

THEOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED
CHURCHES IN THE NETHERLANDS AT APELDOORN

**CALVIN'S ECCLESIOLOGY IN HIS BIBLICAL EXEGESIS
OF THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH:**

THE MOTIF OF *POPULUS MEUS*

ACADEMIC THESIS

FOR CONFERRAL OF THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR IN THEOLOGY,

ON AUTHORISATION OF THE RECTOR PROF. DR. M. J. KATER,

TO BE DEFENDED IN PUBLIC, GOD WILLING,

ON 1 JULY 2024

AT 3 HOUR

AT THE THEOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, WILHELMINAPARK 4, APELDOORN

by

BONG-IL PARK

21 February 1976, Incheon, The republic of Korea

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INTRODUCTION

The Purpose of the Present Study

The present study intends to investigate John Calvin's doctrine of the church as expressed in his exegesis of the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations. It argues how Calvin addresses his Genevan church in his lectures and sermons based on the book of Jeremiah and Lamentations. This research is initiated by the following three questions.

The first question pertains to Calvin's interest in his later years. Following my examination of Calvin's commentary on the book of Daniel,¹ I have increasingly taken an interest in Calvin's final years. In the preface to his commentary on the book of Jeremiah, Calvin mentions that he approached the book of Jeremiah after completing his work on the book of Daniel. He expresses hope that time permitting, a more capable individual will delve into the book of Ezekiel.² This raises the question of why Calvin delivered a series of lectures on the Prophets around 1560. This inquiry could be rephrased as: what were his interests in his final years? Kingdon states that in 1555, Calvin achieved a political victory over the *Enfants de Genève* led by Ami Perrin, subsequently concentrating on two undertakings: "[o]ne was the teaching of theologians. The other was the evangelization of other countries, especially France."³ Additional scholars assert that around 1555, Calvin's attention shifted towards the evangelization of France.⁴ At this critical juncture, Calvin's primary focus turned to education, with the prophetic writings of the Old Testament serving as his educational foundation. Aware of the ongoing reformation efforts within his homeland, France, despite the repressive stance of the Catholic Church and its accompanying hardships, Calvin directed his educational efforts accordingly. Against this historical backdrop, the question arises: why did Calvin choose to interpret and teach the Prophets? This query extends to potential disciples of Calvin: what lessons should we

¹ B. Park, "Calvijns visie over 'vluchtelingen en vervolging' in zijn *praelectiones* van het bijbelboek Daniël," (Th. D. dissertation, Theologische Universiteit Apeldoorn, 2016).

² CO 37. 469 (COR II 6/1. 15). "POSTQUAM expositis duodecim prophetis minoribus, pervenimus tandem ad finem Danielis, jam suscepi librum Jeremiae explicandum, modo tamen vita suppetat, et detur otium. Quod si per Dei gratiam otium dabitur, restabit unus ex Prophetis Ezechiel, cui utinam contingat magis idoneus interpres, ut spero."

³ Kingdon, "Calvin's Last Years," 181.

⁴ Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed*, 109-114; Gordon, *Calvin*, 312-315; Naphy, *Calvin and the Consolidation*, 209.

draw from his teachings on the Prophets, and how can we apply these lessons as individuals of a markedly different era from those in the 16th century?

The second question is why Calvin needed to continue his education on the church even after 1555. We previously discussed Calvin's life shift following 1555. So, what demands were placed upon him within and beyond Geneva during that period? Although Calvin achieved political stability, there were still political pressures and violence from the Catholic Church. This is evident from the influx of numerous religious refugees seeking sanctuary in Geneva.⁵ Therefore, while Knox lauded the Genevan Church as the most exemplary school of Christ and a genuinely reformed community, Geneva was far from perfect in any aspect.⁶ During that period, the church comprised a mix of sinful believers and unbelievers. This is why Calvin had to instruct the congregation at the Genevan church on Christian piety after 1555. Another motive for this instruction can be traced outside of Geneva. During that period, churches in France urgently implored Geneva to dispatch pastors, a request that exceeded Geneva's capacity. Consequently, Calvin endeavored to educate pastors in the teachings of the Bible and facilitate their deployment. It is evident that Calvin imparted to them the fundamental principles and facets of the reformed church. Calvin believed that the success of the Reformation hinged on the efficacy of pastors in teaching correct doctrines and administering sacraments.⁷ During this period, Calvin instructed on the Prophets. Therefore, in his lectures on the Prophets, he had to communicate his church-centered interpretation along with the foundational lessons drawn from the Prophets.

The final question is why it is necessary for us to study interpretations of the book of Jeremiah. Why did this research specifically opt for an exploration of the interpretation of the book of Jeremiah? Concerning his lectures on the book of Jeremiah, Calvin conveys to Frederick III the following: "And if Jeremiah himself were now alive on earth, he would, if I am not deceived, commend me, for he would acknowledge that his prophecies have been explained by me honestly and

⁵ Naphy, *Calvin and the Consolidation*, 140. By 1550 the population of Geneva had risen to between 12,400 and 13, 893 but would balloon to around 21,400 by 1560; Gordon, *Calvin*, 297-8.

⁶ Gordon, *Calvin*, 277.

⁷ Gordon, *Calvin*, 314.

reverently. Furthermore, that they have been suitably applied to present circumstances.”⁸ Calvin's confidence appears to be remarkable. Particularly interesting is Calvin's application of Jeremiah's prophecy to the 16th-century context. This demonstrates that his teachings were not confined to mere knowledge but engaged with the issues of his era. He drew parallels between the exiled Israelites and the circumstances of his time when the reformed church and the Catholic Church coexisted, contextualizing biblical themes. To achieve a more comprehensive interpretation, Calvin emphasizes that biblical scholars should possess knowledge encompassing culture, society, politics, and religions, asserting that theology can be informed through such knowledge.⁹ In other words, Calvin certainly taught the book of Jeremiah recognizing the necessity of lessons on the church for the congregation in Geneva and the aspiring pastors.

Furthermore, the timeframe during which Calvin delivered lectures on the book of Jeremiah serves as another rationale for incorporating the interpretation of the book in this research.¹⁰ In 1559, Calvin published the final Latin version of *Institutes*. After returning to Geneva from Strasbourg, Calvin extensively revised the *Institutes*, which means that he continued to refine his theological thoughts subsequent to studying the works of Church Fathers and contemporary theologians.¹¹ Upon completing the *Institutes* 1559, Calvin commenced studying and delivering lectures on Jeremiah. Consequently, his lectures on Jeremiah could potentially serve as a resource for elucidating connection between his *Institutes* and his biblical exegesis. Indeed, Calvin elucidates the concept of the church through the book of Jeremiah in his *Institutes* 1559. Particularly, in *Inst.* 4.2.3 where he delineates the distinction between the true church and the false one, Calvin clearly states, based on Jer. 7:4, that a congregation is not church of God unless it wholeheartedly listens to and keeps the

⁸ CO 20. 77-8 (Calvin to the Elector of the Palatinate, 23 July 1563). “Ac si hodie superstes in terris ageret Jeremias ipse, ad commendationem, nisi fallor, accederet ejus suffragium, quia suas prophetias agnosceret non sincere minus quam reverenter a me fuisse expositas: addo etiam ad praesentem usum utiliter accommodatas.”; Cf. Gordon, *Calvin*, 330.

⁹ Cf. Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 23. Such factors form the context of Calvin's interpretations and give influences on his interpretations. It will be dealt in Chapter 1.

¹⁰ Parker, *Old Testament Commentaries*, 28-9. Calvin lectured on the Psalms in 1552, then taught the Prophetic writings. He first lectured on the book of Hosea, then on the Minor Prophets 134 times. And from June 12, 1559, he taught the book of Daniel, then started the lectures on the book of Jeremiah 193 times from April 15, 1560. And the 18 lectures of the Lamentations were carried out from September of 1562 to January of 1563. Then, Calvin taught the book of Ezekiel up to 20:44 until February 1564.

¹¹ McKee, “Exegesis, Theology and Development,” 163; Selderhuis, “The *Institutes*,” 200

word of God.¹² He also references Jeremiah when discussing the source of authority for the prophets.¹³ Moreover, in *Inst.* 4.9.3, when Calvin expounds on the role of pastors in the church, he recommends considering Jeremiah's perspective on pastors, alluding to the evident presence of the church during Jeremiah's time.¹⁴ Therefore, it is meaningful to examine how Calvin's ecclesiology unfolds in his lectures on the book of Jeremiah, considering that he had completed his *Institutes*. Specifically, it is valuable to discern the characteristics of a particular theology when it is applied to specific texts concerning a particular object.

Main Question

By considering the above questions, the main inquiry of this research originates from Calvin's interest during his latter days. At that time, he recognized the necessity of teaching on the church both within and outside its walls. Moreover, he applied his interpretation of the book of Jeremiah to his contemporary time and church. In essence, while interpreting the book of Jeremiah, Calvin likely conveyed his thoughts on the situation of his era and the church over which he presided. Therefore, this research aims to elucidate the characteristics of Calvin's ecclesiology in his interpretations on Jeremiah and Lamentations. Consequently, the central question posed in the examination and analysis of Calvin's exegesis on the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations is as follows: *What is Calvin's ecclesiology in his biblical interpretation on the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations, and what are its characteristics? How do these characteristics differ from the ecclesiology presented in the commentaries on Jeremiah by his contemporaries?* Further details will be discussed in the following section.

The Focus of the Present Study

¹² CO 2. 769 (*Inst.* 4.2.3). "Quare neque alio argumento refutandi nobis sunt, quam quo adversus stultam illam Iudaeorum confidentiam pugnabat Ieremias (7, 4), nempe ne gloriantur in verbis mendacibus, dicentes: templum Domini, templum Domini, templum Domini est. Quando nihil Dominus usquam suum agnoscit nisi ubi verbum suum auditur ac religiose observatur."

¹³ CO 2. 847 (*Inst.* 4.8.3). "Quid vero est; nuntiari a Domino, nisi sic loqui ut confidenter iactare ausit, non suum esse sed Domini verbum quod attulerit? Tantundem est japed Ieremiam (23, 28) aliis verbis."

¹⁴ CO 2. 859 (*Inst.* 4.9.3). "Durabat quoque ecclesia ad tempus Ieremiae. Audiamus quid de pastoribus dicat (6, 13 et 14, 14): a propheta usque ad sacerdotem quisque sectatur mendacium. Item: prophetae mendacium prophetant in nomine meo, quum ego non miserim eos, neque praeceperim eis."

In this study, we will focus on why and how Calvin speaks more pertinently about the church of his time. Someone's biblical interpretation is closely related to their era and interacts with historical influences. Thus, when studying Calvin's interpretation, we should examine not only the main materials but also the context.

Importance of the Context

First of all, we can divide the context of Calvin's commentary on Jeremiah into three parts. The initial aspect to consider is understanding his exegetical methodology in interpretation. Calvin devoted himself to forming and maintaining the Genevan church throughout his life. To this end, he regarded the study of the Bible and the delivery of the biblical lessons to Genevan church members as the most important ministry.¹⁵ This dedication is evidenced by his final words: "according to the measure of grace that God had given him he had endeavored to teach God's Word purely, both in his sermons and in his other writings, and expound the sacred Scriptures faithfully."¹⁶ Such dedication is the impetus behind this research. Moreover, we can discern certain expressions and patterns that he employed in his interpretation. Thus, it is imperative to first understand his exegetical principles or methodology in interpretation and observe how these manifest in his work of the book of Jeremiah.

Secondly, we have to take Calvin's historical background into account. According to Engammare, Calvin states in his commentary of 1 Corinthians that "[b]y prophets he [Paul] means, in my judgment, not those who had the gift of foretelling things to come, but those who had a particular gift not only of expounding Scripture, but also that of accommodating it wisely and applying it according to the people and the time."¹⁷ According to Calvin, correct interpretation of the Bible and its appropriate application are important. It cannot be denied that Calvin's interpretation of Jeremiah aims at particular people. Therefore, his interpretation contains content and application suitable to the situations of specific individuals. In this regard, Balsarak already infers the situation of the Israel in

¹⁵ Balke, *Calvijn en Bijbel*, 43-49.

¹⁶ CO 20. 299. "Je proteste aussi que l'ay tasché, selon la mesure de grace qu'il m'avoit donnee, d'enseigner purement sa Parole, tant en sermons que par escrit, et d'exposer fidelement l'Escriture sainte."

¹⁷ Engammare, "Calvin: A Prophet," 647-8; CO 49. 506 (1 Cor. 12:28). "Transit enim statim a primo gradu ad prophetas: quo nomine intelligit (meo quidem iudicio) non eos qui dono vaticinandi pollerent: sed qui singulari non modo interpretandae, sed etiam in praesentem usum prudenter accommodandae scripturae gratia pollerent."

the Old Testament and Calvin's historical situation while studying Calvin's interpretations of Minor Prophets.¹⁸ Similarly, Calvin compares the church of his time to the church of Jeremiah era. Through such comparison, Calvin illustrates his era and its people, elucidating his ecclesiology within the historical contexts. Calvin, as a prophet, also demonstrates self-awareness as well as awareness of his historical context.

Thirdly, we need to examine other theologians' interpretations of the book of Jeremiah. If contexts influence one's biblical interpretation differently from others, studying other theologians' interpretations will clarify the characteristics of Calvin's exegesis. Therefore, the researcher has selected Calvin's contemporaries who were active in preaching and writing near Geneva. This approach aims to minimize the variation in time and geographical context. The outcome of employing such methodology depends on the selection of scholars for study. Consequently, the works on the book of Jeremiah of Oecolampadius (1482-1531),¹⁹ Bullinger (1504-1575),²⁰ and Maldonado (1535-1583)²¹ will be examined.

Importance of the Text

In studying Calvin's interpretation of Jeremiah, we need to consider not only the context of his biblical interpretation but also the characteristics of the text itself.

Firstly, the relationship between the church and *Populus Meus* is evident in Calvin's interpretations. There are three main characters in the book: God, the Israelites and Jeremiah the prophet. Through the prophet, God delivers his will and plan for Israel, determining the life of Israel. In this regard, God refers to the Israelites as *Populus Meus*, based on their covenantal relationship. Selderhuis asserts that Calvin's commentary on an Old Testament book provides a clear understanding of Calvin's theology because he argues for the continuity of the old and new

¹⁸ Balserak, *Establishing the Remnant Church*, 2-3. According to him, Calvin reads the Minor Prophets as a mirror of his own day; Cf. Selderhuis, "Church on Stage," 47.

¹⁹ J. Oecolampadius, *In Hieremiam prophetam commentariorum libri tres* (Argentinae: In officina Matthiae Apiarii, 1533).

²⁰ Bullinger, *Jeremias fidelissimus et laboriosissimus Dei Propheta: concionibus CLXX expositus* (Zürich: Froschauer, 1575). Digital copy online at books.google.com.

²¹ Juan de. S.J. Maldonado, *Commentarij in Prophetas IIII Ieremiam, Baruch, Ezechielem & Danielem*, ed. Johann Kinckius (sumptibus Ioannis Kinckes Bibliopolae Coloniensis, 1611).

covenants.²² Such a perspective is highly valuable, especially in addressing the term *Populus Meus*. The covenant God made with the people of Israel in Exodus 19 also appears in a similar pattern in Jeremiah. In Jeremiah 31:33, God establishes a new covenant with the people of Israel, stating, “I will be their God and they shall be my people.”²³ The word “*people*” (*populus*) is mentioned repeatedly in Jeremiah and Lamentations. Particularly, the phrase “*my people* (לְעַם לִי, *populus meus*),”²⁴ which implies possession, occurs more frequently in Jeremiah than in Exodus.²⁵ Here, the significance of the word *populus* is threefold. Firstly, this word is used from the beginning to the end of the book of Jeremiah, making God’s will and plan through Jeremiah clear, sometimes implicitly, throughout the book. Secondly, through this word, we can understand who God is. If the Israelites are the people of God, then there must be the God of Israel. This indicates that the word has a clear meaning when it has a clear target, thereby depicting a certain aspect of God. Thirdly, the relationship between the people of God and their God is encompassed in the meaning of the word “*my people*.” Furthermore, the significance of the church in illustrating the relationship between the two can be understood through the word itself. Thus, the divine will, which designates the Israelites as “*my people*” under this covenant, will be considered throughout this study. Therefore, the term *Populus Meus* is central to this research.

Secondly, the four stages of church, which are based on covenant theology, can be found in Calvin’s interpretation of Jeremiah. For Calvin’s, the covenantal idea implies a ‘bond’ or ‘union’ with God, as the expression “my people” signifies belonging to God or to have a relationship with Him.²⁶ However, the covenantal relationship depicted in the book of Jeremiah is not static. This is because there are various aspects of the relationship in the book of Jeremiah which demonstrate divine punishment upon treacherous Israelites and their responses to it through prophecy and historical

²² Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 15-6.

²³ All the biblical verses in English are from *ESV* unless specified.

²⁴ Calvin indicates “my people” in two kinds of Latin expressions: ‘*mihi in populum*’ (Jer. 31:33) and ‘*populus meus*’ (Jer. 31:14). I chose the latter express in order to clarify the meaning of “my people”.

²⁵ The word “people” appears 150 times in Exodus while 149 times in Jeremiah, and 10 times in Lamentations. The phrase “My people” also emerges 19 times in Exodus, but 40 times in Jeremiah. The expression, “my people,” often appears in other books such as Hosea, Isaiah and the Psalms. However, the Exodus is the first book in which the expression refers to “all Israel”. The Exodus contains the first narrative of forming the Israelites into the people of God officially. Meanwhile, the book of Jeremiah includes the era of “my people” taken to Babylon as captives. So, it seems to be meaningful to compare the two books.

²⁶ Lillback, *The Binding of God*, 138-139.

events. Within the covenant, God forms, preserves, ruins and restores His people. It should be noted that the church is a community of God and His people based on the covenant.²⁷ Therefore, we can comprehend the various facets of church as a continuous flow or cycle through the covenantal relationship. Thus, in this study, we will discuss this flow in four stages: the foundation of the church, the fall of the church, the preservation of the church, and the restoration of the church. These four stages will be elucidated by comparing the Israelites to Calvin's Genevan congregation. However, these four stages do not necessarily follow a constant chronological sequence. Within the framework of this research, these stages and arrangements can only be appreciated as a sequence of teaching (*ordo docendi*). They are simply meant to explain the aspects and characteristics of an individual church. Nonetheless, these flowing stages of church are mentioned in Calvin's interpretation of Jeremiah because the book of Jeremiah clearly suggests two important periods: one when the Israelites were taken to Babylon, and the other when they returned to Canaan. Therefore, Calvin applies each of these two periods and the various aspects of Israel between them to Genevan church, considering these four stages.

Thirdly, there is a subtle difference between Calvin's ecclesiology as interpreted from Jeremiah and that of his theological writing. According to McGrath, Calvin was interested in biblical interpretations, but his Christian thought developed through them.²⁸ Thus, Calvin's exegesis and theology are distinct but not separate. If this is applied to this study, Calvin's interpretations of Jeremiah and ecclesiology are distinct but not separate. In this respect, McGrath states the following.

While he regards theology as 'an echo of the biblical text', it is not, strictly speaking, so much a *commentary* upon that text as an *interpretative framework* by which the text may be understood. It is clear that, in commenting upon texts, Calvin often feels it improper to provide a full-blown exposition of the total doctrinal implications of a given passage. In part, this reflects his awareness of the need to deal with the historical, linguistic and literary points raised by that passage. It also, however, rests upon his evident assumption that his readers will refer to the *Institutes* as the primary source of his theology – and hence his method of interpreting scripture – in its entirety.²⁹

²⁷ Selderhuis, "Church on Stage," 49-51.

²⁸ McGrath, *John Calvin*, 150-1.

²⁹ McGrath, *John Calvin*, 146.

Calvin explains details of the biblical texts clearly through commentaries, while he enables readers to discern his extensive theological thought through the *Institutes*. Therefore, we cannot ascertain all of Calvin's theological thoughts on church through the texts on Jeremiah. In other words, the ecclesiology explained in the exegesis of Jeremiah should be understood within the context of the given texts. It would be impossible to deduce a comprehensive ecclesiology that is not fully addressed in one text alone. Therefore, the interpretation of the text should be confined. However, this research is expected to elucidate Calvin's thoughts on church, as they can only be found only in the book of Jeremiah within such limitations.

The Present Study's Place within Current Calvin Scholarship

The literature on Calvin's theology and his life has been steadily increasing to the point where one must spend considerable time organizing it systematically.³⁰ Various studies are underway, including theological analyses based on the *Institutes*, chronological studies of his life, research on his political, economic and cultural influences after his death, some comparative studies between Calvin and his contemporaries, and analyses of his literary works and practical ministry in Geneva. Among these studies, this research focuses on his ecclesiology,³¹ which is a part of dogmatic theology.

³⁰ The publications on Calvin studies are announced every year in the *Calvin Theological Journal*. It has served many scholars to grasp trends in Calvin scholarship.

