sermons) New Edition. (Rotterdam: Van Der Meer & Verbruggen, [1739] 1856), p. 33.

153 Ibid, p. 517.

154 Ibid.

155 Ibid., p. 519.

power; the law knows no Christ, while the covenant of grace brings us to Christ.¹⁵⁶ The implication of this is that both Christians and Gentiles are subject to God's law, but only through the mediatorial work of Christ can man be saved. The foundational role of the covenant in the lives of the believers,¹⁵⁷ à Brakel, is beyond dispute. In his *Christian's Reasonable Service*,¹⁵⁸ à Brakel states that the elect need but to open their mouths to receive, for whatever is comprehended in the articles of the covenant will most certainly be given to them. On the other hand, they must focus upon the covenant, be active in entering into the covenant of grace, and living therein, they must make it the foundation of their life: "This will motivate the godly to proceed with understanding and steadfastness, neither resting in the steadfastness of their faith or godliness nor, as one is so often inclined to do, being tossed to and fro when both appear to diminish".¹⁵⁸ Because the covenant of works has been broken and it would be to the advantage of God's children to look away from this covenant of grace, the foundation for all rest and comfort "and seek holiness from Him as a principal element of salvation".¹⁵⁹ Entering into this covenant embodies reconciliation with the Triune God and a right to eternal life. In this covenant the fullness of salvation is to be found.¹⁶⁰ Embracing this covenant and yielding oneself unto the Lord, brings about living in peace and friendship with God; consists of "light, love, joy, and pure holiness, which all partakers of the covenant shall enjoy both now and forever."¹⁶¹ À Brakel now calls upon the hesitant: "Come, make a resolution, and enter into the covenant."¹⁶²

Also in his commentary on the *Heidelberg Catechism*, Johannes Beukelman takes the covenant as a focal point for his exposition of the Reformed faith. Firstly, he draws a distinction between the covenant of works, concluded between God and Adam, and the covenant of grace concluded between God and Moses after man's fall into sin.¹⁶³ The prelapsarian covenant was broken through man's disobedience (Genesis 3: 1 - 6), as a result of which God again concluded a covenant with Israel

156 Ibid.

157 Translated from the Dutch by Bartel Elshout, ed. by Joel R. Beeke, Volume I, third printing (Grand Rapids, Michigan: [1992] 1999), p. 262. All translations of Brakel's work are those of the author, AR.

158 Ibid., p. 380.

159 Ibid.

160 Ibid., p. 449.

161 Ibid.

162 Ibid.

163 *De Leere Der Waarheid tot Godzaligheid; of Volledige Verklaaring Over den Heidelbergschen Kategismus, in Twee en Vyftig Leeredenen: ...* (The Doctrine of Truth to Godliness; or Complete Expositions of the Heidelberg Catechism in Fifty Two Sermons: ...), First Part. ('s Gravenhage: Jan Abraham Bouvink, 1774), p. 47.

(Exodus 19) after which God's people received his law. This (second) covenant was not the covenant of works because of man's fall into sin; neither was it a "mixed covenant", composed of the covenant of works and the covenant of grace, for then Israel would have sought its justification through the covenants of works and grace, in conflict with Romans 11: 6. Nor is it a natural or people's covenant or a forensic covenant or an external covenant demanding external obedience.¹⁶⁴

The covenant between God and Israel, concluded at Horeb, was in fact the covenant of grace. It was the same covenant concluded between God and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Deuteronomy 7: 12 and 29: 13). The contents of this covenant were God's promise to be the God of Israel, and Israel's promise to be God's priestly kingdom. Although this is a covenant of grace, God's moral law has a bearing on this covenant.¹⁶⁵ Referring to the law, Beukelman states that although the law was given to convince the unconverted of sin, God's curse and man's damnability, for their transgressions, the main aim of the law is to serve as a rule of life and gratitude. Israel, who was included by God in the covenant, was given God's law as a rule of life and everlasting thankfulness for God's grace.¹⁶⁶ The general line of covenantal thought in the theology of Bo(u)daan, Smijtegelt and Beukelman is the same: the Biblical covenant was *established* by God in a monopoleuric (one-sided / unconditional / unilateral) fashion, but it was a mutual covenant and duopleuric (mutual / conditional / bilateral) in its *functioning*. Although a distinction can be drawn between the covenant of works and the covenant of grace, both covenants are manifestations of God's one and eternal covenant with man. The eternal covenant was concluded subject to man's undertaking to obey God's commandments, accepting the personal responsibilities and rights emanating from it, including man's responsibility to obey the will of God. Due to man's fall into sin, man is unable to keep the conditions and promises of the covenant. Man's status as a partner to the covenant and obedience to the conditions of the covenant has been restored through the mediatorial work of Christ and man's obedience to the law is a manifestation of this thankfulness for his salvation and his sanctification in so far as the law of the covenant is also a rule of life for the whole of mankind, including political authorities and subjects.