³¹ Some research on Calvin's ecclesiology includes P. J. Richel, *Het Kerkbegrip van Calvijn* (Utrecht/Rotterdam: Libertas Drukkerijen, 1942); Alan Craft Thomson, *The theological declaration of Barmen and the reformation conception of the church*. Th. D. dissertation (New York: Union Theological Seminary, 1961); R. J. Mooi, *Het kerk- en dogmahistorisch element in de werken van Johannes Calvijn* (Wageningen: Veenman, 1965); Benjamin Charles Milner, Jr., *Calvin's Doctrine of the Church*. Studies in the History of Christian Thought 5 (Leiden: Brill, 1970); Nobuo Watanabe, *Calvin's ecclesiology* (Tokyo: Kaikakusha, 1978); George Timothy, *John Calvin and the church. A prism of reform* (Louisville: Westminster / John Knox Press, 1990); Willem van't Spijker, Willem Balke, K. Exalto en L. van Driel, ed., *De kerk. Wezen, weg en werk van de kerk naar reformatorische opvatting* (Kampen: de Groot Goudriaan, 1990); Richard Craig Gamble, ed., *Calvin's ecclesiology: sacrament and deacons* (New York & London: Garland Publishing, 1992); Herman Anthonie Speelman, *Calvijn en de zelfstandigheid van de kerk*. Th. D. dissertation (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1994); Gerard Mannion and Eduardus Van der Borgh, ed., *John Calvin's Ecclesiology. Ecumenical Perspectives* (New York: T&T Clark International, 2011); Michael Welker, Michael Weinrich, and Ulrich Möller, ed., *Calvin Today: Reformed Theology and the Future of the Church* (London: T&T Clark, 2011); Yosep Kim, *The Identity and the Life of the Church: John Calvin's Ecclesiology in the Perspective of His Anthropology* (Cambridge: James Clarke, 2014). Moreover, some notable articles are as follows: C. Veenhof, "Calvijn over de 'zichtbare' en de 'onzichtbare' kerk," in his *Volk van God*. Enkel aspecten van Bavincks kerkbeschouwing (Amsterdam: Buijten en Schipperheijn, 1969) 323-340; Kilian McDonnell, "The ecclesiology of John Calvin and Vatican II," *Religion in Life* 36 (1967), 542-556; Richard Stauffer, "L'ecclésiologie de Jean Calvin," *Positions Luthériennes* 25 (1977), 140-154; Alexandre Ganoczy, "L'église, communauté ou institution? L'héritage ecclésiologique de Calvin," *Revue de Théologie et de Philosophie* 27 (1977), 222-234; Herman J. Selderhuis, "Kirche im Theater: Die Dynamik der Ekklesiologie Calvins," in *Calvin im Kontext der Schweizer Reformation*, ed. by Peter Opitz (Zürich: TVZ Theologischer Verlag, 2003), 195-214; Roger, S.J. Haight, "Calvin's Ecclesiology," *Christian Community in History* 2 (New York: Continuum, 2005), 82-147; Emidio Campi, "Calvin's Understanding of the Church," *Reformed World* 57, no. 4 (2007), 290-305; Cornelis Pronk, "Calvin's Doctrine of the Church," in *Calvin for Today*, edited by Joel R. Beeke (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2009), 139-54; Michel Johnner, "Église visible et invisible: l'architecture

Compared to other doctrinal research, specifically on his views on predestination or Christology, relatively few studies have been devoted to his ecclesiology.³² Recently, diverse research on Calvin's doctrine of the church can be found not only general ecclesiology but also the aspects of worship and sacrament,³³ discipline,³⁴ and the unity of church³⁵ related to his ecclesiology. This indicates that studies of Calvin's ecclesiology are closely connected to his doctrines of the sacraments, ecclesiastical offices, justification, and the Christian life.³⁶ However, stating Calvin's view of the church by simply repeating what he says in his theological writings like the *Institutes* is not the goal of this study. As mentioned earlier, this study aims to clarify Calvin's idea of the church as expressed in his lectures and sermons on the book of Jeremiah and Lamentations among his many exegetical publications. Studies on Calvin's biblical interpretation have been ongoing for ages. In many instances, however, the goal of the previous studies was to elucidate the methods and characteristics of his exegesis.³⁷

Afterwards, scholars attempted to study Calvin's theological thoughts from his exegesis. This present research follows such methodology. For this study, on the one hand, it is necessary to have special *loci* on church. In *Calvin's Doctrine of Church* (1970), Milner attempts to interpret Calvin's doctrine of the church from his ideas concerning "the dialectical correlation between the work of the Holy Spirit and the diverse manifestations of the order of the Word."³⁸ His work demonstrates that

ecclesiologique de Calvin," *La Revue réformée* 61, no. 4 (2010), 27-68; Jaeseung Cha, "Calvin's Concept of the Church as *mater fidelium* [Mother Believers], Viewed Through His Concept of Accommodation," *Journal of Reformed Theology* 9, no. 2 (2015), 182-201.

³² Harms, *In God's Custody*, 13.

³³ David C. Steinmetz, "Christ and the Eucharist," in *Taking the Long View: Christian Theology in Historical Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 115-126; I. John Hesselink, "Reformed View: The Real Presence of Christ," in *Understanding four Views on the Lord's Supper*, ed. John H. Armstrong (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 59-84.

³⁴ Robert M. Kingdon, "Calvin et la discipline ecclésiastique," *Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire du Protestantisme Français* 155, no. 1 (2009), 117-26; Jung-Sook Lee, "Calvinist Penitence Evaluated: Restoration of Calvin's and Calvinist Churches," *Torch Trinity Journal* 6, no.1 (2003), 241-55; Johannes Plomp, *De Kerkelijke Tucht bij Calvijn*. Dissert (Kampen: Kok, 1969).

³⁵ I. John Hesselink, "Calvinus Oecumenicus: Calvin's Vision of the Unity and Catholicity of the Church," in *the Unity of the Church: A Theological State of the Art and Beyond*, ed. Eduardus van der Borgh (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 69-93; C.F.C. Coetzee, "Calvijn en die eenheid van die kerk," *Acta Theologica* 26, no. 1 (2006), 16-35; Lukas Vischer, *Pia Conspiratio: Calvin's Commitment to the Unity of Christ's Church* (Geneva: Centre International Réformé John Knox, 2000); Gyeung Su Park, "John Calvin as an Advocate of Church Unity: A New Portrait of John Calvin," (Ph. D. diss., Claremont Graduate University, 2004); Peter de Jong, "John Calvin on Reformed Church Unity," *Christian Renewal* 14, no. 2 (1995), 10-11.

³⁶ Milner, *Calvin's Doctrine*, 2.

³⁷ R. Ward Holder, *John Calvin and the Grounding of Interpretation. Calvin's First Commentaries* (Leiden: Brill, 2006); Jon. Balsarak, "Luther, Calvin and Musculus on Abraham's Trial: Exegetical History and the Transformation of Genesis 22," *Reformation and Renaissance Review* 6, no. 3 (2004), 361-73; Randall C. Zachman, "Gathering Meaning from the Context: Calvin's Exegetical Method," *The Journal of Religion* 82, no. 1 (2002), 1-26; David Curtis Steinmetz, "John Calvin on Isaiah 6: a problem in the history of exegesis," *Interpretation* 36 (1982), 156-170.

³⁸ Milner, *Calvin's doctrine*, 190-191.

Calvin regards the church not as a static entity, but as a dynamic sphere of the movement of the Holy Spirit. Similarly, in “Church on Stage: Calvin’s Dynamic Ecclesiology,” Selderhuis analyses Calvin’s ecclesiology through Calvin’s commentary on the Psalms, highlighting the dynamics of Calvin’s ecclesiology.³⁹ These two works emphasize on the dynamic nature of the church. Therefore, this research will use these two works as its foundation.

On the other hand, in current scholarship on Calvin’s study, there are some examinations of Calvin’s theological thoughts based on his interpretations of other scriptures.⁴⁰ However, the researcher could not find any monographs or papers specifically on Calvin’s lectures and sermons on the book of Jeremiah and Lamentations from the recent bibliography on Calvin studies. Nevertheless, materials concerning Calvin’s works on other prophets are available. In 2004, Erik de Boer’s dissertation⁴¹ on Calvin’s sermons on Ezekiel was published in English by Brill. He studied “Calvin’s hermeneutics of visionary revelation in the Old Testament through Calvin’s exegesis on Ezekiel chapters 37-48.” M. A. van den Berg received his doctoral degree in 2008 with his study of Calvin’s lectures from the book of Daniel: *How the message of the prophet, who lived as an exile in Babylon, is relevant to the evangelical believers in the sixteenth century, especially in France.*⁴² These works do not directly address Calvin’s ecclesiology. Additionally, Jon Balsarak studied the Remnant Church in France through Calvin’s lectures on the Minor Prophets from 1556-1559.⁴³ In his book, he clarifies that Calvin engaged in his work with the authority of a prophet and sought to establish the true church, just as the prophets has done when calling out the faithful remnants.⁴⁴ This research focuses on how Calvin’s concern for the Reformed church is depicted in his lectures. However, it does not

³⁹ Selderhuis, “Church on Stage,” 48-9.

⁴⁰ Cf. Herman J. Selderhuis, *Calvin’s Theology of the Psalms* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007); McKee wrote two valuable books on Calvin’s ideas about worship, almsgiving and ecclesiastical offices by studying his commentaries on the New Testament. Elsie A. McKee, *John Calvin on the diaconate and liturgical Almsgiving* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1984), Elsie A. McKee, *Elders and the Plural Ministry. The Role of Exegetical History in Illuminating John Calvin’s Theology* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1988); Wilhelmus H. Th. Moehn, *The relation between God and His Audience in Calvin’s sermons on Acts* (Genève: Droz, 2001); Raymond A Blacketer, *The School of God: Pedagogy and Rhetoric in Calvin’s Interpretation of Deuteronomy* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006); Susan E. Schreiner, *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?* (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1994).

⁴¹ E. A. de Boer, *John Calvin on the vision of Ezekiel: Historical and Hermeneutical Studies in John Calvin’s sermons inédits, especially on Ezek. 36-48* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

⁴² Micheal A. van den Berg, *Het rijk van Christus als historische realiteit: Calvijns anti-apocalyptische uitleg van het boek Daniël* (Apeldoorn: de Banier, 2008), 17-19.

⁴³ Jon Balsarak, *Establishing the Remnant Church in France: Calvin’s Lectures on the Minor Prophets, 1556-1559* (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

⁴⁴ Balsarak, *the Remnant church*, 211-213.

fully explain the general idea of Calvin's ecclesiology and does not provide sufficient elucidation of the continuity between the Israelites and the church. Furthermore, in 2010, Harms analyzed Calvin's ecclesiology in his sixteenth-century context through his works on the Minor Prophets in his doctoral dissertation.⁴⁵ His study argues that Calvin understands the need of the reformation of his church in his historical circumstances as a reflection of the church that should be restored during the age of the Minor Prophets. However, he did not identify the cause of the ecclesiological difference by comparing the interpretation of the Minor Prophets among contemporary theologians.

Moreover, there is a dissertation dealing with Calvin's ecclesiology concerning a scripture other than the Prophets. In 2017, Alten received a doctoral degree with his study of *the pneumatology for ecclesiology in John Calvin's commentary on the Acts*.⁴⁶ In this work, he examines the significance of Pentecost and the consequent work of the Holy Spirit for the reformation and restoration of the church in Calvin's commentary on the book of Acts. He addresses the systematic aspect of the church but tends to focus on one aspect of Calvin's ecclesiology by highlighting the relationship between ecclesiology and pneumatology. Balsarak, Harms and Alten have already written books on Calvin's thoughts on the church by analyzing his commentaries. Unlike their studies, this research will utilize Calvin's sermons and lectures on Jeremiah as the primary source. Therefore, the original line of thought pursued in this present study should be emphasized.

Methodology and Outline

The method for this study combines various approaches. The topic will be developed in three parts: historical, systematic-theological, and comparative approaches, depending on the context and the text of Calvin's exegesis on the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations. The majority of the research dealing with Calvin's ecclesiology in his interpretation of the book of Jeremiah is presented in a

⁴⁵ Frederik A. V. Harms, *In God's Custody: The Church, a History of Divine Protection* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht GmbH & Co, 2010).

⁴⁶ Herman Hendrik van Alten, *The Beginning of a Spirit-filled Church. A Study of the Implications of the Pneumatology for the Ecclesiology in John Calvin's Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht GmbH & Co, 2017).

systematic-theological way and is found between two parts. *Part I* and *III* focus on the context of Calvin's exegesis, while *Part II* examines its textual content more closely.

The first part outlines the background of Calvin's exegesis of the book of Jeremiah (Chapter 1) and his historical context (Chapter 2), providing necessary context before delving into the specific hermeneutics and exegesis of Jeremiah. Additionally, it delineates the main ecclesiological issues addressed by Calvin in his exegesis of Jeremiah through his theological instruction (Chapter 3). Finally, this part endeavors to elucidate Calvin's thoughts based on his biblical interpretations of the problems faced by the church in the two eras (Jeremiah's and his own) and comparing the churches of the two eras (Chapter 4).

Part Two constitutes the main portion of this study and is centered on the themes of the main text. In this section, we will elucidate Calvin's thoughts on the church, which are dispersed throughout his exegesis of the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations. Chapter five and six focus on clarifying the motif of *Populus meus*, while the subsequent eight chapters are organized to group two related themes⁴⁷ in each category, leading to discussions on 'the foundation of the Church,' 'the fall of the Church,' 'the preservation of the Church,' and 'the restoration of the Church'.

Chapter five and six delve into Calvin's interpretation of *populus meus* to elucidate the relationship between "my people" and the church. Chapter five focuses on the topic of Covenant while the next chapter deals with the significance of the Israelites and their special position as God's people, exploring the relationship between Israel and the covenant. These chapters argue that Israel and the church share the same identity as the people of God.

Chapter seven and eight explain *the foundation of the church as populus meus*. Chapter seven delves into Calvin's thoughts about the Scripture as the revelation of God, as well as the nature and character of the Word. The eighth chapter emphasizes the true worship of God while highlighting the idolatry of Judah. Moreover, it explains the importance of keeping the Sabbath and the relationship between Christian life and worship.

⁴⁷ The research finds that Calvin shows his thoughts on church in various ways based on the messages mentioned in the book of Jeremiah. To clarify his thoughts, the researcher has selected 10 topics and sorted them out in 5 larger themes according to the characteristics of the topics. Of course, there is a way to making Part II with five chapters by putting a lot of content on one theme, but the researcher assumed that it would be more useful to deal with one topic in each chapter.

Chapter nine addresses the covenant-breaking state of the people of Judah and the Genevan church, identifying it as the cause of the church's fall. Additionally, as a study on various types of corrupted churches, this chapter engages in a discussion of the church's sanctification. Chapter ten considers the concept of repentance, its necessity, and its relationship to faith. These chapters clearly illustrate that the church possesses not only static but also dynamic aspects.

Chapter eleven explains the significance of the church office and examine the calling, choice, and mission of the pastor, focusing on the presence of God in the church. Chapter twelve discusses the church's existence in this world between God and the devil. To live as the people of God, Christians must be trained and nurtured in the church.

The final two chapters in *Part Two* illustrate the status of the restored church following its fall, based on the restoration of Israel from Babylon. Chapter thirteen seeks to define the concept of the remnant, primarily concerned with the ecclesiological question of predestination and the relationship between God's election and the church. Chapter fourteen concludes by exploring Calvin's interests in demonstrating the meaning of the restoration of Israel and discussing the complete restoration of the church through its union with Christ. This chapter argues that the church is Christ-centered, elucidating Calvin's thoughts through Christ's two offices: King and Priest.

In *Part Three*, through a comparative study of Calvin's interpretations and some commentaries of his contemporaries on the book of Jeremiah (Chapters 15-17), the research will first examine differences among them and then focus on the uniqueness of Calvin's ecclesiology. All three figures studied lived during the 16th century. However, there are some differences: Oecolampadius⁴⁸ and Bullinger⁴⁹ were Reformed but lived in different cities and worked in different decades. Meanwhile, Maldonado⁵⁰ is a Catholic theologian who began his ministry after Calvin's death. The

⁴⁸ "Oecolampadius is a reformer who ministered in Basel in the sixteenth century. He was a powerful preacher in the church, and a professor at the University of Basel. His biblical exegeses were so excellent that they were recognized by many reformers, including Luther and Calvin, and he left many biblical commentaries." Dyck, "Johannes Oecolampadius," 25-29; Fisher, "The Breakdown of a Reformation Friendship," 270-71.

⁴⁹ McKim and West, *Heinrich Bullinger*, ix-x. Bullinger was the second Zurich reformer and the adviser to most reformed churches of Europe. For forty-four years, he served as *Antistes* (Head pastor) of the Zurich church, which he prudently guided through the perils of a turbulent age, while at the same time developing an astonishingly intensive activity as pastor; van den Berg, *Friends of Calvin*, 216-226; On Bullinger, see more Patrik Müller, *Heinrich Bullinger. Reformator, Kirchenpolitiker, Historiker* (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 2004); Bruce Gordon and Emidio Campi, *Architect of Reformation. An Introduction to Heinrich Bullinger 1504-1575* (Eugene: WIPF & STOCK, 2004).

⁵⁰ Jean M. Prat, *Maldonat et l'Université de Paris au XVI^e siècle*. (Paris: Julien Lanier, 1856), 1-19. Maldonado (1533-1583) was a Spanish Jesuit theologian. He worked as a professor at the University of Salamanca and Rome and wrote

differences or similarities among them in their commentaries will be discerned through historical investigation, consideration of their religious background, and examination of their doctrines.

Chapter 18, the last chapter, serves two purposes. First, it consolidates the findings of this study. Second, it briefly explores the characteristics of Calvin's ecclesiology as revealed in his exegesis of the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations, considering its relevance to a contemporary church in the 21st century.

many commentaries including his commentary on the Book of Jeremiah. His most famous commentary is the commentary of the four Gospels. He is now considered to be one of the most learned men of the sixteenth century.”

Chapter I. Understanding Calvin's work on the Book of Jeremiah

1.1 The Two Genres of Calvin's Biblical Interpretation of the Book of Jeremiah

In the preface of the lecture on Jeremiah, Calvin informs readers that he began to interpret the book of Jeremiah after having finished lectures on the 12 Minor Prophets and Daniel. If time was allowed by God's grace, he wanted to lecture on Ezekiel, which he had not interpreted yet.¹

According to Balke, Calvin was a man of the Bible, because he gave so much of his talents, time and energy to interpreting the Bible.² In his last will and testament Calvin said, "in keeping with the grace of God he had tried to teach His Words sincerely, both in his sermons and in his works, and explain Scriptures faithfully," we can see that he was a man of the Bible.³ Calvin interpreted the book of Jeremiah by means of two genres: sermons and lectures. This chapter, first of all, will deal with the basic understanding of the two forms, and then will explain their characteristics using a comparative study.

1.1.1 Genres: Sermons and Lectures

1.1.1.1 Sermons

After returning to Geneva from Strasbourg in 1541 Calvin lived as a preacher at St. Pierre.⁴ He thought that the most important aspect of pastoral duty was to deliver God's Word.⁵ So, when he was sick during his last years, he even preached while sitting on a chair in his pulpit.⁶ Most of his sermons are unknown until the refugee, Denis Raguénier, was hired as a transcriber on August 25,

¹ CO 37. 469 (COR II 6/1. 15; Jer. 1:1). "POSTQUAM expositis duodecim Prophetis minoribus, pervenimus tandem ad finem Danielis, jam suscepi librum Jeremiae explicandum, modo tamen vita suppetat, et detur otium. Quod si per Dei gratiam otium dabitur, restabit unus ex Prophetis Ezechiël, cui utinam contingat magis idoneus interpres, ut spero."; Calvin taught about Ezekiel from January 1563, but has not completed all of Ezekiel. His last lecture was on Ezekiel 20:40-44 on February 2, 1564: To study more about Calvin's interpretation on Ezekiel, see de Boer, *John Calvin on the Visions of Ezekiel*.

² Balke, *Calvin en de Bijbel*, 40-42.

³ CO 20. 299; Moehn, "Sermons," 173.

⁴ See the following: Manetsch, *Calvin's Company of Pastors*, 146-52; McKee, *The Pastoral Ministry and Worship in Calvin's Geneva*, (Genève: Droz, 2016); McKee, "Calvin and His Colleagues," 15-23.

⁵ McKee, "Calvin and His Colleagues," 15.

⁶ Parker, *Calvin's Preaching*, 106.

1549.⁷ According to McKee, Raguénier recorded 91 sermons on the book of Jeremiah after Nov. 2, 1549. However, these recordings of Calvin's sermons are lost. Nevertheless, he recorded Calvin's sermons on Jeremiah 14:19-18:23 from June 14, 1549 to August 16, that are not included in the lost 91 sermons. Based on this fact, McKee assumes that Calvin may have preached on Jeremiah 1:1-14:18 between October 1548 to June 1549.⁸ And his sermons on Jeremiah were preached in various churches - St. Gervais or La Madeleine, not St. Pierre, on the basis of the ministry rotation system in Geneva.⁹ During this time, Calvin preached on the book of Hebrews and Acts on Sunday mornings, and the Psalms in the afternoons.¹⁰ Because Calvin thought that preaching is God's work, and the most important aspect of God's work of accommodation being the spoken word,¹¹ Calvin believed Christians should be edified by God's words.

1.1.1.2 Lectures

Calvin's lectures on the Old Testament had begun in his teaching the book of Isaiah in 1549.¹² Afterwards, he taught the Old Testament until he died in 1564.¹³ His lectures were delivered mostly to students. As well, scholars, pastors and those who were interested in his lectures could hear Calvin's exegetical lectures on the Friday *congrégation*.¹⁴ Parker argues that the others except pastors and students must be refugees who came to Geneva in order to escape from religious persecution.¹⁵ Some

⁷ Parker, *Preaching*, 65-68. Considering the working conditions for a transcriptionist at that time, the recording of Calvin's sermons, which Raguénier had done, is incredible. Before he died (late 1560 - early 1561), he recorded about 2042 sermons. Calvin is known to have preached more than 4000 times, so Raguénier recorded more than half of Calvin's sermons; Moehn, "Sermons," 175-6.

⁸ McKee, "Sermons, Prayers, and Detective Work," 79-80.

⁹ "Calvin restricted himself to the two Sunday sermons and every day of alternate weeks, or rather, that was his general pattern of preaching. ... The Sunday sermons seem to have been preached in St. Pierre, but those on weekdays were something given in one of the other churches." Parker, *Preaching*, 62; McKee, *The Pastoral Ministry and Worship*, 131. "Calvin was naturally settled at St. Pierre, even though he preached daily at La Magdeleine and also regularly at St. Gervais beginning early in 1546." Calvin's assignment has not changed: La Magdeleine on weekdays and St. Pierre on Sundays, although all the other preachers appear to be set in new places and Calvin's alternate has changed. To learn more of the Ministers' Rotation in Geneva, see McKee, *The Pastoral Ministry and Worship*, 121-160.

¹⁰ Parker, *Preaching*, 150; Parker, *The oracle of God*, 161-162; de Greef, *The Writings*, 110-113.

¹¹ Parker, *Preaching*, 106-109.

¹² CO 21.71.

¹³ For information on the sequence of Calvin's Old Testament lectures, see Parker, *Calvin's Old Testament Commentaries*, 26-29.

¹⁴ Parker, *Calvin's Old Testament Commentaries*, 15. The only three Old Testament books expounded on *Congrégations* after 1549 are the three on which Calvin wrote commentaries proper. In each case publication followed near or after the end of the *Congrégation* expositions on that book. The three books are *Psalms*, *Harmony of the Last Four Books of the Pentateuch*, and *Joshua*.

¹⁵ Parker, *Old Testament Commentaries*, 16; Wilcox, "Calvin as commentator on the prophets," 113.

of them went back to France later and dedicated themselves as laymen to evangelization in France.¹⁶ Calvin started his lectures on the book of Jeremiah on April 15, 1560, after lecturing on Daniel from June 1559. Then, he lectured on Lamentations from 1562. When he began to give lectures on Jeremiah, he had already interpreted all of the Prophets except for Jeremiah, Lamentations and Ezekiel.¹⁷ Calvin's lectures on Jeremiah are comprised of 193 lectures, and his last lecture on Jeremiah was on Wednesday, Sep. 9, 1562.¹⁸ These lectures were published in the following year. The book was dedicated to Elector Frederick III (1515-76) of the Palatinate, who was an ardent supporter of Calvin's variety of Protestantism.¹⁹ On the dedication written in August 1563 Calvin wrote a lot of sections about union with Christ (*Unio cum Christo*) in the Eucharist, which made the unity of the Church impossible in sixteenth century.²⁰ He also revealed his willingness to pay more attention to the French church going forward, warning against François Baudouin (*Franciscus Balduinus*), who had returned to Catholicism and thus according to Calvin became an apostate of the true church.²¹ These lectures on Jeremiah could not be published if Calvin had not thought that they might be beneficial and useful for the church of God.²² In this we see how much Calvin considered his churches not only in Geneva, but also in his homeland, while he was interpreting the book of Jeremiah.

1.1.2 Comparative Study: the Characteristics of Two Genres

As noted earlier, the two genres of Calvin's biblical interpretation, lectures and sermons, are different depending on the time, purpose and the audience to which they were delivered. Then, how do these differences appear explicitly in the two genres of his interpretation? In order to find out the differences, I will select the same passage from the book of Jeremiah, compare Calvin's lectures to his sermons and analyze Calvin's interpretation as it appeared in the two genres. At present, only 25

¹⁶ Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the wars*, 84.

¹⁷ Parker, *Calvin's Old Testament Commentaries*, 29. Calvin taught about Ezekiel from January 1563, his last lecture of his life was on Ezekiel 20:40-44 on February 2, 1564; For the sequence and date of Calvin's lectures after 1550s, see the following books; de Greef, *The Writing*, 107-9.

¹⁸ Wilcox, "Calvin as commentator," 110-111; CO 21. 93.

¹⁹ Blacketer, "Commentaries and Prefaces," 190.

²⁰ Calvin, *Praelectiones*, 2-7.

²¹ Calvin, *Praelectiones*, 9-10.

²² Calvin, *Praelectiones*, 8. "Nec vero arrogantiae vereor, si ingénue profitear hunc librum nullo modo me passurum in lucem exire, nisi considerem ecclesiae Dei fore utilem ac frugiferum."

sermons on Jeremiah (14:19-18:23) are known, and the 193rd lecture on Jeremiah 52:57-64 is Calvin's last lecture. He lectured on all the chapters and verses except Chapter 52. Though he worked on Jeremiah in order in both sermons and lectures, he did not choose the same passage for both sermons and lectures. This means that the verses covered in both lectures and sermons do not overlap exactly with each other. His 5th sermon on Jeremiah 15:10-15, however, is a work on the same verses covered in his 60th lecture. Thus, I chose this passage as a case study because studying the same exact passage is helpful for the sake of comparison.

Jeremiah 15:10-15 show Jeremiah's appeal to God for help in the situation that the Jews opposed and persecuted him. First of all, if we look at Calvin's method of explanation, he often clarifies the meaning of Hebrew words clearly in his lecture. He mentions other biblical interpreters who deal with the Hebrew words²³ and assesses their arguments. Also, if their interpretations are different from his own, Calvin states that they do not reflect accurately the original meaning of the words.²⁴ However, Calvin does not use Hebrew words in his sermon at all. Nor does he give a lengthy explanation of them, quoting other famous exegetes. Mostly, he makes clear the passage while citing other biblical texts, specifically Pauline letters.²⁵ Second, if we look at his method of expression closely, he arranges words well and uses theological expressions or terminology in his lecture. On the contrary, he makes use of more provocative and less refined statements in his sermon.²⁶ Third, if we see who the 'we' are in each genre, i.e., the intended audience, then the 'we' in his lecture do not refer to simple believers, but to preachers or teachers. However, 'we' in his sermons refers to the believers who strive against Satan under the influence of Christ.²⁷ Therefore, when he makes points in his lectures Calvin puts himself into teachers' or preachers' shoes while in his sermons he aims at lay people. Additionally Calvin, in his sermons, uses this expression "therefore, let's think about us"²⁸ in

²³ CO 38. 220 (COR II 6/1. 594; Jer. 15:11). "Quaquam adhuc variant interpretes in verbo [הפגעתו]."

²⁴ CO 38. 220 (COR II 6/1. 594; Jer. 15:11).

²⁵ Calvin, *Sermons*, 33 (Sermon 5 on Jer. 15:10-15). "Comme saint Paul exhorte Thymotée quant il luy dict: ... comme dict saint Paul parlant du regne d'Anthecrist."

²⁶ Calvin, *Sermons*, 31 (Sermon 5 on Jer. 15:10-15). "Et pourtant voila une nouvelle bande d'ennemyz. Les aultres seront adonnez à jurementz et blasphemes. On monstrera la vengeance de Dieu sur telz diables encharmez."

²⁷ Calvin, *Sermons*, 32-3 (Sermon 5 on Jer. 15:10-15). "Ilz batailleront contre nous, mais tant y a que nous serons les plus fortz. Ainsy bataillons hardiement soubz la baniere de Jesuscrist, ce pendant que las meschantz batailleront soubz le diable."

²⁸ Calvin, *Sermons*, 35 (Sermon 5 on Jer. 15:10-15). "Et pourtant pensons à nous."

order to emphasize his application. On the contrary, in his lectures he focuses on the original author's thought as he often uses this expression, "we now understand the prophet's intention."²⁹

1.2 Calvin's Exegetical Method in His Lectures and Sermons on the Book of Jeremiah

In 1968, Hans-Joachim Kraus published a paper on the subject, "Calvins exegetische Prinzipien."³⁰ As shown in the title, his article had as its aim to describe the characteristics of Calvin's biblical interpretation. This was the start of this sort of research and many studies have followed.³¹ These studies have proven that Calvin had his own method of biblical interpretation and that understanding it is very useful in grasping Calvin's exegesis. Proving that this same method appeared in his biblical interpretation of the book of Jeremiah is the main purpose of this chapter. Furthermore, this study will serve as an important foundation to understanding Calvin's ecclesiology based on his exegesis of Jeremiah.

1.2.1 Distinction: Hermeneutical Principles and Exegetical Practices

In the beginning of his article Kraus studies Calvin's correspondence with several contemporaries.³² According to him, Calvin examined the different methods of exegesis used by them in order to develop his own method. Then, he discovered that the goal of biblical interpretation "never could and never should be to 'patch together' words related to the text in order to construct explanations consistent with the Bible, but rather to communicate a 'living exposition'."³³ Calvin took the purpose of biblical interpretation in his time as communication between the biblical text and a practical application. In his paper, Kraus introduces the eight principles of Calvin's exegesis: (1) The principle of *clarity and brevity*; (2) Seeking to determine *the intention of the author*; (3) Interest in the historical, geographical, and institutional *circumstances*; (4) *The real meaning* of a statement or a passage; (5) Understanding the passage in its *context*; (6) *Going beyond the literal wording* according

²⁹ CO 38. 219 (COR II 6/1. 592; Jer. 15:10). "Tenemus nunc consilium Prophetarum."

³⁰ Kraus, "Calvins exegetische Prinzipien," 329-41 and translated by Keith Crim, "Calvin's Exegetical Principles", *Interpretation* 31 (1977), 8-18.

³¹ Muller, "Biblical Interpretation," 8; Blacketer, *The School of God*, 5-6.

³² Luther (CR 39, 36), Melancthon (CR 38, 131), Bucer (CR 38, 404), Zwingli (CR 39, 36), Oecolampadius (CR 39, 36), and others: Kraus, "Calvin's Exegetical Principles," 8.

³³ Kraus, "Calvin's Exegetical Principles," 8.

to the author's intention; (7) Interpreting *metaphorical expressions*, as figures of speech; (8) Recognition of the significance of *the scope of Christ*.³⁴ Despite Kraus' unquestionable role as a starting point in recent studies of Calvin's exegetical methods, his work has been criticized.³⁵ As one of the negative reviews, Holder points out Kraus's problem as follows:

Hermeneutics illuminate deep conceptions that the person brings to the task of interpretation, basic pre-suppositions that remain unchanged by the encounter with the text. [...] Exegetical rules, on the other hand, concern the manner in which a person deals with specific issues in texts. Frequently, scholarship on historical biblical interpretation has concentrated upon these exegetical practices. The terminology is highly specialized, using specific language such as allegory, literal sense, *sensus germanus*, typology, and *αναγωγή*.³⁶

According to Holder's categorization, Kraus' work mixes up hermeneutical principles and exegetical practices. But Holder distinguishes between the two. Because hermeneutical principles contain Calvin's perspective on the Scriptures or the foundation of interpretation, and exegetical practices show some nuts-and-bolts methods to perform the principles of his exegesis. This distinction between the two might also be quite effective in understanding Calvin's methods of biblical interpretation. In this chapter, thus, we will adopt Holder's argument.

1.2.2 Hermeneutical Principles

1.2.2.1 The Unity of the Two Testaments

In the *Institutes*, Calvin shows the unity between the Old and New Testament (*Inst.* 2.10. and 11). Although each Testament seems to deal with some different content, the essence of both is virtually identical. Undoubtedly, Calvin did not completely deny the differences between both

³⁴ Kraus, "Calvin's Exegetical Principles," 12-18.

³⁵ Muller, "Biblical Interpretation in the Era," 8. According to Muller, Kraus does not see Calvin's interpretation as a continuation of the medieval method. Rather, he connects Calvin with the modern critical method, therefore, he isolates Calvin historically; Muller, "The Hermeneutic of Promise," 68-9; Blacketer, *The School of God*, 6. Blacketer agrees with Muller in his book saying, "When it comes to his understanding of Scripture and his method of exegesis, Calvin has much more in common with his medieval predecessors than with modern higher critics."

³⁶ Holder, *John Calvin and the Grounding*, 31-32.

Testaments. But the differences, he said, are inessential in Christ.³⁷ Also, Wendel states that in Calvin's view, the differences between the two Testaments are in the chronological position under the history of salvation, not in their contents.³⁸ While explaining the unity of the Old and New Testaments, Calvin proceeds to summarize in the following way: first, the two Testaments present the hope of immortality, namely the eternal covenant; second, the covenant is completed not by the Jews' own merits, but entirely by the mercy of God; and last, Christ is Mediator of the covenant.³⁹ Calvin thought that God and the covenant are always the same even though they are described in various ways. Also, he took Christ as a link between the messages of the two Testaments. In short, Calvin explains that the Old and New Testament focus on salvation by Christ based on God's covenant.⁴⁰

Calvin's view of the unity of the two Testaments is regarded as a fundamental statement in his biblical exegesis as well as his theology. God announces the Israelites' restoration from the captivity at the beginning of Jeremiah chapter 30. For his interpretation of Jeremiah 30:10, Calvin explains why the prophet Jeremiah mentions "offspring." Jeremiah would like to inform them that their offspring would rightly be saved from the captivity even if the effect of redemption could not reach the people of Israel at that moment.⁴¹ Also, he makes clear that the captured Israelites have to look forward to salvation with endurance believing in God as their forefathers such as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had by keeping faith in God's covenant. Calvin also emphasizes that restoration is only possible by God's grace, and then shows the continuity of His grace (*continuationem gratiae suae*). In

³⁷ CO 2. 329 (*Inst.* 2.11.1). "Hac ratione nihil impediens quominus eadem maneant veteris ac Novi testamenti promissiones, atque idem ipsorum promissionum fundamentum, Christus."

³⁸ "De fait, la comparaison que Calvin institue entre les deux Testaments l'amène à les différencier plutôt d'après leur place chronologique dans l'économie du salut, que d'après leur contenu." Wendel, *Calvin. Sources et Evolution*, 156.

³⁹ CO 2. 314 (*Inst.* 2.10.2). "In tribus autem maxime capitibus hic insistendum est. Primum ut teneamus, non carnalem opulentiam ac felicitatem metam fuisse Iudaeis propositam ad quam demum aspirarent, sed in spem immortalitatis fuisse cooptatos, atque huius adoptionis fidem illis fuisse tum oraculis, tum lege, tum prophetis certo factam. Deinde, foedus quo conciliati Domino fuerunt, nullis eorum meritis, sed sola Dei vocantis misericordia fuisse suffultum. Tertium, et habuisse ipsos et cognovisse mediatorem Christum, per quem et Deo coniungerentur, et promissionum eius compotes forent."; de Greef, *het Oude Testament*, 93-114. Upon the unity of the Bible, de Greef states "de eenheid van het verbond", "het geestelijk karakter van het verbond", "het genade-karakter van het verbond", and "Christus, de middelaar van het verbond."; Puckett, *Calvin's Exegesis*, 37-51; Parker, *Old Testament commentaries*, 42-55; Holder, *John Calvin and the Grounding*, 50-58; Balke, *Calvijn en de Bijbel*, 58-9.

⁴⁰ CO 2. 329 (*Inst.* 2.11.1); de Greef, *het Oude Testament*, 177-184; "das heilsgeschichtliche Handeln Gottes in den mit zunehmender Klarheit gegebenen Hinweisen auf seine Offenbarung in der Menschwerdung Jesu Christi ist umklammert von der Offenbarung in seinem Bund, der auf Christus, sein Sterben und Auferstehen gegründet ist, und Gründung auf Christus heißt Teilhabe an ihm." Wolf, *Die Einheit des Bundes*, 65.

⁴¹ CO 38. 621 (COR II 6/2. 1104; Jer. 30:10). "Haec igitur ratio est cur Propheta commemoret semen: quasi diceret Etiam si ad vos non perveniat effectus redemptionis, Deus tamen non fallat spem vestram, quia posterius vestri sentient ipsum fuisse veracem."

addition, he stresses that the covenant will not be fully fulfilled until Christ comes (*ad Christi adventum*).⁴² Moreover, he interprets the book of Jeremiah based on the unity of the Bible with Christ being the Mediator of all covenants in the two Testaments.⁴³ This can also be found in his sermons. In his sermon on Jeremiah 16:16-19 he preached to the congregation about the redemption which would be given to the Jews in Babylonian exile. Then, he connects redemption with the Mosaic exodus and the salvation of the church by Christ's atonement.⁴⁴ These thoughts have their foundation in the unity of the covenant that has appeared in both Testaments.⁴⁵ In this way, Calvin's perspective on the unity of the Bible is apparent in his interpretations of the book of Jeremiah.

1.2.2.2 Christ as the Center of Interpretation

Calvin states that the aim of reading the Bible is to discover exactly who Christ is and to know how to follow Him in our daily life.⁴⁶ Thus, we may presume that Calvin's goal in interpreting the Scriptures is to seek Christ and find Him.⁴⁷ The two Testaments are not different in nature, as noted earlier. It is Christ that Calvin said is their essence. He taught that while the Old Testament served to hold believers in expectation of Christ's coming, they should expect far more light at His Advent.⁴⁸ This is because Christ is the gospel and His life and works are written in the concrete words in the New Testament. In this way, Calvin interpreted many parts of the Bible Christocentrically.⁴⁹ This aspect appears in his lectures on the Prophets.⁵⁰ His lectures on Jeremiah cannot be an exception.

⁴² CO 38. 619-622 (COR II 6/2 1102-5; Jer. 30:10).

⁴³ Such an interpretation based on the unity of the two Testaments can be found in many parts of Calvin's exegesis of the Book of Jeremiah like this: CO 37. 679-680 (COR II 6/1. 280-283; Jer. 7:11); CO 37. 689-690 (COR II 6/1. 293-4; Jer. 7:21-24); CO 38. 94 (COR II 6/1. 432; Jer. 10:25). "Sciebat enim Propheta quod semel dictum fuerat Davidi, hoc promissum esse toti Ecclesiae in omnes aetates."; CO 38. 186 (COR II 6/1. 550; Jer. 14:9). "... sed objicere tantum illi nomen suum, et promissionem, atque adeo foedus, quod nobiscum pepigit in manu unigeniti Filii sui, et sancivit ejus sanguine."

⁴⁴ Calvin, *Sermons*, 80 (Sermon 12 on Jer. 16:14-19a). "Or nous avons montré que pour entendre cecy qu'il ne fault point prandre ceste prophetie pour ung jour ne pour ung temps, mais qu'il fault poursuyvir jusques à la venue de Jesucrist."

⁴⁵ Calvin, *Sermons*, 7 (Sermon 2 on Jer. 14:19-15:1).

⁴⁶ CO 47. 125 (Com. Evan. Ioan. 5:39) "Primo igitur tenendum est, non aliunde quam ex scripturis Christum rite cognosci. Quod si ita est, sequitur hoc animo legendas esse scripturas ut illic inveniamus Christum."; "Anders ausgedrückt: weil das Ziel, die Erfüllung des Gesetzes, das uns in die Furcht Gottes stellt, Jesus Christus ist, und die Substanz des Evangeliums, das uns zum Vertrauen aufruft, ebenfalls Jesus Christus, darum ist der Zweck unserer Beschäftigung mit der Bibel die Erkenntnis Jesu Christi." Niesel, *Die Theologie Calvins*, 27; de Greef, *het Oude Testament*, 226.

⁴⁷ Kraus, "Calvin's Exegetical Principles," 17.

⁴⁸ CO 2. 309 (*Inst.* 2.9.1). "Quibus verbis admonet, legem in hoc valere ut pios in expectatione venturi Christi contineat; eius tamen adventu longe plus lucis sperandum esse."

⁴⁹ Zachman, *John Calvin as Teacher*, 130; Mckane, "Calvin as an Old Testament commentator," 254.

⁵⁰ Farrar, *History of Interpretation*, 346-7.

On Jer. 7:11, the prophet Jeremiah criticized the Israelites severely for unfaithful worship and their unlawful behavior in the temple: “Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes?” In the lecture on this verse, Calvin points out the false worship of Israelites. In his view, the Israelites lost sight of the original purpose of the temple. Thus, he states that Israelites’ turning their temple into a shelter of robbers is a reasonable simile.⁵¹ Calvin continues to link this verse with Christ’s work, in which He applied this verse to the Jews having defiled the temple in the New Testament.⁵² That Calvin connects verses from Jeremiah with Christ’s life and work is found often when the prophet rebuked the unfaithful worship of the Israelites, because worship is only possible through Christ’s sacrifice and his holy blood.⁵³ Furthermore, for the salvation of the Israelites Calvin focuses on Christ’s work by explaining not only the Israelites return from Babylon, but also eternal redemption through Christ.⁵⁴

1.2.2.3 The Audience-Centered Interpretation

After the citizens in Geneva had chosen to take an oath to adhere to the Reformation on 21 May 1536 under the guidance of Farel,⁵⁵ their services of worship went through changes.

In all of these actions, Genevan worshippers became accustomed to a liturgical rhythm of psalmody, public prayer, preaching, and partaking of the Lord’s Supper, and were now called to intentional participation in each. Whereas in medieval worship they would passively observe the liturgy, comprehend little that was said, and pray privately, now they were called to rise, sing, pray publicly, listen, and partake. The presider now spoke in their own language, and expected them to hear and listen. The meal was now theirs to partake each time it was served.⁵⁶

⁵¹ CO 37. 680 (COR II 6/1. 282; Jer. 7:11). “Optime igitur quadrat comparatio, ubi Propheta dicit, Judaeis Templum Dei factum esse quasi speluncam latronum.”

⁵² CO 37. 680 (COR II 6/1. 282; Jer. 7:11). “Et ideo Christus ad tempus suum accommodat hoc vaticinium: quoniam Judaei etiam tunc Templum profanaverant”

⁵³ CO 37. 690 (COR II 6/1. 294; Jer. 7:21). “... deinde sacrificia erant vivae Christi imagines: erant certa pignora expiationis, ut homines reconciliarentur cum Deo, ...”

⁵⁴ Calvin, *Sermons*, 79 (Sermon 11 on Jer. 16:14-19a). “Voilà où le prophete conduit ce peuple. Mais encores le veult il conduire plus loing, c’est assavoir à ceste delivrance generale qui a esté faite par nostre Seigneur Jesucrist; ...”

⁵⁵ de Greef, *The Writings*, 28; Partee, “Farel’s influence on Calvin: a prolusion,” 173-186.

⁵⁶ Witvliet and Bierma, “Liturgy,” 417.

The worship service after the Reformation was different from that of the previous era.⁵⁷ The most apparent difference is that the preachers delivered their messages in their own languages thanks to the influence of the Reformation. The congregation also participated in the worship service. So, Calvin wanted Genevan Christians to be involved actively and positively in worship. For that reason he taught them to listen to his sermons carefully.⁵⁸ According to Calvin, the Genevan congregation needed to listen to all sermons critically, to assess them, and to apply them to their everyday life rather than to hear them without doubt.⁵⁹ Therefore, all passages in his preaching are oriented to his audience.

When Calvin preached on Jeremiah 16:16-19, he considered the worship of the Catholic Church to be idolatry. Calvin argues that the land wherein they worshiped had been polluted by their services. By contrast, he said that Geneva was the place consecrated by God.⁶⁰ Through this comparison he intended to show a difference between the Genevan congregation and the Catholic Church. This suggests that his exegetical method is oriented to his audience. In his sermon on Jeremiah 18:15-16, he explains ‘we’ and ‘neighbor’ concretely. Calvin states that ‘we’ are the Genevan congregation at that time and that ‘neighbors’, who were utterly exhausted, mean the reformed believers under persecution in France.⁶¹ The interpretation of this verse may show that he interpreted the Bible with the religious refugees from France in mind.

1.2.2.4 Scripture’s Authority

For preachers, the authority of the Scriptures is an important issue. This was also an important issue for Calvin. He states clearly in the *Institutes* 1.6.2: “But whether God became known to the patriarchs through oracles and visions or by the work and ministry of men, He put into their minds

⁵⁷ Manetsch, *Calvin’s Company of Pastors*, 146-8.

⁵⁸ Moehn, *Calvin’s Sermons on Acts*, 198-9.

⁵⁹ Moehn, *Calvin’s Sermons on Acts*, 211-2.

⁶⁰ Calvin, *Sermons*, 85 (Sermon 12 on Jer. 16:14-19a). “il a fait une consecration special de la terre où nous habitons Genève est une terre d’élection, ...”

⁶¹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 155 (Sermon 23 on Jer.18: 13-16). “noz voisins qui languissent de soif Calvin pense avant tout à ses compatriots gagnés aux idées réformées qui vivaient alors en France des moments difficiles.”

what they should then hand down to their posterity.”⁶² God spoke,⁶³ planted His words in our mind, and kept it there in order to be remembered eternally. This written record are the Scriptures. In other words, the Bible is the written words of God, and teachings from heaven (*Coelesti doctrina*).⁶⁴ However, some people argued that the authority of the Scriptures belonged to the Church, thus rejecting the idea that the Bible is the Word of God. Against their arguments, Calvin stated that the church had been built upon the teachings of the prophets and apostles (Eph. 2:3), and that God’s command was given before the church existed.⁶⁵ In addition, just as we know how to distinguish light from darkness, white from black, and sweetness from bitterness, so too the fact that the Scriptures are the word of God, Calvin argued, was itself similarly known.⁶⁶ The authority of the Scriptures is not based on historical traditions or religious institutions, but only on the Word of God.⁶⁷ From the basis of this belief in this authority of the Scriptures, Calvin interpreted, lectured, and preached the Bible.