The same line of Reformed covenantal thought is also reflected in the theological position of Bo(u)daan, Hellenbroek and Beukelman, on the basis of the Zurich Reformation's approach to the Biblical covenant.

164 Ibid., p. 735.

165 Ibid., pp. 735 - 736.

166 Ibid., 736.

7. The office of magistracy and the Dutch Second Reformation

By the time Abraham van de Velde (1614 - 1677) wrote his treatise on the 125-year history of the United Netherlands, at the dawn of the Second Reformation in the Netherlands, the paradigm of the Biblical covenant had already substantially permeated Dutch Reformed thought. The central theme of his exposition on civil magistracy is that “if someone has occasion to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, it is they who are given authority in this world”.¹⁶⁷ They will do this when they exercise themselves in the Word of the Lord, and read it all the days of their lives (Deuteronomy 17: 19). They do this when they subject themselves to the gospel, in obedience kiss the Son, serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. To Van de Velde it is not the office that adorns the doctrine, but the piety of those who hold the office. Like a candle or light shows up better on a high place, than when it sits on the floor, so these exalted persons who live godly lives adorn the doctrine better than those, who do not with fear and trembling serve the Lord. The former can do much good for the people by their example, since people are inclined to follow the example of their magistrates. The blessings bestowed upon the magistrate in Holland, performing their duties, are directly related to the covenant concluded by Prince William (“the Lord’s Hero!”).¹⁶⁸

One of the prominent Dutch divines of the Second Reformation, Wilhelmus à Brakel, was the author of probably the most widely read work of this period, with the title *The Christian’s Reasonable Service*, a commentary on the Reformed faith.¹⁶⁹ His commentary on the fifth precept of the Ten Commandments, is virtually a summary of Ursinus’s version in his *Treasurebook*, the Dutch version of his commentary on the *Heidelberg Catechism*. À Brakel first deals with the object of this precept and the duties attached thereto.¹⁷⁰ To à Brakel, the object is contained in the words “father” and “mother”, with regard to the domestic, ecclesiastical and

167 Chapter 46, unpaginated edition, of the text with the English title: *The Wonders of the Most High (A 125 Year History of the United Netherlands 1550 - 1675) or Indication of the causes, ways and means whereby the United Provinces, against the expectation of the whole world, were elevated in such a marvelous way from their previous oppression to such great, awe-inspiring riches and acclaim. As related by several eminent historians, and which after the manner of the time are compiled to a necessary and profitable use ...* (Edmonton, Still Waters Revival Books, 1999).

168 Ibid.

169 The Dutch title reads: *Logikē Latreia, dat is redelyke godtsdienst, in welke de goddelyke waerheden des genaden verbondts worden verklaert, tegen partyen beschermt, en tot de practyke aangedrongen. Als mede de bedeeling des verbondts en de handelingen Gods met zyne kerke in het O. Testament, ende in het N. Testament, vertoont in een verklaringe van de Openbaringe Johannes ...* 16th Edition. (Rotterdam: The Widow of Hendrik van den Aak, [1700] 1784.