In Jeremiah 36:4-6, the prophet Jeremiah records the Word of God. Here Calvin explains that Jeremiah recited the words which God had spoken to him, and Baruch wrote them down on the scroll.⁶⁸ Calvin stresses the fact that the prophet was only the instrument of God, since the scripture came from Him and Jeremiah had simply to follow His command.⁶⁹ Likewise, he criticizes the Catholic Church because they treated patristic doctrine and the decrees of the church as more important than the Scriptures.⁷⁰ This idea can be found throughout his sermons. In his sermon of July 26, 1549, he said that God only approves His words through pastors when they rightly speak what he

⁶² CO 2. 54 (*Inst.* 1.6.2). “Sive autem per oracula et visiones patribus innotuit Deus, sive hominum opera et ministerio suggestit quod deinde per manus posteris traderent, indubium tamen est insculptam fuisse eorum cordibus firmam doctrinae certitudinem, ut persuasi essent atque intelligerent, a Deo profectum esse quod didicerant.”

⁶³ Fuhrmann, “Calvin, The Expositor of Scripture,” 193. Fuhrmann asserts that the important principle of Calvin’s hermeneutical method is his proclamation, “God spoke”.

⁶⁴ “... The fact is that for Calvin the Bible, the whole Bible and every nook and cranny of the Bible, is the Word of God as completely as if God Himself had spoken the actual words. At every point, therefore, we are confronted by God’s will, God’s mind, and not by human purpose and ideas.” Parker, *Old Testament Commentaries*, 66.

⁶⁵ CO 2. 58 (*Inst.* 1.7.2).

⁶⁶ CO 2. 58 (*Inst.* 1.7.2). “Non enim obscuriorem veritatis suae sensum ultro scriptura prae se fert, quam coloris sui res albae ac nigrae; saporis, suaves et amarae.”

⁶⁷ Steinmetz, “Theology and Exegesis,” 382; Muller, “The Foundation of Calvin’s Theology,” 14-17.

⁶⁸ CO 39. 118 (COR II 6/2. 1360; Jer. 36:6). “Iterum repetit Jeremias nihil ex sensu suo esse profectum. Videmus ergo non dictasse pro arbitrio quae venirent in mentem, sed Deum suggestisse quidquid voluit scribi per manum Baruch.”

⁶⁹ CO 39. 449 (COR II 6/2. 1784; Jer. 51:11). “Sed hinc colligimus, Jeremiam non humanitus locutum esse, sed fuisse organum Spiritus.”

⁷⁰ CO 37. 692 (COR II 6/1. 297; Jer. 7:24). “... ideo pluris aestimant doctrinam Patrum et perpetuum consensum Ecclesiae Catholicae, ut vocant, quam et Legem, et Prophetas, et Evangelium.”

directs them to say. So pastors should not mingle God's words with their own thoughts,⁷¹ since this fault arises from their denying the authority of the Scriptures.

1.2.2.5 Accommodation: Two Authors

God's essence is incomprehensible, and His divinity is far beyond all human awareness.⁷² The distance between divine infinity and human finiteness is unfathomable. Calvin uses the concept of 'accommodatio' to indicate the total otherness of God.⁷³ Since we are not able to understand God by ourselves, we cannot have any knowledge of God if He has not come to us to make Himself known.⁷⁴ In other words, we cannot know Him of our own ability without His self-revelation.⁷⁵ So, God accommodates to our capacity in the way in which He reveals Himself to us.⁷⁶ For that reason, this is God's unilateral self-reliant work.⁷⁷ Calvin utilizes this concept of accommodation in many ways.⁷⁸ However, the most prominent aspect of his understanding is that the Word of God is *divine accommodation*. Huijgen notes that for Calvin, "[a]ll biblical language is accommodated." God uses human language to present Himself to us since we cannot recognize Him in our own capacity.⁷⁹ This language is the biblical language, and it is God's accommodation.

Who wrote the Scriptures, which are the fruit of God's accommodation? The answer is clear. Calvin states that the Bible is written by the Holy Spirit.⁸⁰ The human writers wrote down the Words

⁷¹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 125 (Sermon 18: Jer. 17:13b, 15,16). "Or il n'approuve que ce qu'il a dit. Il faut donc que les hommes ne s'abusent point de meller leur parole avec la parole de Dieu, car c'est autant de pollution."

⁷² CO 2. 41 (*Inst.* 1.5.1). "Essentia quidem eius incomprehensibilis est, ut sensus omnes humanos procul effugiat eius numen."

⁷³ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 40-41.

⁷⁴ CO 2. 48 (*Inst.* 1.5.9). "Unde intelligimus hanc esse rectissimam Dei quaerendi viam et aptissimum ordinem; non ut audaci curiositate penetrare tentemus ad excutiendam eius essentiam, quae adoranda potius est, quam scrupulosius disquirenda; sed ut illum in suis operibus contemplemur, quibus se propinquum nobis familiaremque reddidit ac quodammodo communicat."

⁷⁵ Wright, "Calvin's Accommodating God," 16-7.

⁷⁶ Battles, "God Was Accommodating Himself," 35.

⁷⁷ "This accommodation, however, is not God's changeability, but by His condescension to us." CO 2. 339 (*Inst.* 2.11.13) "Quod externam formam et modum mutavit, in eo non se ostendit mutationi obnoxium; sed hominum captui, qui varius ac mutabilis est, eatenus se attemperavit."

⁷⁸ Parker, *Old Testament Commentaries*, 98; Huijgen, "Divine Accommodation and Divine Transcendence," 121-2. According to Huijgen, the concept of Accommodation started from the *Institutes*. But, since F.L. Battles, "God Was Accommodating Himself to Human Capacity" in 1977, research upon the concept has delved into Calvin's sermons or commentaries; "[y]et accommodation is certainly more than a convenient tool for him. It seems to function in Calvin as a significant element in his thought, particularly as regards his thinking on God's relationship with humankind." Balserak, "Accommodatio Dei," 373.

⁷⁹ Huijgen, *Divine Accommodation*, 271.

⁸⁰ CO 2. 59 (*Inst.* 1.7.4).

of God under the guidance of the Spirit and expressed the divine rhetoric.⁸¹ According to this principle, we understand that the Scriptures are written by two writers, the Holy Spirit and the human author. It is difficult to deny that these two writers are closely bound together in the formation of the Scriptures.⁸² Calvin mentions the dual authorship of the Scriptures in his lectures on the book of Jeremiah. As he said, we should find meaning in the biblical texts and gain benefit from them. To do this, readers have to understand what the Holy Spirit intended in the text, and then to consider why the prophets spoke.⁸³ God's accommodation is manifested clearly through the biblical event. In that event, Baruch wrote down what YHWH told Jeremiah (Jer. 36:4-6). God, by his Spirit, presided over and guided the mind and tongue of the prophet. Jeremiah stood between God and Baruch.⁸⁴ Calvin put emphasis on the point that the prophet spoke with the help of the Spirit. And Baruch wrote down what he heard on the scroll. Jeremiah repeated again the fact that nothing came from himself. Jeremiah indicated clearly from the beginning of his ministry as a prophet that his words were his own, but he was not the author of them but only the minister of God's words.⁸⁵ God spoke to His people through Jeremiah the prophet. He revealed Himself to them by his instrument, the Hebrew language. This all means that God accommodates Himself to man. In Calvin's thought, the Scriptures were written externally by human authors, and internally by the Holy Spirit who accommodated Himself to them.

1.2.2.6 Edification (*Aedificatio*)

As soon as Calvin came back to Geneva from Strasbourg after 3 years of ministry there, he suggested four offices for the church in 1541.⁸⁶ He also tended Geneva as a pastor and teacher. His two offices seem to have common ground in the study, interpretation and teaching lessons from the

⁸¹ CO 2. 851 (*Inst.* 4.8.9). "Quanquam inter apostolos et eorum successores hoc, ut dixi, interest, quod illi fuerunt certi et authentici spiritus sancti amanuenses, et ideo eorum scripta pro Dei oraculis habenda sunt."; Battles, "God Was Accommodating," 22; Muller, "Biblical Interpretation in the Era," 10; Muller, "The Foundation of Calvin's Theology," 16.

⁸² Puckett, *Calvin's Exegesis*, 26-37.

⁸³ CO 38. 88 (COR II 6/1. 424-5; Jer. 10:23). "Nunc tenemus in quem finem tendat Propheta: et hoc semper respiciendum est, si cupimus cum fructu legere quaecunque scripta sunt: nempe ut reputemus quale fuerit consilium Spiritus Sancti: deinde in quem scopum verba direxerit: ubi hoc tenemus, jam facilis est transitus ad reliqua. Sed qui non expendit finem, ille vagatur semper huc et illuc: etiam si multa dicat, non tamen attinget ipsam rei summam."

⁸⁴ CO 39. 118 (COR II 6/2. 1360; Jer. 36:4). "Fuit igitur Jeremias medius inter Deum et Baruch, quia Deus Spiritu suo praeivit, et gubernavit Prophetam mentem ac linguam. Propheta autem duce Spiritu et magistro recitavit quae Deus jubebat. Baruch autem scripsit, et deinde promulgavit totam propheticae doctrinae summam."

⁸⁵ CO 37. 474 (COR II 6/1. 22; Jer. 1:2). "Ergo hic Jeremias quasi per modum correctionis subjicit suos esse sermones, non quorum ipse sit autor, sed Minister duntaxat."

⁸⁶ *Les ordonnances ecclésiastiques* (1541): CO 10.15.

Bible. Calvin calls the word of God a particular school for God's children (*peculiarem filiorum Dei scholam*), since we cannot reach God without their help.⁸⁷ Only the Scriptures, God's words, can help us to obtain knowledge of God. The goal of Scriptures is also, Calvin said, to know God's goodness that leads believers to be in communion with God and to reach true happiness.⁸⁸ Therefore, he thought that the most important work was to edify the faithful by teaching the Scriptures.⁸⁹ The purpose of preaching is the edification of congregations because then they are able to understand God and to be trained through listening to sermons.⁹⁰ In his sermon of June 24, 1549 on Jer. 15:1-6, Calvin said that Genevan believers had to reflect on themselves and to repent of their sin.⁹¹ The unbelievers mentioned in the Scriptures were suitable examples called to mind in order to edify believers. Also, Calvin hoped that believers should be armored by God's words, while Calvin preached that they could fall into wickedness if they would not keep those words.⁹² In addition, the reason why the words have been spoken is that through the Scriptures we can live the right way.⁹³

1.2.3 Exegetical Practices

1.2.3.1 Lucid Brevity

⁸⁷ CO 2. 56 (*Inst.* 1.6.4). "Nam quum humana mens pro sua imbecillitate pervenire ad Deum nullo modo queat nisi sacro eius verbo adiuta et sublevata, omnes tunc mortales, exceptis Iudaeis, quia Deum sine verbo quaerebant, necesse fuit in vanitate atque errore versari."

⁸⁸ CO 51. 326 (Sermon on Ephesians 1:17-18). Note that "Car l'Escriture n'est pas pour nous paistre de choses vaines et superflues: mais elle est pour nous edifier à nostre salut, c'est à dire, pour nous faire sentir la bonté de Dieu, à fin que nous soyons conioints à luy, et que ce soit là nostre vraye felicité."; Blacketer, *The School of God*, 31-2.

⁸⁹ Zachman, "Calvin as commentator on Genesis," 21. Since Calvin is convinced that all Scripture is given to us in order to build up and edify the faith and piety of the church, the goal of all interpretation is edification; Holder, *John Calvin and the Grounding*, 81-2, 256. Holder states that the edification in the church is not only the goal of the Bible, but it is also the purpose of Calvin's doctrine. And, he also argues that the edification is the first and final or unique task of Calvin's theology; Armstrong, "Duplex cognitio Dei, Or?," 151.

⁹⁰ Parker, *Preaching*, 114; "The sermons stand in a rather different formal category again. They were not intended for academic instruction but for the teaching and training of the Church in Geneva;" Parker, *Old Testament commentaries*, 38; de Greef, *Het Oude Testament*, 52-54.

⁹¹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 19-20 (Sermon 3 on Jer. 15:1-6). "Voila comment on en fait aujourd'hui, je ne dy pas en la papaulté, mais à Geneve. ... Nous voyons les desbauchez et pourtant advisons à nous, car Dieu dict: "Je suis las de vous pardonner.""

⁹² Calvin, *Sermons*, 43 (Sermon 6 on Jer. 15:12-13, 15-17). "... c'est "d'estre assis" en la parole de Dieu, car si nous ne sommes retirez par ceste parole, nous voila adonnez à tout mal."

⁹³ Calvin, *Sermons*, 49 (Sermon 7 on Jer. 15:17-19). "Apreons donc que la parole de Dieu nous est donnée, affin que nous aprenions de n'estre point trompez, mais que nous ayons nostre chemyn certain."

Calvin's practical methods for interpreting the biblical texts can be first found in his letters written to Grynaeus.⁹⁴ In their correspondence, they agreed that the fundamental practice of biblical interpretation was "lucid brevity (*brevitas*)."⁹⁵ In fact, Calvin tried to read the Scriptures in a simple way and to write in a simple way. So, he took this as his guiding principle because he thought that the meaning of the biblical texts needed to be clear and simple.⁹⁶ Also, he believed that brevity (*brevitas*) would certainly promote clarity (*claritas*) in the text, since verbose or repeated explanations disrupt comprehension for the believers who read the Scriptures or listen to sermons.⁹⁷ For this reason, he liked to concentrate only on the biblical texts. This helped him to grasp the intention of the biblical writer and to deliver it correctly to his audience.⁹⁸ The other reason to emphasize brevity is his hope to introduce this method to pastors.⁹⁹ Since a lot of pastors could not spend much time in biblical interpretation, Calvin thought that this simple and clear exegesis would help them for their sermon preparation. For this, Calvin underlines the following steps. First, avoid the allegorical interpretation.¹⁰⁰ As the allegorical interpretation has lots of room for various interpretations, this might hinder the clear meaning of the biblical author.¹⁰¹ Second, Calvin does not include theological matters in his exegesis frequently since theological matters would introduce unnecessary doctrinal arguments. He thought that this would interrupt the congregation's understanding of the Bible.¹⁰²

⁹⁴ "Zijn eerste commentaar, die op de Romeinbrief, heeft hij opgedragen aan Simon Grynaeus in Bazel. Grynaeus was een van de meest intieme vrienden van Calvin gedurende zijn verblijf in Bazel van 1535-1536. Grynaeus was professor Grieks aan de universiteit en gaf in die tijd college over de brieven van Paulus. Calvin en Grynaeus hebben samen diepgaande gesprekken gehad over de problemen van de van de rechte exegese van de Heilige Schrift." Balke, *Calvin en de Bijbel*, 54; Kraus, "Calvin's Exegetical Principles," 12. Calvin expressed his views on this point in his letter to Simon Grynaeus. It was a dedicatory letter which Calvin wrote on October 18, 1539 to accompany his just-published commentary on Roman.

⁹⁵ Parker, *Calvin's New Testament Commentaries*, 86-7; Holder, *John Calvin and the Grounding*, 131; Gamble, "Brevitas et Facilitas," 3. According to Gamble's study, Calvin's methods could be seen in his commentary on the book of Psalms (1557). This means that Calvin maintained this method from the beginning of his exegetical works to the end; CO 31. 33-34. "Itaque non modo simplex docendi ratio ubique a me servata est, sed quo longius abesset omnis ostentatio, a refutationibus ut plurimum abstinui, ..."; Gordon, *Calvin*, 105.

⁹⁶ Torrance, "The Hermeneutics of Erasmus," 57-8. These thoughts are similar to Erasmus' way of dealing the biblical texts.

⁹⁷ "Wat hij (Calvin) in zijn uitleg beoogd is de eigenlijke betekenis van de tekst te verhelderen (*perspicuitas*) en zich daarop ook te concentreren (*brevitas*)." Baars, "Bondig en toch helder," 13-17.

⁹⁸ Holder, *John Calvin and the Grounding*, 127.

⁹⁹ Gamble, "Brevitas et Facilitas," 6.

¹⁰⁰ CO 2. 460 (*Inst.* 3.4.5). "Secundum argumentum ex eodem fonte ducunt, hoc est ex allegoria, quasi multum valeant allegoriae ad dogma aliquod confirmandum. Sed valeant sane, nisi eas ipsas ostendero speciosius a me obtendi, quam ab ipsis posse."; Balke, *Calvin en de Bijbel*, 62.

¹⁰¹ Holder, *John Calvin and the Grounding*, 129; Kraus, "Calvin's Exegetical Principles," 13.

¹⁰² Parker, *New Testament Commentaries*, 90; Selderhuis, *John Calvin*, 97-8. The *Institutes* has played a role as a sort of the systematic-theological handbook to accompany the exegesis.

Calvin's clear and simple interpretation appears over and over with expressions like "to sum up" or "in short (*in summa*)" making it. That, "this is a summary (*Haec summa est*)" indicates his intention.¹⁰³ He used these expressions to illuminate a given passage concretely,¹⁰⁴ or to rearrange some difficult matters with a well-defined description. Additionally, another expression, "I will present the intention of the prophet more concisely (*sed breviter ostendam prophetae consilium*, CO 38. 15)" points to this method. Importantly, he said at the end of his lecture on Jer. 19:8, "I present only what the prophet intended in the passage and what are applied by it, though I can give a long-winded explanation,"¹⁰⁵ and in Jer. 12:1 he explains again the whole meaning of this verse again using the expression, "[w]e understand more clearly what I said."¹⁰⁶

1.2.3.2 Verse by Verse

Calvin did not give up his passion for lectures and sermons until his last lecture on the book of Ezekiel on February 2, 1564 and delivered his last sermon on the Synoptic Gospels on February 6.¹⁰⁷ As discussed above, he preached or lectured on a book of the Bible continuously (*lectio continua*); not following a topical reading.¹⁰⁸ Through this, he hoped that his audience would become accustomed to all of the Scriptures, and that all preachers would not avoid any passage of the Bible. So that they could study all of the Scriptures and connect them with their congregations.¹⁰⁹ Despite his consecutive approach, his biblical interpretation does not exceed the limits of the Bible.¹¹⁰ First of all, he explains the whole outline of a given passage in his lecture, and then states the specific meaning of each verse step by step. Last, he completes his interpretation with a summary of the whole. For

¹⁰³ These expressions appear frequently in Calvin's exegeses.

¹⁰⁴ Parker, *Preaching*, 101. Parker states that Calvin often used this method in his sermons: Note that "... Here are some of Calvin's summaries of the essential message of the Bible. Besides these, he also sometimes gave summaries of what was daily preached in Geneva. But these also, since it was intended that only pure doctrine should be preached, are indications of Calvin's view of the essential message of Scripture."

¹⁰⁵ CO 38. 69 (COR II 6/1. 401; Jer. 10:8). "Hoc posset multo copiosius tractari, sed tantum expono mentem Prophetarum, et simul etiam ostendo quorsum pertineat haec doctrina, et quomodo aptari debeat in communem usum."

¹⁰⁶ CO 38. 130 (COR II 6/1. 478; Jer. 12:1). "Nunc clarius tenemus quod dixi, ..."

¹⁰⁷ Parker, *Old Testament Commentaries*, 13; Parker, *Preaching*, 64.

¹⁰⁸ Parker, *Preaching*, 60. When Calvin returned to Geneva from Strasbourg in 1541, he preached on the next verse from the verse he had preached before he was banished from Geneva. He may have had a strong will to finish preaching on a book from the Bible; de Greef, *The Writings*, 110.

¹⁰⁹ Moehn, *Calvin's Sermons on Acts*, 243-5.

¹¹⁰ "We must remember that even though he proceeds verse by verse, Calvin is grasping the text as a whole, aware of the difficulties that lie before him. He deals with one part of the text knowing the implications of his interpretation for later verses and the way in which later verses impinge on his exegesis of earlier ones. ... Calvin is in dialogue with that text as a whole." Schreiner, "Through a Mirror Dimly," 180

example, in his lecture on Jer. 8:19 (CO 38. 19-22) Calvin takes on only a verse. Calvin first introduces three truths from this verse: 1) a declaration about impending destruction that people are not afraid of yet, 2) a mention of the Israelites' response, 3) the prophet's response in God's name and his scolding of the Israelites' sins.¹¹¹ Likewise, he first summarizes the whole meaning of the verse, and then begins to explain it in detail, dividing his examination into three parts: 1) in the first part "*Listen to the cry of my people from a land far away* (ESV)," he explains God's first message of destruction, 2) by the second "*Is the Lord not in Zion? Is her King no longer there?*" he explains the sinful state of the Israelites, 3) and finally through the third "*Why have they aroused my anger with their images, with their worthless foreign idols?*" he lectures his students on the anger of God and scolding of the Israelites. After finishing explanations of each part, he closes his lecture on this verse with a notice of the next verse. Usually, he explains the passage consecutively in this way although he does not use the exact same pattern all of the time.

1.2.3.3 Paraphrase

This practice, "Paraphrase" is deeply concerned with the audience's understanding of a text. When Calvin lectured or preached, he used to paraphrase if his intended meaning could not be delivered precisely.¹¹² It is very important, he thought, for the audience to understand the meaning of texts, and this method helps them understand. Calvin puts emphasis on what to "restate," by using such short expressions as 'if said (*acsi diceret*),' 'as has been mentioned (*quasi diceret*)' or 'that is (*hoc est*)' etc., or by use of an adverb 'namely (*nempe*),' 'in other words (*denique*)' and so on.¹¹³ These paraphrases, however, do not mean 'a simple repetition' of the original explanation. Calvin does not like to restate things pointlessly.¹¹⁴ This practice of paraphrase is used as follows. First, he

¹¹¹ CO 38. 19 (COR II 6/1. 337; Jer. 8:19). "Hoc versu Propheta suscipit diversas personas, primum cladem denuntiat, quae tametsi jam erat propinqua, non tamen metuebatur a populo: deinde repraesentat populum ipsum, et refert quae dicturus erat. Tertio adjungit responsionem Dei nomine, quae compescat obstreperas illas voces populi."

¹¹² Holder, *John Calvin and the Grounding*, 91; "La paraphrase qui reprend une seconde fois l'idée peut être plus brève (*interpretatio*), ou plus longue ("paraphrase" à proprement parler) que la première formulation." Millet, *Calvin et la dynamique de la parole*, 734.