170 Ibid., p. 150.

political spheres.¹⁷¹ In the political sphere “fathers” refer to (a) the authorities of higher and lower status, each with its particular status and rank, and to which the name of either “father” or “mother” is attached (e.g. David called Saul his father (1 Samuel 24: 11,12)).¹⁷² The duties attached to the object, according to à Brakel, entail those of “higher and lower and more and less”.¹⁷³ They involve the virtues of those higher in office towards their subjects, namely in which everyone is placed by God, and to love those subject to their authority.¹⁷⁴ The virtues of the subjects towards their superiors are (1) to *honor* them, (a) to hold them in high esteem as superiors installed by God (1 Thessalonians 5: 12); (b) to show subservience towards the authority of superiors (Romans 13: 1); (c) to pay tribute in word and deed; (2) to *love* their superiors, not only as human beings, but also with regard to their authority; even if the person filling the office is not amiable or does not conduct himself worthy of respect, the subjects are still under the duty to love their superiors, because it is pleasing to God; (3) to act *faithfully* towards their superiors; (4) to show *obedience* by obediently executing the commands of superiors in everything required by them and to diligently execute the orders of the superiors, not only when the governance of superiors is benevolent, but also where their governance is strict – the orders of superiors are to be obeyed, not only because this is right and proper, but because superiors have the power to command (1 Peter 2: 18) and only that is exempted which is against God’s commandments (Acts 4: 19); (5) to have *forbearance* with their infirmities because superiors are also human beings and sometimes act unmercifully towards their subjects, giving offence and conducting themselves improperly towards their subjects.¹⁷⁵ The sins against the fifth commandment can, states à Brakel, be easily deduced from the required virtues.¹⁷⁶ The sins of superiors towards their inferiors are: (1) to despise their office by behaving unbecomingly and slavishly towards them; (2) to hate their inferiors, behaving inimically towards them; (3) to provide them with a bad example; (4) not to seek the advantage of their subjects but their own, abusing their subjects for their own selfish interests; (5) not to attend to the needs of their subjects, not taking the needs of their subjects to heart; (6) not to show commiseration with the infirmities of the subjects but to punish them harshly and mercilessly.¹⁷⁷

171 Ibid., pp. 150, 151.

172 Ibid., p. 151.

173 Ibid.

174 Ibid.

175 Ibid., pp. 151 - 152.

176 Ibid., p. 153.

177 Ibid.

The sins of the inferiors towards their superiors include: (1) despising them by acting impolitely, surly and contemptible towards them (1 Samuel 10: 27); (2) having an aversion for them and loathing them; (3) behaving faithlessly towards them; (4) being disobedient and rejecting their authority; (5) scorning and ridiculing them.¹⁷⁸ À Brakel concludes that we should heed what is included under the terms “father” and “mother”; we should consider our relationship towards them, in the light of their authority, the duties of the superiors towards inferiors and *vice versa*, examining our behavior towards superiors and inferiors, taking note of sins, humbling ourselves, seeking reconciliation, motivated to act according to the commandments in the light of the purpose thereof, namely the prolongation of our abode in the land that the Lord our Father gives us.¹⁷⁹ Man is, therefore, not only called upon to avoid evil but also to honor and obey all superiors instituted by God, because (1) it is the explicit command of God; (2) all superiors receive their authority from God, which authority is a shadow of God’s glory; (3) man must manifest love, solicitude, and observe the duties to accomplish this, and (4) God bestows blessings upon obedient inferiors.¹⁸⁰

In his *Synopsis* of the Reformed doctrine Franciscus Burmannus follows the traditional Reformed line of thought on magistracy, starting his exposition with an analysis of the divine origin of the office of magistracy, the duties of magistrates towards their subjects and taking upon themselves the protection of the Reformed religion.¹⁸¹ This analysis of Burmannus is based on the Biblical covenant. Under the dispensation of the new covenant (the covenant of grace) believers gather together in Republics and commonwealths and require the care and protection of political authorities, and submit themselves to their governance.¹⁸² In this covenantal dispensation, civil government is also important to the church. Political authority, to Burmannus, originated from man’s fall into sin – kingdoms gradually evolved from institutions like marriages, cities and republics.¹⁸³ In spite of man’s fall into sin, God did not withdraw his grace from his people. Burmannus states that although man has the power to appoint political authorities, the power of these institutions are from

178 Ibid., pp. 153 - 154.

179 Ibid., pp. 155 - 156.

180 Ibid., pp. 156 - 157.

181 *Synopsis. Dit is Kort Begryp Der Heilige Godgeleerdheid, En Voornamelyk van de Huishouding Der Verbonden Gods, Van het begin tot aan het einde der Wereld* (Synopsis. That is a Short Summary of the Holy Knowledge of God, in particular of the Dispensations of the Covenants of God, From the Beginning to the End of the World) (Amsterdam: Johannes Rotterdam, 1740), pp. 574, 580.

182 Ibid., pp. 575 - 576.

183 Ibid., p. 575.

God.¹⁸⁴ Because of man's sin, God sometimes exercises his wrath by punishing the knavery of peoples by delivering them into the hands of tyrants and the only recourse of God's people are their "tears and prayers".¹⁸⁵ Where a free republic exists, it is the duty of political authorities and leaders to protect their freedom by all possible means and prevent their servitude to new rulers. Such a subjection would not be a "lesser error than sentencing a free person to the cruelest servitude".¹⁸⁶ Burmannus also finds the subjection of political authorities to papal supremacy insufferable – not only did the papists (the violators of political government) hand over tribunals to "lions" and incorporate the rights and laws of kingdoms in their papal bulls, but they flung down kingly crowns and the dignity of kingdoms; subjecting them to Papish authority under the pretext that temporary powers should be subservient to spiritual authorities.¹⁸⁷

The commentary of Johannes Beukelman on Question 104 of the *Heidelberg Catechism* follows the same Reformed line of thinking: God is a God of order and not of chaos.¹⁸⁸ To obey one's father and mother also includes obedience to all authorities ruling over man, whether domestic, political or ecclesiastic. The worldly authorities include all lawfully instituted political authorities, both higher and lower. The violent and harsh rule of worldly authorities does not diminish the duty to honor and obey them (1 Peter 2: 18).¹⁸⁹ Beukelman also supports the Reformed view of the duties of political authorities towards themselves and towards their subjects: (1) to have knowledge of the true service of God; to be convinced thereof, to study God's Word, as the kings of Israel were instructed to copy the law in their own hand twice per year and read therefrom daily (Deuteronomy 17: 18, 19); (2) they must conduct themselves like fathers of the fatherland and guardians of the church, maintaining both tables of the law and preventing all godlessness and grievous sins (Romans 13).¹⁹⁰ Furthermore, believers must pray to God for the authorities to support the true religion and to conduct themselves as maintainers of both tables of God's law.¹⁹¹

Finally, the commentary of the Dutch theologian Johannes Barueth can be taken as typical example of the authors of the Dutch Second Reformation on the nature of the office of magistracy and the obedience due to the

184 Ibid., pp. 576 - 577.

185 Ibid., p. 577.

186 Ibid.

187 Ibid., pp. 577 - 578.

188 *De Leere der Waarheid tot Godzaligheid*, p. 839.

189 Ibid., p. 843.

190 Ibid., p. 844.

191 Ibid.

bearers of political authority.¹⁹² Barueth's exposition, fits into the structure of his commentary on the second table of the law, dealing with the duties of love towards the neighbor generally, and the Christian's duties towards those in authority in particular. Barueth divides all authority into those pertaining to domestic, ecclesiastical and civil institutions.¹⁹³ The civil (or third category) of authority includes those of kings, governors, magistrates and all other bodies (whether higher or lower) under the title of "fathers". In the first part of Barueth's exposition, four aspects pertaining to the title of "father" receive particular emphasis: Firstly, the foundation of all authority, supervision, government and rule flows from domestic and fatherly government¹⁹⁴; secondly, with the name of "father" the subjection of inferiors to superiors is softened¹⁹⁵; thirdly, the reference to fathers evokes an affection in the hearts of the subjects to obey their rulers¹⁹⁶; and fourthly, to imprint upon the minds of rulers their duty of fatherly and motherly love and tenderness towards their subjects.¹⁹⁷ Furthermore, Barueth deals with the honor subjects should have towards the authorities placed over them.¹⁹⁸ This entails, firstly, the duty to show love and faithfulness towards them; secondly, the duty of subjects to submit themselves to their good teaching and chastisement with proper obedience; thirdly, that subjects must also have forbearance with their infirmities and shortcomings; fourthly, God wishes to govern us through his hand and authority and this, in fact, is a reflection of God's governance of mankind.¹⁹⁹ All these things were wisely and ingeniously devised and structured in the *Heidelberg Catechism*, according to Barueth.²⁰⁰ This entails that subjects must show their parents and all authorities all honor, love and faithfulness.²⁰¹ Honor is closely knit to love, and both to faithfulness. Barueth, therefore, sees honor, faithfulness and love as three overlapping circles that cannot be broken. Honor is manifested both inwardly and outwardly.²⁰² To honor, the Catechism attaches love because, to Barueth, through love honor is discharged – the greatest honor which someone can receive, is true and unfeigned love.²⁰³ To this he adds

192 *De Leere Der Waarheid Vervat in den Heidelbergschen Catechismus ...* (The Doctrine of Truth Contained in the Heidelberg Catechism ...) (Dordrecht: Abraham Blussé & Zoon, 1777).

193 *Ibid.*, p. 234.

194 *Ibid.*, p. 236.

195 *Ibid.*

196 *Ibid.*

197 *Ibid.*

198 *Ibid.*, p. 237.

199 *Ibid.*, pp. 236 - 237.

200 *Ibid.*, p. 237.