¹¹³ CO 37. 606 (COR II 6/1. 187; Jer. 5:1); CO 38. 134 (COR II 6/1. 483; Jer. 12:4); CO 38. 108 (COR II 6/1. 449; Jer. 11:9-10).

¹¹⁴ Gamble, "Brevitas et Facilitas," 13. This verbose rhetoric is called 'frivolous rhetoric': For this, note that "This frivolous rhetoric is the rhetoric of the world. In worldly rhetoric one finds the motivation of honor or ambition driving the authors to discover more and more subtle means of expression; they wish to be ostentatious and to tickle the ear, in summary to please men."

paraphrases with other expressions in cases when his explanation is not clear enough or when it needs more explanation.¹¹⁵ Also, he does it when summaries are needed of the passage. Sometimes, he restates when specific explanations are needed from Hebrews grammar or syntax.¹¹⁶ Particularly, Calvin uses this method in cases that he wants to emphasize theological materials in the text.

These cases are found often in his lectures on the book of Jeremiah. In the first verse of chapter 24, he clarifies the vision of two baskets of figs. In order to explain the phrase, “*two baskets of figs placed in front of the temple of the Lord (ESV)*,” Calvin inserts the expression, ‘*quasi diceret*’ and he gives us a clear explanation about the situation in which all people stand before God’s judgment. As lay persons find it difficult to understand the meaning of visions by themselves, Calvin repeatedly uses such expressions in his explanation of Jeremiah 24.¹¹⁷ Specifically, he rephrases his explanation with ‘*nempe*,’ to stress the proper meaning of the Hebrew preposition ‘*le* (ל).’ In this way he explains clearly various interpretations of this preposition.¹¹⁸ In addition, when Calvin explains again the theological meaning of faith on Jeremiah 6:16, he discusses the significance of the text using the adverb ‘*nempe*.’¹¹⁹

1.2.3.4 Genuine Meaning and Context

The Bible is the Word of God.¹²⁰ The authority of the Scriptures is based on this proposition, even though the Bible has been written by human writers and the characteristics of the authors are found in it. Therefore, exegetes should clarify the intention of God in a given biblical passage because that is the genuine meaning of the Scriptures.¹²¹ Hence, Calvin frequently uses this expression, “Now

¹¹⁵ “‘explication’ l’examen qui détaille les éléments ou les différents aspects d’une même idée, et nous garderons le terme d’*expolatio* pour les procédures argumentatives plus ou moins détaillées qui introduisent des idées accessoires.” Millet, *Calvin et la dynamique*, 735.

¹¹⁶ Millet, *Calvin et la dynamique*, 737-8.

¹¹⁷ CO 38. 458 (COR II 6/1. 899; Jer. 24:1-2). “Ideo dicit locatas fuisse corbes vel calathos istos fuisse positos in Templo: *quasi diceret* totum populum stare ad Dei tribunal: ...”

¹¹⁸ CO 38. 468 (COR II 6/1. 911; Jer. 24:9). “Ideo dicitur, *in malum*, id est, propter malum. Nam ה hic diversis modis capitur, cum dicit, *in commotionem*; postea, *in malum*. Secundo igitur loco ה causalis est particula, *nempe* propter malum, quia scilicet tam severa et horribilis erit Dei vindicta, ut commoveat ac perturbet omnes populos.”

¹¹⁹ CO 37. 659 (COR II 6/1. 255; Jer. 6:16). “Locus hic continet utilem doctrinam, *nempe* fidem semper nobis adferre pacem coram Deo, neque id modo, quatenus in Dei misericordia acquiescere jubet, sicuti Paulus etiam docet hunc esse perpetuum ejus fructum: sed quia unica Dei voluntas ad pacandas mentes nostras sufficit.”

¹²⁰ See footnote 64.

¹²¹ Jacob, *The Motif of Stranger*, 71.

we can know the intention of the author,” or something equivalent to it in his lectures.¹²² Nevertheless, it is not easy to do so because it takes a lot of efforts to interpret God’s original intention and to present it in human language. And it’s hard to know exactly what the original intention is. Therefore, some people believed that the Scriptures might have not only literal and direct meanings, but also other meanings behind them. They thought that the genuine meaning could be obtained from the spiritual sense beyond the literal.¹²³ On the contrary, Calvin thought that the very literal meaning was spiritual.¹²⁴ Thus he emphasizes the literal interpretation.¹²⁵ Parker argues that Calvin considered the literal sense of the biblical text to include both its grammatical meaning and its rhetorical meaning.¹²⁶ Thus, exegetes of Scripture have to interpret it based on linguistics and contexts.¹²⁷ This is an important aspect of Calvin’s interpretation.¹²⁸ To understand his context-centered interpretation of Jeremiah, we need to consider the following four points. First, Calvin used the original languages of the Bible. He translated and interpreted God’s words from the original languages himself. In the wake of the Reformation, 16th century preachers were required to translate the Scriptures from Hebrew or Greek. It’s hard to say that, Engammare observed, Calvin’s Hebrew skills were perfect.¹²⁹ Even though his Hebrew translations were not faultless, Calvin endeavored to teach the word of God correctly using the original Hebrew texts.¹³⁰ While interpreting the biblical texts, he refers to commentaries of the Church Fathers and contemporary theologians as well as

¹²² CO 37. 606 (COR II 6/1. 187; Jer. 5:1). “Nunc ergo tenemus consilium Prophetarum, ...”; CO 37. 637 (COR II 6/1. 227-2; Jer. 5:26-27); CO 38. 35 (COR II 6/1. 357; Jer. 9:10). “Nunc ergo tenemus Prophetarum sensum, ...”; CO 38. 108 (COR II 6/1. 449; Jer. 11:9-10).

¹²³ Muller, “Biblical Interpretation in the Era,” 10-12; Parker, *New Testament Commentaries*, 96-7.

¹²⁴ “Once again, therefore, the only literal meaning is the spiritual.” Parker, *New Testament Commentaries*, 98.

¹²⁵ Thiselton, *Hermeneutics*, 132; Boer, *John Calvin on the Visions of Ezekiel*, 249. In de Boer’s view, Calvin had his own exegetical method. Although he sometimes used the traditional method, he did not follow the exegetical trend of that time; Blacketer, “Commentaries and Prefaces,” 185-6; Muller, “Biblical Interpretation in the Era,” 11.

¹²⁶ Parker, *New Testament Commentaries*, 100-101.

¹²⁷ “The first context was linguistic and historical, including the whole world mediated to him by Greek and Latin literature, with its history, astronomy, psychology, zoology, poetry, philosophy, meteorology, and rhetoric.” Zachman, *John Calvin as Teacher*, 130.; Parker, *New Testament Commentaries*, 99.

¹²⁸ McKane, “Calvin as an Old Testament Commentator,” 250-3; Holder, *John Calvin and the Grounding*, 98-108.

¹²⁹ Engammare, “Joannes Calvinus Trium Linguarum Peritus?,” 57-60.

¹³⁰ CO 37. 668 (COR II 6/1. 266; Jer. 6: 28); CO 38. 145-6 (COR II 6/1. 496-8; Jer. 12:13); CO 37. 634 (COR II 6/1. 223; Jer. 5:24). “Dicere in corde tantundem valet apud Hebraeos atque reputare vel expendere secum. Latine dicendum esset, Non venit illis in mentem: hoc est, adeone fuerunt privati communi sensu, ut saltem non venerit illis in mentem, neque succurreret haec cogitatio, *Timeamus Dominum?*”: Through these texts, it can be found that Calvin compared the Hebrew texts with Latin version to clarify meaning of a word. Thus, he seems to have used the Vulgate when he interpreted the Old Testament and referred to the literatures of the Church Fathers written in Latin. For a comprehensive discussion of this, see de Greef, *Calvijn en zijn uitleg van de Psalmen*, 37-41.

Jewish commentators.¹³¹ He did not hesitate to take various borrowed ideas into his exegesis if they could help him explain the Scriptures rightly.¹³² Second, Calvin considered historical and social circumstances which the prophet Jeremiah faced, as well as his supposed state of mind.¹³³ Without understanding the historical situation of Jeremiah's time, Calvin could not interpret texts correctly because the Israelites' situation was totally different from that of Calvin's era. He also had to pay attention to both; Jeremiah as a proclaimer and the Israelites as hearers of Jeremiah's proclamation, in order to interpret it accurately.¹³⁴ Third, he introduces various translations or some comments concerning a given passage, and then chooses one of them, explaining the reasons for his choice.¹³⁵ Sometimes, he offers his own translation when he finds that the mentioned interpretation or translation is not appropriate.¹³⁶ Last, he takes account of the whole context. He considers how the passage is related to the whole Bible, and if it is out of harmony with the intention of the two Testaments or not.¹³⁷ Through these explanations we know that Calvin interprets the biblical texts considering various contexts, namely the literal, historical, textual, and intertextual, etc. Most importantly, he tries to unveil the genuine intention of God through these methods.

¹³¹ de Greef, *Calvijn en zijn uitleg van de Psalmen*, 300-301. Hunnius criticized Calvin in 1593 because he referred to Jewish commentaries; "That Calvin was often critical of Christian exegesis and sometimes favorable toward Jewish exegesis could only have made him appear more guilty in Hunnius's eyes." Puckett, *John Calvin's Exegesis*, 53; CO 38. 411-2 (COR II 6/1. 841; Jer. 23:6). "Judaei qui videntur aliis modestiores, nec audent canina impudentia corrumpere totum contextum, eludunt hoc nomen Christi, etiam si in ipsum proprie competat." According to Puckett's view, Calvin could find out the original meaning of Hebraistic texts through the Jewish commentaries. But, he criticized them without hesitation when their interpretations were different from God's intention. For a more detailed discussion of this, see the chapter 3 and 4 of Puckett, *John Calvin's Exegesis*.

¹³² CO 38. 495 (COR II 6/1. 945; Jer. 25:25). Calvin used to quote a commentary of the Chaldeans: Note that "Non dubito igitur quin recta sit illa sententia, quam secutus est Chaldaeus interpres, quod scilicet Sesach sit Babel."; CO 39. 184 (COR II 6/2. 1443-5; Jer. 39:5). Calvin also explained the city, Plinius, through historical and geographical understandings in his lecture on Jer. 39:5.

¹³³ In the prologue of his lectures on Jeremiah, Calvin mentions first a difficult situation in Jeremiah's times and his laborious task: CO 37. 469 (COR II 6/1. 15; Jer. 1:1). "Quantum ad Jeremiam pertinet, hoc primo observatu dignum est, coepisse fungi Prophetae officio, regnante Josia, et quidem anno decimotertio Regni ejus. Nam etsi Rex ille sincerus erat Dei cultor, tamen res tunc valde confusae erant."

¹³⁴ CO 37. 471 (COR II 6/1. 18; Jer. 1:1). "Hoc igitur fuit praecipuum in doctrina eius, actum esse de Regno et Sacerdotio, quoniam Judaei toties et tam diversis modis, et tam longo tempore provocaverant iram Dei, et respuerant sanctas admonitiones servorum ejus."

¹³⁵ Holder, *John Calvin and the Grounding*, 9. This method is not Calvin's unique way of exegesis, but a common characteristic of exegesis which could be found in the exegetes who had been influenced by humanism; CO 37. 669 (COR II 6/1. 267; Jer. 6:28). "Hic sensus non admodum mihi displicet: verum quia subtilior est, nescio an satis habeat firmitatis."

¹³⁶ CO 38. 15 (COR II 6/1. 332; Jer. 8:13). "Et quantum ad primam expositionem pertinet, videtur mihi nimis restricta. Ego igitur sic accipio."

¹³⁷ CO 38. 25 (COR II 6/1. 344; Jer. 9:1). "Prosequitur eandem sententiam: ..."; CO 38. 120 (COR II 6/1. 465; Jer. 11:17). "Generalius etiam interdum accipitur haec loquitur, quemadmodum etiam proximo capite videbimus, et aliis Scripturae locis satis constat."; CO 38. 270 (COR II 6/I. 658; Jer. 17:9-10). "Pendet haec doctrina ex superiori, et ideo uno contextu haec simul legenda sunt."

1.2.3.5 *Scriptura Sacra sui ipsius Interpres*

In his exegesis, Calvin tries to clarify the meaning of the Scriptures first through other biblical texts, although he consulted the notes of different commentaries.¹³⁸ He believed that the sacred Scriptures interpret themselves (*Scriptura sacra sui ipsius interpres*). Calvin thought that an implied meaning in a text could be discovered through another biblical text which is more direct in its language.¹³⁹ When he had to interpret a particular verse in detail for his lectures on Jeremiah, he brought in other texts. Then, combined, the two verses present their meaning more clearly after complementary interaction. For instance, he translates the word “*rishona* (ראשונה)” in Jer. 16:18 as ‘from the very beginning.’ According to Calvin, through this word the prophet means that God gathers all the sins of generations together in one place. To clarify his argument, he quotes Christ’s saying in Matt. 23:35, “... so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah (ESV).”¹⁴⁰ In many cases he cites verses from the New Testament so as to aid in interpretation, particularly the Pauline epistles.¹⁴¹ One example is that as Calvin exegetes Jer. 42:7-10 he encourages his congregation to endure even though God does not save them from their sufferings immediately.¹⁴² On this, he cites Philippians 3:15, which describes Paul’s endurance. In addition, he quotes the Pauline epistles frequently, not only in his lectures, but also in his sermons on the book of Jeremiah.¹⁴³

1.2.3.6 *Sitz im Leben*

¹³⁸ Kraus, “Calvin’s Exegetical Principles,” 15-6.

¹³⁹ Holder, *John Calvin and the Grounding*, 109.

¹⁴⁰ CO 38. 253 (COR II 6/1. 636-7; Jer. 16:18).

¹⁴¹ Moehn, “Calvin as commentator,” 214-5; Puckett, *Calvin’s Exegesis*, 99. “... Calvin views Pauline usage (or rather the Holt Spirit’s usage) as the determinative consideration in deciding how the Old Testament passage should be understood.”; Barbara Pitkin, “Calvin as commentator on the Gospel of John,” 181. Specifically, the Epistle to the Romans plays a pivotal role in his interpretation.

¹⁴² CO 39. 224 (COR II 6/2. 1497; Jer. 42:7). “Interea discamus ex hoc loco, si Deus non statim expediat nos omni perplexitate et cura, patienter id ferendum esse, quemadmodum etiam ubi de ipsa doctrina agitur, Paulus admonet fideles ut quieti maneant, donec illis patefactum fuerit quod adhuc ignorant.”

¹⁴³ Calvin, *Sermons*, 3 (Sermon 1 on Jer. 14:19, 20b, 21a). “Au reste nous sommes aussi admonestez que quand Dieu nous declare son royaume, c’est afin que nous y obeissions / comme dit saint Paul.”; Calvin, *Sermons*, 45 (Sermon 6 on Jer. 15:17-19). “Et de fait saint Paul nous admoneste de nous courrousser. Pareillement Davyd dict: “Courrousses vous, mais ne pechez point”.”; Calvin, *Sermons*, 112 (Sermon 16 on Jer. 17:9-11). “Voila l’office de la doctrine, dit saint Paul, c’est à savior “d’arguer, de reprendre, d’enseigner et de coriger.” Besides this, the quotes from the Pauline epistles can be found in many parts.”

That Calvin reads and interprets the text within its historical context is not limited to his biblical commentaries. This aspect could also be found in his commentary on Seneca's *De Clementia*, which was written much earlier.¹⁴⁴ He considers the historical context not only of the texts, but also of his own context. He interprets the texts considering his own situation, time, and audience. This practice is the sort of method that discusses a theological discourse in accordance with its time.¹⁴⁵ His lectures on Jeremiah have applications to his era. He says directly, "Today, like this,"¹⁴⁶ "In our era ... also present,"¹⁴⁷ Calvin compares the situation of Jeremiah's era to that of Geneva in the 16th century and explains the biblical text with specific events and circumstances from his time.¹⁴⁸ Specifically, he connects the unfaithful behavior of the Israelites before God with that of the Catholic Church.¹⁴⁹ In his applications, we can see that he chooses the best way for his audience to gain understanding. Furthermore, we can use his method these days because the words of God were not just for Calvin's time, but also for our time.¹⁵⁰ In a nutshell, Calvin's biblical interpretation is closely related to his walk of life. In the circumstances of Geneva at his time he interpreted and preached the word of God. Seen practically, moreover, he wanted them to directly affect his own congregation and his own time. God's words live on in the lives of those who follow him.

1.2.4 Application in Calvin's Sermons: Transition from Text to Life

¹⁴⁴ Jacob, *The Motif of Stranger*, 70.

¹⁴⁵ "Yet his awareness of the need for accommodation to the times was so strong that it drove him to what, for the times, was a new way of looking at theological discourse." Bouwsma, *John Calvin*, 232.

¹⁴⁶ CO 38. 229 (COR II 6/1. 606; Jer. 15:17). "... sicuti hodie ..."; CO 38. 196 (COR II 6/1. 562-3; Jer. 14:17); CO 37. 511 (COR II 6/1. 69; Jer. 2:13); CO 37. 525 (COR II 6/1. 87-8; Jer. 2:24); CO 37. 594 (COR II 6/1. 172; Jer. 4:22); CO 37. 677 (COR II 6/1. 279; Jer. 7:9-11); CO 37. 692 (COR II 6/1. 297; Jer. 7:21-4).

¹⁴⁷ CO 38. 194 (COR II 6/1. 561; Jer. 14:15). "... quemadmodum hodie idem contingit."; CO 37. 552 (COR II 6/1. 121; Jer. 3:6). "... quemadmodum etiam hodie multi."; CO 37. 586 (COR II 6/1. 161; Jer. 4:13); CO 37. 691 (COR II 6/1. 295; Jer. 7:21-4); CO 37. 698 (COR II 6/1. 304; Jer. 7:27). "Quemadmodum hodie necesse est ...".

¹⁴⁸ CO 38. 170 (COR II 6/1. 528; Jer. 13:21). "Quemadmodum si Turcae hodie in Europam trajicerent atque illic dominarentur." In his lecture on Jer. 13:21, Calvin explained the invasion of Babylon of Israel with the example that Turkish people have attacked Europe at his time; Calvin, *Sermons*, 19-20 (Sermon 3 on Jer. 15:1-6). "Volia comment on en fait aujourd'hui, je ne dy pas en la papaulté, mais à Geneve." and see the footnote that "les desbauchez *Le nom de "libertins" appliqué aux partisans de Perrin ne se rencontre chez les historiographes qu'à partir du XVII^e siècle. Les Perrinistes, défenseurs de la liberté civile et des anciennes moeurs, patriotes et frondeurs, sont appelés par Calvin et ses adeptes "malheureux", "malins", "méchants", "moqueurs", "gaudisseurs", "débordés", "débauchés", et traités d' "hypocrites", voire de "canailles" et de "villains pouacres"*".

¹⁴⁹ CO 37. 640 (COR II 6/1. 231; Jer. 5:30-1). "Idem hodie cernitur in Papatu: ..." These examples of the Catholic Church could be found frequently in his interpretations. I will deal with this issue more extensively in Chapter 4.

¹⁵⁰ Muller and Thompson, "The Significance of Precritical Exegesis," 337; Muller, "The Foundation of Calvin's Theology," 16; CO 2.74 (*Inst.* 1.10.2).

While in Geneva Calvin delivered 10 sermons every two weeks until he died in 1564. It would not be an overstatement to say that his life was almost made up of his sermons. Among his biblical interpretations, his sermons seem to occupy more space than other genres.¹⁵¹ What is the difference between sermons and other genres? The answer is simple. Sermons and other genres have common ground in terms of dealing with God's word. Yet the biggest difference sermons have is that sermons are delivered during worship services. According to Moehn, Calvin says implicitly in his sermon 24 on the book of Acts that a church cannot exist without preaching.¹⁵² In his *Institutes*, Calvin also writes about the church, “[w]herever we see the word of God purely preached and heard, and the sacraments administered according to Christ’s institution, there [...] a church of God exists.”¹⁵³ In other words, preaching is the condition for a church to exist. That the word of God is preached in a church maximizes the significance of preaching. In Geneva Calvin explains the word of God to specific congregations (believers) through preaching, and deals with their circumstances at the same time.¹⁵⁴ Thus, in sermons the life of congregations are concretely made known, and the transition from the text to the application in life is carried out.¹⁵⁵ This transition might be a great feature of his preaching. Calvin puts emphasis on applications. These applications make up a big portion of his sermons. In his 22nd sermon on Jeremiah he says the following: “To put it plainly, the Word of God must have its own goal, not be scattered without direction. So, it must be applied to its hearers.”¹⁵⁶ In this way that the word of God should be transferred to the audience’s life seems to be crucial to Calvin’s sermons.

What is the main application of Calvin’s sermons on the book of Jeremiah? We know only 25 sermons, which are just a small part of his sermons on the book. The biblical texts (Jeremiah 14:19-18:23) are concerned with God’s will that the Israelites should turn to Him from their sins. His

¹⁵¹ Balke, *Calvijn en de Bijbel*, 72.

¹⁵² Moehn, *Calvin’s Sermons on Acts*, 179.

¹⁵³ CO 2. 753 (*Inst.* 4.1.9). “Ubi enim cunque Dei verbum sincere praedicari atque audiri, ubi sacramenta ex Christi instituto administrari videmus, illic aliquam esse Dei ecclesiam nullo modo ambigendum est.”; Cf. Calvin, *Institutes II*, ed. McNeil, 1023.

¹⁵⁴ Balke, *Calvijn en de Bijbel*, 75.

¹⁵⁵ Zachman, *John Calvin as Teacher*, 171. Calvin realized, however, that this transition from instruction in doctrine to practice in life is the most difficult thing.