201 *ibid.*

202 *Ibid.*

203 *Ibid.*

faithfulness, which cannot be separated from honor and love.²⁰⁴ Faithfulness is the burning, zealous and concerted effort to maintain “the good name of authorities placed over us”.²⁰⁵ This duty is expounded by the Catechism to entail that we will subject ourselves to the good teaching and punishment of authorities with proper obedience. Reason teaches us that obedience cannot be separated from honor, because all disobedience towards authorities flow from “contempt of authority and is a manifest example thereof”.²⁰⁶ Further, we are called upon to have forbearance with their infirmities and indigence by showing honor, love and faithfulness, not only to the good but also harsh authorities.²⁰⁷ Lastly, Barueth points out that subjects must consider that God governs us through their hand (Ephesians 6: 1, 2; Colossians 3: 20, 22; Romans 13: 1-5; 1 Peter 2: 13 - 20), because all authority, dignity, majesty, and sovereignty are from God and a “beam” of godly rule so that he who despises political authority, in effect, despises God.²⁰⁸ Referring to God’s promises of blessing, Barueth states that in Biblical times disobedience to parents, prophets, priests and political rulers was punished in three ways. Transgressors were ejected from Canaan, their fatherland, by the Assyrians, Babylonians and Roman conquerors.²⁰⁹ They were scattered among the heathens and maligned, despised and trodden under foot by all the nations of the earth. They were also ejected from their heavenly fatherland and inheritance.²¹⁰

From the expositions of the duties and virtues embodied in the fifth precept of the law by authors of the Dutch Second Reformation, it appears that the nature of the office of magistracy, the duties of rulers and subjects, and the virtues of political governance are closely associated with man’s duties, responsibilities and status within the covenant.

8. Conclusion

Magistracy is not merely a mundane and secular matter, arising from the sinful needs of mankind, but a glorious and virtuous institution to the honor of God. This is the focal perspective of the Zurich Reformation’s view on magistracy. This stands in sharp contrast to the secularism typical of the post medieval views on political power.

204 Ibid., p. 238.

205 Ibid.

206 Ibid., p. 239.

207 Ibid., p. 240.

208 Ibid., p. 241.

209 Ibid., p. 243.

210 Ibid.

The end of the Middle Ages saw the breaking down of the medieval order under which the individual was seen as a minute part of a universal organism, and the emergence of the notion of the individual as an end unto himself. Machiavelli (1496 - 1527) introduced the modern notion of politics, namely the state as an end in itself, that a state which is not expanding must decline, and that the principles upon which the prince must rule are conditioned purely by the end, namely the success of the state. The results of the secular views on political society produced implications which meant that moral standards are not necessarily binding upon political rulers and that the prince may at times use means which are immoral and, for the sake of maintaining political power, make deceit and hypocrisy indispensable. Machiavelli maintained that religion is but an instrument of policy, that secular politics have a disregard of law or organization above that of the state itself. The resulting nave of absolutism in the fifteenth and sixteenth century in almost every part of Western Europe brought a new interest in alternative political theories. Bullinger, follower of Zwingli in Zurich, responded to the need of formulating an alternative political theory, based on the reformed idea of the Biblical covenant. This covenantal model of political theory devised by Bullinger, formed the backbone of the Heidelberg Reformation. Ursinus followed in the footsteps of Bullinger's views on the covenant and the office of magistracy, also drawing upon Calvin's condensed version of Bullinger's political theology.

It was, however, Ursinus's work on the *Heidelberg Catechism*, his commentary in the *Treasurebook*, and the forty aphorisms on magistracy by David Pareus, which served as the platform on which the authors of the Dutch Second Reformation could establish a strong tradition of covenantal magistracy in opposition to the politics of secular absolutism, rapidly spreading in the wake of the deterioration of medieval and scholastic models of papist authority. The commentaries on the *Heidelberg Catechism* by the Puritan authors of the Dutch Second Reformation, strongly relied on and expounded the views of Heinrich Bullinger, the fountainhead of Puritan Reformed politics, the results being manifestly different from those produced by Machiavellian political theory. The spirit of this line of Reformed politics is perhaps best captured in the concluding prayer in Abraham van de Velde's treatise: "Let the governors be found fathers of the fatherland and nursing fathers of Thy Church. Fill them with zeal for Thy honor and Thy holy truth, that they may promote Thy Kingdom with all their might. Lord, sanctify them with Thy truth, that they may sanctify Thee, their God, in faith and in obedience; ban sins and scandals as they abound in these evil times; but make them good ministers of Thy people."