¹⁵⁶ Calvin, *Sermons*, 148 (Sermon 22 on Jer. 18:11-14). “Brief, la parole de Dieu n’est point pour estre jectée à l’aventure, mais il fault qu’elle ait son but certain, c’est asscavoir qu’il ne faut point jecter la parole de Dieu en l’air, mais qu’il fault qu’elle soit appliquée à ceulx qui l’oyent.”

preaching has no choice but to contain the message of the text. Therefore, he demands his congregation ask for forgiveness for its sins. He preaches that believers should know how weak they are, and that they should turn their back on their sins.¹⁵⁷ God welcomes sinners who repent. Also, He wants their life to be renewed every day.¹⁵⁸ Calvin says that this renewal must be repeated during their entire life.¹⁵⁹ Furthermore, Calvin hopes that the Word of God would remain central in the life of the congregation.¹⁶⁰ Through the Word, believers will be let to be obedient to God,¹⁶¹ and they will move towards God. Consequently, Calvin insists that pastors should preach and teach just the Word of God.¹⁶² Moreover, Calvin encourages his congregation to believe the covenant of eternal salvation by Christ firmly, and to walk with God.¹⁶³ Through his preaching on Jeremiah we can see how significant to Calvin church is. It is the place where the word of God should be preached. After listening to sermons believers could review their lives in light of the spoken word, realize and repent of their own sins, and reform their life as a true Christian. And also they remember their identity as the people of God's covenant, so that they can properly await their eternal salvation by God through Christ.¹⁶⁴ Calvin emphasizes in his sermons the following: the church is called the throne of God¹⁶⁵ so, He always keeps her well and the church will continue to exist thanks to His protection.¹⁶⁶

¹⁵⁷ Calvin, *Sermons*, 23 (Sermon 4 on Jer. 15:6b-10). "A quoy est ce que Dieu pretend? C'est que nous soyons reduictz à repentance."; Calvin, *Sermons*, 5-6 (Sermon 1 on Jer. 14:19, 20b, 21a). "Mais tant y a qu'il ne nous faut point justifier, mais congnoistre que nous sommes coupables. Or avons nous fait cela, nous pouvons recourir à Dieu pour avoir pardon."; Calvin, *Sermons*, 72 (Sermon 10 on Jer. 16:8-12). "Apreons donc qu'il faut que nous congnoissions noz fautes, autrement nous serons plus à condampner que les ydolâtres."; Calvin, *Sermons*, 20 (Sermon 3 on Jer. 15:1-6). "... ce qui ne se peult faire, sinon en confessants noz fautes."

¹⁵⁸ Calvin, *Sermons*, 74 (Sermon 11 on Jer. 16:12-15). "... ce sera quant, puisque nous avons sa parolle, que chacun advise de se reformer,"

¹⁵⁹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 111 (Sermon 16 on Jer. 17:9-11). "Mais de nostre part congnoissons que Dieu scaura bien reformer noz cueurs à son ymage."

¹⁶⁰ Zachman, *John Calvin as Teacher*, 166-169; Calvin, *Sermons*, 138 (Sermon 20 on Jer. 17:24-27). "Et advisons que sa parolle soit myeulx receue que de coustume et que nous venions au sermon non pas pour dire: "J'y ay esté!", mais à fin que estans retournez en la maison nous meditions sa parolle que nous aurons oye ..."

¹⁶¹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 148 (Sermon 22 on Jer. 18:11-14).

¹⁶² Calvin, *Sermons*, 125 (Sermon 18 on Jer. 17:13b, 15, 16). "... voicy Dieu qui m'a baillé charge de sa parolle, il faut donc que je ne mette rien hors de ma bouche, ..."

¹⁶³ Calvin, *Sermons*, 7 (Sermon 2 on Jer. 14:20a, 21b, 22; 15: 1). "... c'est assavoir que nonobstant noz fautes son alliance dure toujours. Vray est que de nostre part nous l'avons cassée, mais si est ce qu'il nous veult encores recevoir à mercy et veult que ses promesses aient toujours lieu."

¹⁶⁴ Moehn, *Calvin's Sermons on Acts*, 185; Calvin, *Sermons*, 175 (Sermon 25 on Jer. 18:18b-23). "Et quant nous avons ce desir de les attirer à Dieu et ilz ne le veulent point faire, alors nous devons desirer que Dieu les pugnisse, afin que leurs ames soient réservées à salut."

¹⁶⁵ Calvin, *Sermons*, 3 (Sermon 1 on Jer. 14:19, 20b, 21a). "Elle est donc nommée le trosne de Dieu."

¹⁶⁶ Calvin, *Sermons*, 3 (Sermon 1 on Jer. 14:19, 20b, 21a). "Or est il que sa volonté est immuable et qu'il faut qu'il y ait toujours une Eglise. ... Ainsi donc quant à la preservation de l'Eglise, il ne faut point imaginer les moyens à nostre fantaisye, mais estre certains qu'il la gardera."

According to Calvin's preaching, the church is the space where believers are always with God in His word.

1.3 Conclusion

A knowledge of Calvin's hermeneutical principles and exegetical practices in his work on the book of Jeremiah lead to a better understanding of his ecclesiology. Meanwhile an important question remains: Why did Calvin endeavor to make the meaning of the Scriptures clear? If he was satisfied with his understanding of the Bible for himself alone, he would not have written biblical commentaries, lectures, and sermons. Thus, the reason why he interpreted the Bible becomes self-evident. It is to apply his biblical interpretation to believers and to communicate with them. This biblical exegete lived and played a role not only in the academy, but also as a teacher and a preacher for the living church in Geneva.¹⁶⁷ So, he taught and preached there. To do this work, he utilized all the hermeneutic principles and exegetical practices which we have discussed so far. We see, then, that his biblical interpretation is practical, and highly purpose-driven. And, one of his most important purposes was to encourage his congregation to live as true Christians. So, Calvin's biblical interpretation adhered to the realities of life. If we know his life and the historical context of his time, we have a better understanding of his theology and theological works.¹⁶⁸ Accordingly, now we need to turn to investigate Calvin as a man in his own historical setting.

¹⁶⁷ Muller, "The Significance of Practical Exegesis," 342.

¹⁶⁸ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 43.

Chapter II. Historical Context in 1550s

2.1 Introduction

In 1549, Calvin's interpretation of the book of Jeremiah first appeared in his sermons. About ten years later, he interpreted the book again in his lectures at the Geneva Academy. Between these two periods, the most important event in Calvin's ministry happened; he won politically against his opponents called the "Perinnists." Although this victory did not lead the Genevan church model to become successful immediately, the church could nevertheless take further steps towards reformation.¹ Therefore, some scholars argue that this event led Calvin to switch gears and take different steps to reform.² This change was deeply related to international issues at that time.³ Even though the Genevan church had been at peace for five years, since his political victory, Calvin emphasized church reform in his lectures of 1560.⁴ He still pointed out the problems in the Genevan church, mentioning by way of illustration the wrongdoings of the Judean people.⁵ He also criticized the Catholic Church and revealed the problems in their worship and theology.⁶ In 1555, according to John Knox the Genevan church was the most idealistic church and its congregation was more pious than any other congregations in other areas.⁷ This is because the Genevan church at that time was an idealistic community reformed and established by the guidance of Calvin. Nevertheless, Calvin continued to emphasize church reform and proclaim repentance.⁸ This aspect brings us to three questions. One is why, in the final period of his ministry, Calvin continuously emphasized the church

¹ Naphy, "Geneva II," 54-55.

² Monter, *Calvin's Geneva*, 134-5; Kingdon, "Calvin's Last Years," 183-7; Balsarak, *Establishing the Remnant Church*, 4-5.

³ In 1555, the Peace of Augsburg, which acknowledged the Protestants in society, was complete and there was a development in the French reformation. Also, around this time the council of Trent, the ecumenical council of the Catholic Church, was about to end. I will deal with this issue later.

⁴ CO 38. 462 (COR II 6/1. 904; Jer. 24:7). "... ut non tantum redituri sint in patriam Judaei, sed futuri sint vera Ecclesia, ..."

⁵ CO 37. 520-1 (COR II 6/1. 81-3; Jer. 2:21); CO 37. 640-1 (COR II 6/1. 230-3; Jer. 5:30-1); CO 38. 149 (COR II 6/1. 501-2; Jer. 12:14); CO 38. 681 (COR II 6/2. 1181-2; Jer. 31:24).

⁶ CO 38. 183 (COR II 6/1. 546-7; Jer. 14:7); CO 38. 420-1 (COR II 6/1. 851-3; Jer. 24:11); CO 38. 574 (COR II 6/2. 1043-4; Jer. 28:10-1); CO 38. 634-5 (COR II 6/2. 1120-1122; Jer. 30:20-1); CO 39. 251 (COR II 6/2. 1530-1; Jer. 44:1-7).

⁷ "William Whittingham, a Genevan citizen, described Geneva as 'the mirror and model of the true religion and true piety.'" Monter, *Calvin's Geneva*, 268; Berg, *Friends of Calvin*, 228; Kingdon, *Geneva and the coming*, 21; Spijker, *Johannes Calvin*, 290; Jenkins, *Calvin's Tormentors*, 78; Benedict, "Calvin and the Transformation of Geneva," 11.

⁸ CO 37. 560 (COR II 6/1. 130; Jer. 3:13). "... exigit primo loco Deus confessionem scelerum ab Israelitis:"; CO 38. 671-2 (COR II 6/2. 1168-9; Jer. 31:18). "Hinc ergo colligimus poenitentiam esse Spiritus Santi opus. Deus quidem nos invitat, atque etiam sollicitat externis mediis ad poenitentiam."

reform and the edification of his congregation? And the other is whether the change occurred to his ministry after 1555 expanded his thought on the scope of the church? Or, did he think, from the beginning of his ministry, that his ministry extended to all of the reformed churches in other areas beyond Geneva?

The purpose of this chapter is to study the events which occurred in and outside Geneva between 1549 when Calvin preached on Jeremiah and 1560 when he taught the book at the Geneva Academy. Calvin lived in Geneva in the 16th century. Hence, he could not help not only influencing his situation, but also being influenced by it.⁹ For these reasons his exegesis of the book of Jeremiah has limits: historical and personal. This historical context makes his interpretation extraordinary. In this chapter, for the study on the historical context of Calvin's work, we will go over the situation around the churches in and outside of Geneva in the years 1549, 1555, and 1560.

2.2 The Historical Context to 1549

2.2.1 The Genevan Church to 1549

In 1541, Calvin came back to Geneva from Strasbourg. His return to Geneva was not an easy decision for him.¹⁰ When he returned to Geneva, Calvin was not a naïve neophyte anymore. In Strasbourg, he could turn his attention to the whole of the Holy Roman Empire. Also, his theology and pastoral mind had deeply developed under the influence of Bucer, whom Calvin considered to be his father. After his return, he established the *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* in 1541. This discipline meant that a new church different from the Catholic Church was formed.¹¹ Gordon explains that these ecclesiastical ordinances reflect Calvin's ecclesiology as it had been developed in his writings (1539 *Institutes, Commentary on Romans*) and his experiences in serving at the refugee church in Strasbourg.¹² Calvin established fourfold ecclesiastical offices, and wrote a standard catechism for the

⁹ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 23.

¹⁰ Gordon, *Calvin*, 121. In his letter to Viret, Calvin wrote, "it would be far preferable to perish for eternity than be tormented in that place." From this letter, one can assume that he felt hard on return to Geneva.

¹¹ Monter, *Calvin's Geneva*, 99. However, Calvin states that the newly reformed church was not a new church merely replacing the Catholic Church but a newly formed church.

¹² Gordon, *Calvin*, 126.

Genevan church. Through these drastic pastoral reforms of 1541-46, the Genevan ministers were replaced by well-educated Frenchmen who had fled to Geneva to avoid religious persecution.¹³ Also, Calvin set up the Consistory in 1541, which oversaw the people while judging their wrongdoings and settling their conflicts. In 1546, such ecclesiastical institutions achieved a new level of power.¹⁴ However, the Consistory and the magistrates of the Council conflicted over having authority for punishment, especially excommunication. This conflict continued until 1555.¹⁵

Ami Perrin formed a new party, revealing the wickedness of exclusivism during this period. The party led by Perrin was called ‘*les Enfants de Genève*.’¹⁶ They were unsatisfied that the Genevan Consistory and pulpits were getting filled by foreigners: the influx of French religious refugees.¹⁷ Moreover, Calvin’s introduction of a strict mode of life sparked conflict.¹⁸ In the November election in 1548 those who united with the Perrinists won. And, Perrin became the mayor of Geneva in the following year. So, Calvin had difficult times for seven years afterwards.¹⁹ Despite the political problems which Calvin went through in the 1540’s, his most difficult experience may have been the death of his wife.²⁰ In a letter to Viret, Calvin wrote, “I lost the best partner of my life.”²¹ During this time, he concentrated on establishing the Genevan church even though he underwent public and private conflicts. His ministry at the Genevan church was based on his ministry in Strasbourg with Bucer. The Genevan church was being established by Calvin’s experience and mindset gained from outside Geneva.

2.2.2 The Church Outside Geneva Before 1549

It is important to rehearse the events happening in the Holy Roman Empire before 1549. At the Diet of Speyer, where the Protestant and the Catholic Church met in 1529, the Protestant’s

¹³ Naphy, *Calvin and the Consolidation*, 68-69; Manetsch, *Calvin’s Company*, 39-40.

¹⁴ Gordon, *Calvin*, 140-141; Naphy, “Calvin’s Church in Geneva,” 102-3.

¹⁵ Spijker, *Johannes Calvin*, 162; Manetsch, *Calvin’s Company of Pastors*, 29.

¹⁶ To study more about the origin of “*les Enfants de Genève*”, see Jenkins, *Calvin’s Tormentors*, 78-9; Gordon, *Calvin*, 123. Ami Perrin who went to Strasbourg in order to escort Calvin to Geneva, stood strongly against him beginning in 1546.

¹⁷ Selderhuis, *John Calvin*, 150.

¹⁸ de Greef, *The Writings*, 45-50.

¹⁹ Selderhuis, *John Calvin*, 152; Spijker, *Johannes Calvin*, 198. According to Spijker, *les Enfants de Genève* still supported Calvin’s doctrine during that time. They were against Calvin not for his doctrine, but over disciplinary matters.

²⁰ Selderhuis, “Wij zijn altijd onderweg,” 85.

²¹ Gordon, *Calvin*, 159; CO 13. 230-231.

insistence was flagrantly ignored and the Catholics unmoved. After this meeting Philip of Hesse, who felt a strong need for solidarity among the non-Catholics, called for a meeting of the reformation's leaders. So in October, 1529, Luther, Oecolampadius, Zwingli, and Melancthon gathered in Marburg, but could not reach agreement on the one sticking point out of fifteen articles (the one concerning the Supper).²² In 1530, a Diet between the Protestants and the Catholics was called in Augsburg. And in this Diet, the Protestants lost again. Then, the Protestant churches became yoked together against the Catholic Church in Schmalkalden in February, 1531. However, in the meeting between the Catholics and the Protestants in Nürnberg in 1532 and Frankfurt in 1539 a decisive agreement was not reached. Calvin also participated in the imperial diets during his years in Strasbourg. In the Hagenau meeting of 1540 and the imperial diet in Regensburg in April 1541 which he attended, agreement on Holy Communion was not successful.²³ However, the endeavors for the unity of church were continuing. In the meantime, the Council of Trent was called together in December 1545. However, the Reformed church was pessimistic about this council.²⁴ The war between the Protestants and the Catholics went on and the Schmalkaldic war broke out in 1546. This war ended with the Catholics victorious in 1547. The war was a setback to the Protestants. As a result, reformers such as Martin Bucer, Wolfgang Musculus, and Peter Martyr Vermigli had to leave the European continent.²⁵ The Augsburg Interim was written in 1548. This was not a balanced pledge between the Protestants and the Catholics, but a statement of the Catholics. The pledge provoked an instant response from the Protestants, especially the Lutherans.²⁶ The Swiss reformed church was not an exception either. Bullinger and Calvin thought that this interim had defiled the faith. And the

²² CO 38. 124 (COR II 6/1. 470; Jer. 11:19). "Verum etiam si demus Prophetam fuisse typum Christi, quid hoc tamen ad similitudinem corporis, quum potius nunc loquatur simpliciter de cibo?"; Calvin, *Sermons*, 92 (Sermon 13 on Jer. 16:19-21). "S'ilz alleguent que c'est en vertu de ces parolles que Jesuchrist a dit<es>: "Voila mon corps", il n'a pas dit que le pain estoit son corps. Ansi nous voions assez clairement que ce n'est que invention humaine."

²³ de Greef, *The Writings*, 153-156.

²⁴ Stolk, "Calvin and Rome," 111; Selderhuis, *Luther*, 299-300; Calvin's complaints on the Council of Trent are revealed thoroughly in his sermon on August 10, 1549. See Calvin, *Sermons*, 167 (Sermon 24 on Jer. 18:17-18). "Comme aujourd'hui, asscavoir, si le pape assemble ses conciles et qu'il ne se contente point d'un, mais qu'il veult en avoir deux ou pour le moins deux demiz, l'un à Trente et l'autre à Bologne, asscavoir, quant il aura assemblé tout cela, s'il sera ordonné que les prophetes soient ouyz et que l'Esriture soit publiée? Nenny, nenny!"; CO 38. 558 (COR II 6/2. 1024; Jer. 27:16). "Quae est illa Catholica Ecclesia? si Papa cogat synodum sedebunt quidem illic mitrati: sed quorsum?"

²⁵ Balsarak, *Establishing the remnant church*, 3-4. According to Balsarak, the terms in the Peace of Augsburg meant that cities like Strasbourg were converted to Lutheranism. This was very influential in encouraging French evangelicals to turn more decidedly to Geneva for aid.

²⁶ Kolb, *Martin Luther*, 40.

consensus led to an agreement between Zurich and Geneva.²⁷ At last, the Zurich church and the Genevan church reached agreement in 1549.²⁸ However at first Basel and Bern did not officially acknowledge the *Consensus Tigurinus*, and Wittenberg harshly decried the consensus.²⁹ However, this consensus contributed decisively to the spread of the reformation beyond the border of the Swiss churches.³⁰ Calvin worked hard for the unity of the Protestant church while building the Genevan church in the 1540s. While doing so, he came to have a negative view of the Catholic Church and tried to bring about ‘the unity of church’ in the circle of the Protestant churches.

2.3 The Historical Context From 1550 through 1555

2.3.1 The Genevan Church From 1550 through 1555

Since 1546 the number of French refugees who came to Geneva fleeing religious persecution increased, and this resulted in urban problems.³¹ After 1549, moreover, the influx of influential and rich French men into Geneva led to social and political conflict.³² Genevans took the influx of refugees as a hindrance to the maintenance of their tradition and culture. This resulted in complaints over the controversy that concerned Calvin’s prohibition on the usage of baptismal names in Geneva.³³ Also, since Calvin used sermons as a tool to control his congregation’s thoughts and to critically offend his political opponents, Genevans complained about this behavior.³⁴ While tension

²⁷ Gordon, *Calvin*. 176.

²⁸ Calvin was sure that the unity of the Church is certain. Calvin clearly said that union with the Catholic Church would be cursed (CO 38. 231: COR II 6/1. 608-9; Jer. 15:18). But, he thought that the unity and union through submitting to God’s word is desirable (CO 39. 40: COR II 6/2. 1260-1; Jer. 32:39).

²⁹ Campi, “Calvin, the Swiss Reformed churches,” 123.

³⁰ Opitz, *Leben und Werk*, 128; Wendel, *Calvin: Origins and Development*, 330. According to Wendel, both Calvin and Bullinger came to an understanding on the question of the Eucharist, but this *Consensus Tigurinus* was at the price of repeated concessions on the one side and the other, so that it is unsafe to take this agreement, as a basis for an objective study of the real teachings of Calvin; Campi and Moser, “Loved and Feared,” 30.

³¹ Benedict, “Settlements: France,” 425.

³² Naphy, *Calvin and the Consolidation*, 121-139. As one of the causes for such problems, Naphy pointed out the French men’s attitude, which tried to maintain their own closed community not trying to mingle with the native Genevans. By the influx of diverse refugees, a large number of poor refugees received assistances from the city’s resources and charity; the rich refugees influenced the established economy of Geneva. The prominent refugees received citizenship and then exercised their influence over Genevan society. Thus, Naphy noted that the native Genevans faced difficulties on many fronts.

³³ Gordon, *Calvin*, 203; Calvin, *Sermons*, 70 (Sermon 10 on Jer. 16: 8-12). “Quant nous allons cerchier Dieu à Saint Claude, voila une injure que nous faisons à Dieu. Autant en est il de tout ce que font les papistes, car il n’y a nul fondement en l’Escripture de ce qu’ilz font.”

³⁴ Naphy, *Calvin and the Consolidation*, 159-162.

between Calvin and the Genevan city council increased, a controversial dispute took place. In October 1551, a French doctor named Jérôme-Hermès Bolsec (1520-84) publicly criticized Calvin's doctrine of predestination.³⁵ This incident saw to the banishment of Bolsec from Geneva in December, and some time later, he returned to the Catholic Church.³⁶ His expulsion was carried out by the city council. The treatment of Bolsec clearly showed the conflicts between Calvin's company of pastors and the city council as well as the fear of his opponents.³⁷ Starting with Bolsec, the controversy over the doctrine of predestination resulted in a debate with Jean Troillet. Amid this debate, Calvin argued that predestination did not come out from his own thought, but from God, and that he must retain the doctrine of predestination.³⁸ On August 13 1553, Michael Servetus (1511-53) arrived in Geneva. Afterwards the city was once again caught up in tumult because of the punishment of this heretic who denied the Holy Trinity. There had been already some theologians who condemned the theology of Servetus.³⁹ Following the advice of evangelical cities in Switzerland,⁴⁰ Geneva burned him at the stake on October 26. However, mistrust between the Genevan city council and Calvin appeared again amid his treatment of Servetus.⁴¹ Moreover, this incident became a major point of attack against Calvin later.⁴² In fact, such theological controversies raised the issue of excommunication, which was the major problem in the conflict between the two parties in Geneva. During this period, the expelling of Berthelier, the leading person in '*les Enfants de Genève*' made the conflict worse in the city.⁴³

In the early 1550s, Calvin suffered from theological and political conflicts. Continuous controversies over baptismal names, the doctrine of predestination (Bolsec), the Holy Trinity (Servetus), and excommunication drove the Genevan church and society to confusion. These pains

³⁵ In his lecture on Jeremiah, Calvin taught that the doctrine of predestination should be taught to believers: CO 38. 298 (COR II 6/1. 694; Jer. 18:7). "Hoc ergo valere debet in arcana Dei praedestinatione."; CO 38. 274-5 (COR II 6/1. 663-5).

³⁶ Spijker, *Johannes Calvijn*, 204-205.

³⁷ Naphy, *Calvin and the Consolidation*, 171-2.

³⁸ de Greef, *The Writings*, 52; Gordon, *Calvin*, 206. Calvin spent much of the 1550s defending his doctrine of predestination against many churches, including some of his closest allies. Most alarmingly, he found himself at odds with Bullinger.

³⁹ Spijker, *Johannes Calvijn*, 211.

⁴⁰ de Greef, *The Writings*, 175-6; Spijker, *Johannes Calvijn*, 213.

⁴¹ Jenkins, *Calvin's Tormentors*, 59; Gordon, *Calvin*, 219.

⁴² de Greef, *The Writings*, 176. Following the execution of Servetus, Calvin felt compelled by criticism of the case to write about Servetus and his condemnation. Others too, including Heinrich Bullinger, had urged Calvin to publish a justification; Gordon, *Calvin*, 228-232.

⁴³ Gordon, *Calvin*, 211-3.

could be understood as a period of growing pains in order to make the church holy, which Calvin wanted. In his lectures on Jeremiah, Calvin talks about the suffering and hardship of believers. He taught that the righteous are not exempt from suffering and it even gives them certain benefits.⁴⁴ And he states that believers should persevere such pain, and eventually God will take care of them as their father after He acts as their judge.⁴⁵

2.3.2 The European Church outside Geneva from 1550 through 1555

The biggest issue outside Geneva during this period is deeply related to the *Consensus Tigurinus* (1549), agreed upon between Geneva and Zurich. When this consensus was formed, Calvin had a plan to bring about unity with the German Lutherans after the Swiss church was brought together. However, the Lutherans had different ideas about this consensus. They thought that Calvin had abandoned his alliance with them after Luther's death and made an alliance with the Zwinglians.⁴⁶ This disparity appeared in a book, "*Farrago of Confused and Divergent Opinions on the Lord's Supper Taken from the Books of the Sacramentarians*" written by Joachim Westphal, a Gnesio-Lutheran minister in Hamburg.⁴⁷ This book was viciously edited in order to show the huge disparity on the Sacramental issue between the various reformed theologians such as Zwingli, Karlstadt, Oecolampadius, Bucer, etc.⁴⁸ Calvin was hesitant to have a debate with Westphal when he got to know this book. If Calvin had started the debate, this would have hurt the alliance with the Lutherans, which he had planned.⁴⁹ However, against Westphal's work Calvin had to defend himself. Westphal tried to show the contradictions between the consensus and Calvin's earlier work by comparing them. Westphal's offense against Calvin increased in intensity and continued for a long

⁴⁴ CO 38. 240 (COR II 6/1. 620; Jer. 16:4). "Caeterum, si quando rapiuntur ad similes poenas etiam pii et justii, Deus convertit illis in bonum quod per se signum est maledictionis."

⁴⁵ CO 39. 409 (COR II 6/2. 1732; Jer. 50:17). "Hoc consilio Propheta hortatus est ad patientiam fideles sui temporis, cum ostendit Deum fore illis in patrem postquam fuisset iudex."

⁴⁶ Steinmetz, *Calvin in Context*, 171.

⁴⁷ Kolb, *Martin Luther*, 41-42. After Luther's death and the defeat of the German Protestants by Charles V at Schmalkald, Lutherans were split into two camps: the Philippists named after Melanchthon and the Gnesio-Lutheran, which was conservative regarding Luther's theology. The formation of the two parties started after the introduction of the Leipzig Interim, in which Melanchthon and his associates had conceded the use or reintroduction of certain Catholic practices and rituals that they considered adiaphora. But the Gnesio-Lutherans that Westphal belonged to, disagreed with Melanchthon's decisions.

⁴⁸ Gordon, *Calvin*, 234.

⁴⁹ Gordon, *Calvin*, 236.

time. Calvin concluded the debate with Westphal in his *Institutes* 1559.⁵⁰ In the early 1550s, Calvin thought it necessary that all Protestant churches should be united against the Catholics. The reason is that the Catholics expected church renewal and the Council of Trent clearly defined their theology and discipline.⁵¹ Therefore, the unity of the Protestants against the Catholics was very important. Another reason was that during this period the persecution on the Protestants in France was growing stronger.⁵² To appeal to the French king in these circumstances, it was important to present one Protestant church.⁵³ In Calvin's lectures on Jeremiah, he explains that the proper form of the church is the agreement of everyone on one expression of faith.⁵⁴ Through this idea, Calvin was dedicated to the unity in the circle of Protestants,⁵⁵ especially to help the French reformed church and refugee communities.⁵⁶ To him, the reformed church already extended beyond the border of Geneva.

2.4 Two Major Incidents in 1555

2.4.1 Calvin's Victory

In the early 1550s, Calvin was in danger politically. At this point, the turning point was the election of 1555. After the party supporting Calvin and his company of pastors won against the Perrinist party by a narrow margin, the Genevan church faced a turning point. Gordon states that the dominance of Calvin's party came from his vision of a holy community, not from a need to purify society.⁵⁷ The result of this election was not an overwhelming victory for Calvin's party, thus the situation in Geneva seemed to be unstable. So the party chose to give the rights of citizens, or the so-called *Bourgeoisie*, to the French refugees. As a result, the political stance of Calvin became firm.

⁵⁰ de Greef, *The writings*, 192-3; Selderhuis, "Calvin and Wittenberg," 62.

⁵¹ Gordon, *Calvin*, 224; Wright, "Calvin's role," 281. The Council of Trent had demonstrated Rome's clear rejection of the Protestant challenge.

⁵² Knecht, *The Rise and Fall*, 212. The key point of Edict of Châteaubriant, effective of June, 1551, which was enacted under Henry II is to persecute heresy and to exclude the evangelists from public offices.

⁵³ George, "the Agreement of Zurich (1549)," 47; Campi and Moser, "Loved and Feared," 30.

⁵⁴ CO 38. 649 (COR II 6/2. 1139; Jer. 31:6). "Est autem locus hic apprime utilis, quia hinc colligimus quisnam sit verus Ecclesiae status, ubi scilicet consentiunt omnes in unam fidem. Sed simul videndum est ubi fundata sit illa fides."

⁵⁵ Calvin, *Tracts and Letters. vol. 6: Letters, Part 3. 1554-1558*, 19-29, 74-99.

⁵⁶ Calvin, *Tracts and Letters. vol. 5: Letters, Part 2. 1545-1553*, 360-363, 384-387, 453-454; Calvin, *Tracts and Letters. vol. 6*, 32-35, 54-61, 65-66.

⁵⁷ Gordon, *Calvin*, 214.

Later on, Geneva could only remain stable by following Calvin's direction while he was alive.⁵⁸

Because of this incident Calvin could expand his influence beyond the Genevan church.

2.4.2 The Peace of Augsburg of 1555

Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor who had won the Schmalkald War realized that it was impossible to revive the Catholics politically within his empire. So, he formed the Augsburg Interim in 1548. Originally, this interim had been intended to maintain the *status quo* until the Council of Trent decided how to respond to the Lutherans' reformation. Upon this, the leaders of the Northern German cities, under the influence of Wittenberg, would have intended to advocate for their aims. However, their negotiations through the council did not reach an agreement.⁵⁹ The next thing they could do was to settle down such regional conflict politically. Charles V, who could solve this problem, faced stumbling blocks. Inwardly, there were conflicts between the Catholics and the Reformed, and oppositions against centralism. Outwardly, there were continuous threats from the Turkish army. Finally, the Catholics and the Lutherans reached agreement in September 25, 1555, after long negotiations. As a result, each suzerain could have the right to decide his ruling territory to be either Catholic or Lutheran.⁶⁰ However, this peace treaty acknowledged only the Lutherans and not other denominations, including the Calvinists. This meant that Protestants failed to form one church. Later on, the German Lutherans did not try to include other denominations in their religious reformation, and became hostile to other Protestants in Switzerland as well as the Catholics.⁶¹ Calvin did not, however, write any negative pieces on the Lutheran attitude in his commentary on Jeremiah. He still seemed to expect unity among Protestants.⁶² To Calvin, the church was one universal church comprised of all Protestants. However, it did not happen as he wished.

⁵⁸ Manetsch, *Calvin's Company*, 354.

⁵⁹ Brecht, "Luther's Reformation," 148.

⁶⁰ Holder, *Theologies of the reformation*, 17. This peace provision allowed the prince to choose the confession of the lands he ruled. The Lutheran jurist Joachim Stephani later summarized this principle with the Latin phrase *cuius regio, eius religio* (whose realm, his religion) in a treatise published in 1576.

⁶¹ Harms, *In God's Custody*, 26.

⁶² Though Calvin called the Catholic Church schismatic, he thought other churches besides the Catholic were the same including the Genevan church: CO 38. 310 (COR II 6/1. 710; Jer. 18:18). "Neque enim vocatio eorum fundata est in verbo Dei: quia omnes sunt schismatici, et hoc etiam constat ex eorum canonibus."

2.5 The Historical Context from 1555 to 1560

2.5.1 The Genevan Church from 1555 to 1560

After Calvin's political victory in Geneva, those who supported Calvin granted citizenship to 644 refugees within ten years in order to consolidate their political power.⁶³ Also, they granted influential positions to their supporters. As a result, they made new changes intellectually, politically and socially.⁶⁴ And as their political power grew, Geneva got more interested in France and its religious situation.⁶⁵ Therefore, the Genevan church was not only for the citizens of Geneva, and Calvin was not a religious reformer only for this small city, Geneva. Various people came to this small city on account of political, religious, and social issues.⁶⁶ Geneva was a place for a religious life as various people were called to this one community. The city became a more diverse community than before. Calvin still thought that Geneva needed biblical teaching, worship, and discipline in order to support Christian life because Christians were still sinners and the piety of the church was imperfect.⁶⁷ Even though Calvin became weak physically,⁶⁸ he endeavored to fulfil God's will for an authentic church. Calvin and his colleagues nurtured the Genevan community through sermons, which were one of the public media in Genevan society.⁶⁹ Edifying believers was Calvin's lifelong mission.⁷⁰ In his lectures and sermons on Jeremiah, Calvin often talks about the importance of the edification of believers.⁷¹

⁶³ Monter, *Calvin's Geneva*, 169.

⁶⁴ For more details, see Monter, *Calvin's Geneva*, 173-187.

⁶⁵ Naphy, *Calvin and the Consolidation*, 208-9.

⁶⁶ Witte, Jr. and Kingdon, *Sex, Marriage and Family*, 6.

⁶⁷ Gordon, *Calvin*, 227; Calvin often describes the appearances of the mixed church in his lectures on Jeremiah: CO 38. 229 (COR II 6/1. 604; Jer. 15:16). "Tamen multi permixti sunt hypocritae Dei electis: ita etiam in vera Ecclesia et bene composita invocatur Dei nomen super reprobos. Invocatur autem vere nomen Dei super electos, ..."; CO 38. 444 (COR II 6/1. 880; Jer. 23:28). "Sic etiam in Templo saepe permixtum erit triticum paleae, dum pura Dei veritas inquinatur multis commentis, et pravis figmentis: ..."

⁶⁸ Cooke, "Calvin's Illnesses," 60-69. Cooke said that Calvin's many illnesses might help explain his teaching on passivity of the body in relation to the active soul.

⁶⁹ Monter, *Calvin's Geneva*, 100-101.

⁷⁰ Balsarak, *John Calvin*, 179-180; CO 37. 625 (COR II 6/1. 212; Jer. 5:14). "Nam quorsum Deus Evangelii sui Ministros nobis destinat, nisi ut ad salutem nos invitent, atque ita suaviter reficiant animas nostras?"; Calvin, *Sermons*, 125 (Sermon 18 on Jer. 17: 13b, 15-16).

⁷¹ CO 37. 563 (COR II 6/1. 134; Jer. 3:15). "... sed hic loquitur Deus de continuo cursu, vel tenore doctrinae suae, et bene compositi regiminis: ..."; CO 38. 53 (COR II 6/1. 380; Jer. 9:24). "... quomodo felices sumus in Deo? nempe si ipsum cognoscimus erga nos misericordem: deinde si tradimus nos in ejus custodiam et fidem, et sinimus nos ab ipso gubernari, et subiciimus nos etiam Legi ipsius, ..."; Calvin, *Sermons*, 122 (Sermon 18 on Jer. 17:13b, 15-16). "Voila donc à quoy doibvent entendre les ministres de la parole de Dieu: de tirer des propheties les menaces et corections. Voila donc quelle est la charge des pasteurs, c'est à savoir des ministres."

The formation of the church in Geneva was hugely influenced by the publication of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* and the opening of the Geneva Academy. The *Institutes of the Christian Religion* was published in its final Latin edition in 1559 and contained the essence of Calvin's theology. He said, "I believe I have so embraced the sum of religion in all its parts, and have arranged it in such an order."⁷² He was sure, moreover, that this book would help in understanding of the Bible.⁷³ On this theological basis, the Geneva Academy was established in 1559, and it was the apex of Calvin's ministry, as well as another starting point.⁷⁴ Many people from various European countries came to this school. After graduation, they went all over Europe and dedicated themselves to each church.⁷⁵ The Geneva Academy existed not only for the Genevan church, but also for churches all over Europe. French people too learned at this school and went back to their homeland to evangelize France.⁷⁶ When Calvin lectured on Jeremiah, Geneva formed an international community. At this time, the Genevan church still emphasized the holiness of the church. Also, it was dedicated to other churches outside Geneva. Not only the Genevan church, but also other reformed churches were important to Calvin. As a result, the role and importance of Calvin internationally did not allow him to remain confined to one small city.⁷⁷

2.5.2 Churches outside Geneva between 1555 and 1560

2.5.2.1 Germany and Other Churches Nearby

After the *Consensus Tigurinus* was signed in 1549, the conflicts with the Lutherans continued in Frankfurt. The French refugee church established by John a Lasco, which was supported by Calvin and Melancthon, attracted Westphal's attention. So, the city was overwhelmed by numerous arguments. The city was split into two parts. Therefore the refugees in the city faced difficult

⁷² CO 2. 2 (*Inst. Lectori*). "Siquidem religionis summam omnibus partibus sic mihi complexus esse videor, et eo quoque ordine digessisse, ..."

⁷³ Wendel, *Calvin*, 111; Spijker, *Johannes Calvin*, 302.

⁷⁴ Spijker, *Johannes Calvin*, 296; Henderson, *The Teaching Office*, 47. When Calvin returned to Geneva (12 September 1541), one of his initial concerns was the re-establishment of secondary and higher education.

⁷⁵ Maag, *Seminary or University?*, 28-34.

⁷⁶ Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the wars*, 84.

⁷⁷ Maag, "Calvin and Students," 171.

situations.⁷⁸ The arguments about the Sacraments between Calvinists and Lutherans also continued. Calvin thought that it was possible for churches to argue without breaking faith and dogmatics.⁷⁹ He had thought about the unity with the German churches for a long time. However, the arguments with Westphal up to 1558 severely damaged Calvin's desire for the unity of the church. In fact, it was Calvin's defeat. Unity with the Lutherans became difficult. At this time, Calvin still lectured on the Old Testament at the Geneva Academy, writing commentaries while concentrating on the situation of the French reformed church.⁸⁰

2.5.2.2 The French Reformed Church

In the 1550's the religious persecution of the French Protestants was severe. Following the directive of his father, Francis I, Henry II oppressed the Protestants. On June 27, 1551, Henry II executed the *Edict of Châteaubriant*, which prohibited heresy and banned the books of Protestants.⁸¹ During this period, many of Calvin's works were published in France. By reading these works, many people accepted the reformed faith. After the mid-1550s a lot of high-ranking people accepted the reformed faith.⁸² Thus, Henry II's persecution was difficult for those who had accepted the reformed faith. There had to be two different modes of faith in France at that time.⁸³ However, despite such persecution the French church grew considerably between 1555 and 1562.⁸⁴ Such growth in the French church was due to the support of Geneva and Calvin. As mentioned above, after 1555 Calvin carried out his plan in earnest, which was to evangelize France.⁸⁵ His foremost ministry was to send

⁷⁸ Schelven, *De Nederduitsche vluchtingen kerken*, 218-234; Gordon, *Calvin*, 240-243.

⁷⁹ CO 2. 756 (*Inst.* 4.1.12). "Non enim unius sunt formae omnia verae doctrinae capita. Sunt quaedam ita necessaria cognitu, ut fixa esse et indubitata omnibus oporteat, ceu propria religionis placita. Qualia sunt, unum esse Deum; Christum deum esse, ac Dei filium; in Dei misericordia salutem nobis consistere, et similia. Sunt alia, quae inter ecclesias controversa, fidei tamen unitatem non dirimant."

⁸⁰ Kingdon, "Calvin's Last Years," 183-186.

⁸¹ Monter, *Judging the French Reformation*, 127.

⁸² Balsarak, *John Calvin*, 118-119. During this time, Antoine of Navarre who held the title of the First Prince of the Blood or Prince of the French Blood Royal and François d' Andelot de Coligny, Admiral of France were converted to the reformed faith; Spijker, *Johannes Calvin*, 305-6. In the sixteenth century, there were some Christians who had reformed faith but yet chose to participate in Catholic worship. Calvin called them Nicodemites and scolded them severely. According to Calvin, the true Christian would choose to live as religious refugees or endure their sufferings in order to keep their own faith.

⁸³ "Any attempt to estimate their total membership is speculative, but a reasonable guess is between 1.5 and 2 million, roughly 10 percent of the kingdom's total population." Holt, *Renaissance and Reformation France*, 141.

⁸⁴ Berthoud, *Calvin et la France*, 8. There were only five structured churches in 1555. But, when the first national synod in Paris was held in 1559 the number of structured churches rose to 100. And, when the first religious war broke out in 1562, the number reached 2150.

⁸⁵ Mentzer, "Calvin and France," 80.

pastors to France. At that time, there were demands for pastors for churches in France.⁸⁶ Such demands were satisfied with the help of the Geneva Academy. It should be noted that Calvin contributed to the system of the French reformed church. As we know, since the French reformed church existed across France, the Genevan church was within the boundaries of a small city,⁸⁷ the situations and contexts of these two churches were very different. However, when the first national synod of the French church was held in Paris, 1559, Calvin proposed some useful guidance to the representatives while they adopted his ideas over the more important issues.⁸⁸ During this period, Calvin did not contact the French church directly. The substantial leaders of the French church were Beza and Viret. Calvin was faithful to his primary calling: writing, lecturing, and preaching. He was not a church-planter but a church-shaper.⁸⁹ His efforts revealed the value of lectures from the book of Jeremiah. In his dedication to the lectures on Jeremiah, Calvin said that Jeremiah would recommend Calvin's lectures if Jeremiah had lived at that time. He was sure that his lectures on Jeremiah were pious, honest, and useful for understanding the times.⁹⁰ These lectures were beneficial not only to Calvin's Genevan church, but also the congregations in the French reformed church. Those who had heard the lectures given by Calvin came to minister in several churches across Europe. The lectures probably helped the churches in Europe maintain the truth of the words in the book of Jeremiah.

2.6 Conclusion

Calvin states in his lectures on Jeremiah that he left France 30 years prior because he did not want to stay in a place where the teachings of God's truth and eternal salvation had disappeared.⁹¹ He thought that he could freely study God's words, since he was away from his homeland, and that his works were useful to the French Protestants. Also, he thought that he had a calling to teach the

⁸⁶ Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming*, 31. Assignment after 1555 was always in response to a formal request from a church needing a pastor. Hundreds of requests addressed to the Geneva Company of Pastors have been preserved; Sunshine, *Reforming French Protestantism*, 20-21. With Strasbourg's forcible conversion to Lutheranism and Bucer's exile from the city, Geneva increasingly became the major inspiration for French Protestants; Balsarak, *Establishing the remnant Church*, 4

⁸⁷ Sunshine, *Reforming French Protestantism*, 17.

⁸⁸ Benedict, *Purely Reformed*, 135. They did not follow Calvin's advice alone when they organized the structure of the French reformed church. They also decided some issues through urgent meetings without Calvin's instructions.

⁸⁹ Gordon, *Calvin*, 319.

⁹⁰ CO 20. 76-7; Calvin, *Praelectiones*, 8 (COR II 6/1. 8; Dedicatio). "... quia suas Prophetias agnosceret non sincere minus, quam reverenter a me fuisse expositas : addo etiam ad praesentem usum utiliter accommodates."

⁹¹ Calvin, *Praelectiones*, 9 (COR II 6/1. 9; Dedicatio). "Triginta anni elapsi sunt ex quo voluntarium mihi exilium a Gallia indixi, quia inde exulabat Evangelii veritas, pura religio et integer Dei cultus: ..."

doctrine of eternal salvation.⁹² This chapter starts with two questions. First, why did Calvin emphasize church reform in his lectures on Jeremiah after he had already accomplished Reformed stability in Geneva? The answer is that the Genevan church was a mixture of wheat and chaff even after Calvin's political victory of 1555.⁹³ The refugees arriving from France were those who sought a new faith, but they had to be edified based on apostolic teachings. They had to form a pious community, so Calvin continued to proclaim the holiness and restoration of the church. Also, he had to oppose the Catholic Church because it confused the whole church with its inaccurate teachings.⁹⁴ The churches in his homeland, France, as well, continued to be against the Catholic Church, and carried out religious reform. Therefore, Calvin had to emphasize the reformation of all churches and the edification of church members. And the second question is, when did he start to look beyond the boundary of the Genevan church. If we look at his sermons on Jeremiah in 1549, he emphasized 'one church.'⁹⁵ After 1555 he still sought for the unity of the church teaching the Bible and theology to those who came to the Geneva Academy. To him, the church was always one universal church which included all of the Protestant churches beyond Geneva. Moreover, in his lectures on Daniel, Calvin clearly states that he was dedicated to the French church during all his years as a refugee.⁹⁶ In his later years when he published his lectures on Jeremiah, he thought that he should have paid more attention to his French brothers.⁹⁷ This focus on the unity of the church is naturally ingrained in his lectures and sermons from Jeremiah.

⁹² Gordon, *Calvin*, 317-8; CO 18. 614.

⁹³ Douglass, "Calvin in ecumenical context," 309.

⁹⁴ Spijker, *Johannes Calvinus*, 305. When the Council of Trent was called and its position proclaimed, Calvin clearly concluded that the separation from the Catholic church was permanent; CO 7. 340-345. *Acta Synodi Tridentini cum Antodoto*; CO 37. 694 (COR II 6/1. 299; Jer. 7:24). "Papistae quidem obtendunt antiquitatem: dicunt a majoribus ita se fuisse edoctos: et simul objiciunt concilia et statuta Patrum: sed interim nemo eorum est, qui non addictus sit suis commentis, et qui sibi non permittat libertatem, imo effraenem licentiam rejiciendi quidquid visum est."

⁹⁵ Calvin, *Sermons*, 88 (Sermon 13 on Jer. 16:20-21). "Concluons donc que autant de temps qu'il y aura un Dieu au ciel, il y aura une Eglise en terre; ..."

⁹⁶ CO 18. 614.

⁹⁷ Calvin, *Praelectiones*, 9 (COR II 6/1. 9; Dedicatio). "Sed quo mitius mihi Deus pepercit, major pro fratribus meis tam Gallis quam Flandris cura me sollicitat:"

Chapter III. Theological Basis: The Knowledge of God and of Ourselves

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Questions

Scholars have continuously tried to find a key theme in the theology of the Genevan Reformer. However, the result of this research is that, as Selderhuis points out, "such a theme would need to be sufficiently broad so as not to overlook other themes from his theology."¹ Even though all the theological *loci* are not dealt with in detail in Calvin's lectures and sermons on the book of Jeremiah, we find his ideas on the church, which is the theme of this dissertation, as well as other theological themes therein. Nevertheless, in this chapter we cannot deal with all the theological *loci* which Calvin mentioned in his interpretation of Jeremiah. So, we will look at necessary issues before we go into his ecclesiology through his biblical interpretation: *the knowledge of God and that of man*. Understanding Calvin's ecclesiology requires knowledge of many other doctrines. His ecclesiology cannot exist without the help of other theological *loci*. Among many issues, the knowledge of God and that of man are actually the foundation of Calvin's theological themes.² Parker calls these two issues a seed of the *Institutes* of 1559.³ In the heading of the *Institutes*, Calvin mentions two types of knowledge. His work begins with this confession:

Nearly all the wisdom we possess, that is to say, true and sound wisdom, consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves. But, while joined by many bonds, which one precedes and brings forth the other is not easy to discern.⁴

True and sound wisdom, Calvin argues, comes from the knowledge of God and of ourselves. Faith is rooted in this knowledge of God.⁵ Without the knowledge of God in us, we cannot call God's name

¹ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 37; Milner, *Calvin's doctrine*, 2-3.

² CO 1. 25. "Summa fere sacrae doctrinae duabus his partibus constat: Cognitione Dei ac nostri."

³ Parker, *Calvin. An Introduction*, 13.

⁴ CO 2. 31 (*Inst.* 1.1.1). "Tota fere sapientiae nostrae summa, quae vera demum ac solida sapientia censi debeat, duabus partibus constat, Dei cognitione et nostri. Caeterum, quum multis inter se vinculis connexae sint, utra tamen alteram praecedat, et ex se pariat, non facile est discernere."; Cf. Calvin, *Institutes I*, ed. McNeill, 35

⁵ CO 38. 96 (COR II 6/1. 434; Jer. 10:25). "... , qua docemur initium pietatis esse in Dei cognitione."

by ourselves. These two types of knowledge are interrelated, thus they are not independent but depend on each other.⁶ Therefore, if one does not exist, the other knowledge cannot exist.⁷ These two types of knowledge are necessary to understanding Calvin's ecclesiology because, according to Selderhuis, "the mutual relationship between God and men comes to the surface repeatedly in this theological theme."⁸ While expounding the Apostles' Creed, Calvin explains the universal church in his *Institutes* of 1559 as follows: "The article in the Creed in which we profess to 'believe the church' refers not only to the visible church but also to all God's elect, in whose number are also included the dead."⁹ Based on Calvin's argument, the foundation of the church is God's secret election.¹⁰ In the act of election, the act prescribes 'elector' and 'elected'. In other words, the church is the result of the divine act in which God - the elector - chooses His people - the elected - by His will from among many people.¹¹ Therefore, understanding the church requires us to know who God the elector is, and who the church members are. To wrap it up in a nutshell, study of the two types of knowledge is the prerequisite to the understanding of the church. We cannot deal with Calvin's ecclesiology without these two types of knowledge. According to Leith, who argues that the unity of Calvin's theology is in the relationship between God and men,¹² Calvin's ideas on the church can be explained by the personal and existential relationship between God and a human being.

3.1.2 Purpose and Structure

The purpose of this research is to describe Calvin's ecclesiology as shown in Calvin's interpretation of the book of Jeremiah. In this chapter, however, we will see how the knowledge of God and that of ourselves, which Calvin explains in his *Institutes* of 1559 are elucidated in his

⁶ CO 38. 52 (COR II 6/1. 378; Jer. 9:23-24). "... haec enim duo inter se sunt connexa."

⁷ Parker, *Calvin*, 13. Parker says, the theme of the whole of the *Institutio* is that Wisdom lies in knowing God and knowing oneself.

⁸ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 14.

⁹ CO 2. 746 (*Inst.* 4.1.2). "In symbolo, ubi profitemur nos credere ecclesiam, id non solum ad visibilem, de qua nunc agimus, refertur, sed ad omnes quoque electos Dei in quorum numero comprehenduntur etiam qui morte defuncti sunt." Cf. Calvin, *Institutes II*, ed. McNeill, 1022-3; Yosep Kim, *The identity and the life*, 2; Kingdon, "The Church: Ideology or Institution," 96-7. Referring to ideology and institution, Kingdon argues for the correlation and comprehensive understanding of the visible church and God's elect.

¹⁰ CO 2. 747 (*Inst.* 4.1.2). "... cuius fundamentum est arcana illius electio."

¹¹ Richel, *Het Kerkbegrip*, 15-19; Dowey, *The Knowledge of God*, 23-4. In a similar context Dowey explains that the statements about the Creator stands beside those about man as creature, the presentation of God the Redeemer is preceded by that of man as needing redemption.

¹² Leith, *John Calvin's doctrine*, 16.

interpretation of the book of Jeremiah. Calvin says, “[y]et, however the knowledge of God and of ourselves may be mutually connected, the order of right teaching requires that we discuss the former first, then proceed afterward to treat the latter.”¹³ Although these two types of knowledge are closely interrelated, Calvin chooses to seek knowledge of God first.¹⁴ Accordingly, we will deal with the knowledge of God in 3.2, then, the knowledge of ourselves in 3.3. Finally, we will see how the knowledge of God and ourselves could be applied to understanding Calvin’s ecclesiology in 3.4.

3.2 The Knowledge of God

3.2.1 God the Creator and Sustainer

Calvin thought that men became sinful more and more as the fear of God vanished in them because they abandoned knowledge of God. During the era of Jeremiah, the cause of the Israelites’ sinfulness was that they ignored the knowledge of God and deserted it. In other words, if men knew God truly, the fear of God would lead them to awe and belief in Him.¹⁵ In Calvin’s interpretation of Jeremiah, he places emphasis on the fact that God is the Creator and the Sustainer of this world.¹⁶

Hence we have then only the true knowledge of God, when we not only acknowledge him to be the creator of the world, but when we also fully believe that the world is governed by him, and when we further understand the way in which he governs it, that is, by doing mercy and judgment and justice.¹⁷

After having created this world, God rules and governs it, and is not just sitting in the heavens leading a life of leisure (*non-otiosus*).¹⁸ According to His providence, nature in this world follows His

¹³ CO. 2.33 (*Inst.* 1.1.3). “Utcunque tamen Dei nostrique notitia mutuo inter se nexu sint colligatae, ordo recte docendi postulat ut de illa priore disseramus loco, tum ad hanc tractandam postea descendamus.” Cf. Calvin, *Institutes I*, ed. McNeill, 39

¹⁴ Spijker, *Bij Calvin in de Leer*, 47.

¹⁵ CO 38. 28 (COR II 6/1. 348; Jer. 9:3). “Scimus enim ubi serio cognoscitur Deus, fieri non posse quin simul animos uostros afficiat eius timor: et Dei cognitio semper parit reverentiam et pietatis stadium.”

¹⁶ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 94. Selderhuis argues that providence is so essential to Calvin that denunciation of it in fact equals the denial of God’s existence.

¹⁷ CO 38. 51-2 (COR II 6/1. 378; Jer. 9:23-4). “Ergo haec vera est Dei cognitio, ubi non tantum agnoscimus ipsum esse mundi opificem, sed simul persuasi sumus, mundum ab ipso gubernari: deinde rationem quoque gubernationis tenemus, quod faciat misericordiam et iudicium et iustitiam.” Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. I, ed. the Rev. John Owen, 500.

¹⁸ CO 39. 170 (COR II 6/2. 1426; Jer. 38:16). “... deinde ipsum non sedere otiosum, et securum, sed praeese toti mundo, ...”

order and rule,¹⁹ and every event in history has been led by God's hand.²⁰ God continues to govern and preserve this world.²¹ Specifically, God controls wars,²² therefore, that Babylon conquered the land of Israel was the result of God's surprising and secret providence.²³ According to Calvin, the order and events of this world as well as people's minds, reason and their plans depend on God's providence. God guides people's minds and thoughts in the way He likes.²⁴ However, those who do not know His will because of their lack of the knowledge of God think that everything in this world is fortune.²⁵ In particular, the Gentiles attribute everything to coincidence, which in fact are done by God's will.²⁶ However, Calvin teaches that not only coincidences but also things considered to be good luck have happened as God permits them to happen.²⁷ In spite of these teachings, it is not easy for us to discern divine providence. Divine providence is hidden.²⁸ It is also impossible for us to avoid the influence of divine providence because the sovereignty of God is effective everywhere.²⁹ Calvin, accordingly, tells us how the pious should understand divine providence. If we are willing to know divine providence, we should accept the God who reveals by Himself and should not seek for the essence of God beyond His revelation.³⁰ Moreover, believers should persevere with a brave heart until the time God has set and they should submit themselves to divine providence.³¹

3.2.2 God the Father and the Judge

¹⁹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 10 (Sermon 2 on Jer. 14:20-15:1). "Quant nous leverons les yeux au ciel ou que nous les baisserons en terre, soit que nous regardions en hault ou en bas, nous soions advertiz que tout ce que nous voions est procedant de la puissance de Dieu et gouverné par sa providence."; CO 37. 632 (COR II 6/1. 221-2).

²⁰ CO 38. 490 (COR II 6/1. 939; Jer. 25:20). "... , quidquid continget proficisci a Deo."

²¹ Leith, *John Calvin's doctrine*, 108.

²² CO 37. 646 (COR II 6/1. 238-9; Jer. 6:4-5).

²³ CO 38. 578 (COR II 6/2. 1049; Jer. 28:14). "... , sentiant arcana et admirabili Dei providentia hoc esse factum, ut Nabuchadnezer occuparet illas terras."; CO 39. 245 (COR II 6/2. 1523-4; Jer. 43:12).

²⁴ CO 38. 89 (COR II 6/1. 426; Jer. 10:23). "Sed interea notandum est, non modo eventus rerum esse in arbitrio Dei, sed ipsa etiam consilia: dirigit enim Deus corda, et mentes, ut visum est."

²⁵ CO 38. 215 (COR II 6/1. 588; Jer. 15:8). "... , et ideo non tantum tribuunt et prudentiae et virtuti hominum quantum fortunae: quia scilicet ignorant Dei providentiam."

²⁶ CO 38. 223 (COR II 6/1. 597; Jer. 15:14). "... sic rejiciunt ia fortunam quidquid divinitus accidit."

²⁷ CO 38. 91 (COR II 6/1. 428; Jer. 10:23). "Nam quod homines vulgo fortunam appellant, nihil aliud est quam providentia Dei."

²⁸ CO 39. 415 (COR II 6/2. 1740; Jer. 50:21). "... nempe Dei providentia, quae nobis abscondita est."; CO 2.152 (*Inst.* 1.16.9). "... sed quoniam eorum quae eveniunt, ordo, ratio, finis, necessitas, ut plurimum in Dei consilio latet, et humana opinione non apprehenditur, quasi fortuita sunt, quae certum est ex Dei voluntate provenire."

²⁹ CO 38. 438 (COR II 6/1. 874; Jer. 23:24). "... , id est, quoniam et providentia eius, et virtus, et iustitia diffusa sit ubique, ut quocunque homines sese transferant, non possint tamen ab ejus oculis se abscondere."

³⁰ CO 39. 459 (COR II 6/2. 1795-6; Jer. 51:19); Dowey, *The Knowledge of God*, 20.

³¹ CO 39. 491 (COR II 6/2. 1835-6; Jer. 51:52). "Propheta igitur hic fideles hortatur, ut animos sustineant usque ad tempus, quod Deo placuerit: et ita rejicit eos ad providentiam Dei, ne scilicet plus aequo sibi sumant, si velint ipsum agere quemadmodum fert ipsorum animus."

Calvin teaches divine providence in the *Institutes* 1.17.6: “because God has chosen the church to be his dwelling place, there is no doubt that he shows by singular proofs his fatherly care in ruling it.”³² The providence of God, who governs this world, appears to be special fatherly love to His people. However, Israel rejected this fatherly love of God.³³ Even though God is the Creator of all things in this world, He chose the Israelites so that they would worship Him. He resides in them and He is their father who has protected them.³⁴ God as father continuously guards Israel just like a shepherd who cares for a flock of sheep,³⁵ and He treated them with steadfast love even though Israel did wrong and deserved punishment.³⁶ The salvation of Israel was guaranteed as long as they sought God with a sincere heart and accepted Him as their father without leaving Him.³⁷ However, the Israelites abandoned God and did wrong against God’s will even though they knew that God was their father.³⁸ Nevertheless, God did not neglect them. He showed His steadfast love for a long time,³⁹ and His promised everlasting love. Sometimes He showed His fatherly love by punishing Israel’s wrongdoing and leading them in the right way.⁴⁰ Calvin introduces God as the one watching people’s minds. The purpose of His watching is to judge people according to their deeds.⁴¹ Without punishment, their arrogance and rebellion would have continued unchecked.⁴² Calvin argues, however, that God punishes His people in order to make them pure and to save them.⁴³ His

³² CO 2. 159 (*Inst.* 1.17.6). “Non de genere humano tantum loquor; sed quia Deus ecclesiam sibi in domicilium elegit, non dubium est quin paternam in ea regenda curam singularibus documentis ostendat.”; Cf. Calvin, *Institutes I*, ed. McNeill, 219.

³³ CO 38. 452 (COR II 6/1. 891; Jer. 23:36). “... et ita non admittunt paternam illam dulcedinem, qua paratus esset uti, si modo ferre possent.”

³⁴ CO 39. 281 (COR II 6/2. 1567; Jer. 45:5). “Elegi enim mihi in haereditatem: est sanctum genus: est Regnum sacerdotale: ego in medio eius habito: ego ejus tuendi curam suscepi: ego sum eius pater, ipse est mihi non tantum filius, sed etiam primogenitus: ...”

³⁵ CO 38. 406 (COR II 6/1. 833; Jer. 23:4). “... sibi continuum fore ejus curam, quia Pastores ordinabit, ...”

³⁶ CO 38. 550 (COR II 6/2. 1014; Jer. 27:10). “... sed tamen pars clementiae, quod Deus non summo iure ageret cum Judaeis, sed leniter et paterna moderatione ipsos castigaret.”

³⁷ CO 37. 568 (COR II 6/1. 140; Jer. 3:19). “... sed interea erigit ipsos in bonam fiduciam, quia salus illis parata sit, modo Deum sincero corde invocent, et agnoscant patrem suum, idque perseveranter, ne ab ipso unquam deflectant.”

³⁸ CO 37. 517 (COR II 6/1. 78; Jer. 2:19). “... sed cum sensissent Deum sibi esse patrem, ...”

³⁹ CO 38. 645 (COR II 6/2. 1135; Jer. 31:3). “Quia complexus sit Israellem amore perpetuo, *ideo se traxisse*, vel extendisse *clementiam*, ...”

⁴⁰ CO 38. 162 (COR II 6/1. 519; Jer. 13:14). “Deus ergo quamvis tam horrendo exemplo populum suum perdidit, non tamen exiit tunc suam naturam, neque misericordiam suam abiecit, ...”

⁴¹ CO 38. 438 (COR II 6/1. 873; Jer. 23:24). “... ubi Scriptura dicit Deum omnia cernere: sed praecipue considerare oportet quorsum videat, nempe ut tandem vocet ad iudicium quaecunque geruntur ab hominibus.”

⁴² CO 38. 669 (COR II 6/2. 1165; Jer. 31:18). “... quia si indulgeret eorum peccatis, cresceret superbia, et contumacia.”

⁴³ Calvin, *Sermons*, 21 (Sermon 4 on Jer. 15:6-10). “Il nous est souventesfoys remontré que quant Dieu nous afflige, encores connoissons nous son amour en cela. ... Car les afflictions qu’il nous envoie sont aultant de medicines.”; CO 38. 623 (COR II 6/2. 1105-6; Jer. 30:11). “... quoniam poenae quas infligit reprobis sunt exitiales: poenae autem quibus Ecclesiam suam castigat, temporales sunt: ideo cedunt in medicinam et salutem.”

punishment of His people is unlike that of the wicked. Like these, God cares for His people with paternal love, but He also judges them. However, even if God sent them His prophets to reveal Himself, the Israelites did not understand these two aspects of God, and they did not think that God's two aspects should be connected.⁴⁴ God expressed His fatherly love in the midst of His punishment of them. He punished His people temporarily, but destroyed Babylon and their neighboring countries completely.⁴⁵ According to Calvin, God wanted His people to come to Him, the only solution for them in the midst of their suffering due to God's punishment.⁴⁶

3.2.3 God the Savior in Jesus

But, as it has been said elsewhere, whenever the Prophets prophesied of the return of the people, they extended what they taught to the whole kingdom of Christ. For liberation from exile was no more than the beginning of God's favor: God began the work of true and real redemption when he restored his people to their own country; but he gave them but a slight taste of his mercy.⁴⁷

As you can see from the quote above God, in the book of Jeremiah, foretells the destruction of Israel, but promises the revival of Israel. Calvin extends the revival of Israel to the Kingdom of Christ beyond the return of their exile in Babylon.⁴⁸ Therefore, he states that the return of the Israelites from their exile in Babylon was God's prelude (*Praeludium*) to eternal salvation.⁴⁹ When God judged Israel, He already had a plan to save them. That all the Israelite tribes returned from foreign oppression was only the beginning of the salvation God wanted, and was one aspect of His divine love for His people. God promised that there would be true salvation for true Israel beyond

⁴⁴ CO 38. 510 (COR II 6/1. 965; Jer. 25:38). "Non poterant igitur haec duo simul conjungere, Deum semper fore memorem foederis sui, et tamen futurum esse Ecclesiae judicem."

⁴⁵ CO 39. 447 (COR II 6/2. 1781; Jer. 51:10). "... , et primum docet cladem Babylonis fore certum documentum paterni favoris Dei erga suam Ecclesiam."

⁴⁶ CO 39. 474 (COR II 6/2. 1814; Jer. 51:35-6). "... , docere hoc unicum esse remedium, ut ad Deum confugerent, et coram ipso agerent suam causam."

⁴⁷ CO 39. 37 (COR II 6/2. 1255-6; Jer. 32:37). "Sed quemadmodum alibi dictum fuit, quoties vaticinantur Prophetae de populi reditu, extendunt suam doctrinam ad totum Christi Regnum. Nam liberatio ab exsilio nihil aliud fuit quam initium gratiae Dei. Exorsus est igitur Deus opus verae et solidae redemptionis cum populum in patriam reduxit: sed tenuem modo gustum praebuit suae misericordiae."; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 4, 207-8.

⁴⁸ Calvin, *Sermons*, 80 (Sermon 12 on Jer. 16:14-19a). "Or nous avons montré que pour entendre cecy qu'il ne fault point prandre ceste prophetie pour ung jour ne pour ung temps, mais qu'il fault poursuyvir jusques à la venue de Jesucrist."

⁴⁹ CO 39. 55 (COR II 6/2. 1279; Jer. 33:7-8).

their return from exile in Babylon. True divine salvation was prepared for God’s people only in Christ, and would not be completed through other mediators.⁵⁰ Therefore, the true revival of Israel would be possible only when the reign of Christ is accomplished.⁵¹ Calvin emphasized that the Kingdom of Christ, where the reign of Christ is fulfilled, would be as blissful as the kingdom of David reestablished by the Israelite exiles.⁵² At that time, God will call not only Jews but also foreigners to His church through Christ,⁵³ and will lead all people to unite in Christ.⁵⁴ Likewise, God is a true savior who leads His people to true salvation by Christ alone. Therefore, Calvin teaches us that we should always look to Christ when God invites us to the hope of His mercy and salvation.⁵⁵

3.3 The Knowledge of Man

3.3.1 The Covenant and God’s People

Calvin repeatedly states in the *Institutes* (1559) that men are able to know who they are through knowledge of God.⁵⁶ Jeremiah says that God is the father of the Israelites,⁵⁷ and emphasizes that He is ‘God of Israel’ not of any other people.⁵⁸ Such knowledge of God is meaningful to the Israelites. Because, through this knowledge, they know that they are the sons of God,⁵⁹ and that they are the people of God. In other words, the knowledge of God defines who Israel is. God first wanted to have relationship with Israel. Since God had proclaimed that He would be their God to the descendants of Abraham, they became the people of God.⁶⁰ During Jeremiah’s era, the Israelites had

⁵⁰ CO 38. 619 (COR II 6/2. 1101; Jer. 30:9). “Salus igitur in Christo nobis reposita est, neque alibi quaerenda: ...”

⁵¹ CO 39. 413 (COR II 6/2. 1737; Jer. 50:20). “..., sed potius extenditur ad Regnum Christi, quia tunc vere demum completa fuit haec prophetia: ...”

⁵² CO 38. 634 (COR II 6/2. 1120; Jer. 30:20). “..., quasi diceret statum Ecclesiae non minus fore prosperum et felicem sub Christo, quam olim sub Davide floruerat.”

⁵³ CO 38. 255 (COR II 6/1. 640; Jer. 16:19). “..., ita ut Ecclesiam sibi colligeret tam ex Judaeis quam ex gentibus:”

⁵⁴ CO 39. 389 (COR II 6/2. 1707; Jer. 49:38). “... quam fecit antehac aliis gentibus, nempe ut coalescant rursus sub Christo capite.”

⁵⁵ CO 38. 636 (COR II 6/2. 1123; Jer. 30:21). “..., denique quoties nos ad spem gratiae et salutis invitat, semper debere nos in Christum respicere, ...”

⁵⁶ CO 2. 32 (*Inst.* 1.1.2). “Rursum, hominem in puram sui notitiam nunquam pervenire constat, nisi prius Dei faciem sit contemplatus, atque ex illius intuitu ad se ipsum inspiciendum descendat.”; CO 2. 48 (*Inst.* 1.5.10).

⁵⁷ CO 38. 95 (COR II 6/1. 434; Jer. 10:25). “Deum esse patrem erga electos suos, iudicem erga omnes reprobos.”

⁵⁸ CO 39. 221 (COR II 6/2. 1493; Jer. 42:4). “Alio autem sensu vocat Deum populi: ...”

⁵⁹ CO 38. 675 (COR II 6/2. 1173; Jer. 31:20). “Nam filii nomine designat specialem illam foederis gratiam, qua amplexus fuerat semen Abrahae.”

⁶⁰ CO 38. 500 (COR II 6/1. 952; 25:29). “... quemadmodum nomen Dei invocatum est super filios Abrahae, quia pollicitus fuerat se illis fore in Deum, et gloriabantur se esse peculiarem eius populum, nempe adoptionis gratia.”

been chosen as God's people even before they were born, and were promised greater things beyond having lands inherited from their ancestors.⁶¹ That promise includes eternal life and the glory of heaven, and teaches them that God is the God of the living.⁶² Not only is it true that Israel enjoyed their privilege as God's people,⁶³ but also that they were saved⁶⁴ and enjoyed everlasting life. God wanted Israel to have a holy and pure life when He accepted them as His people.⁶⁵ Moreover, God wanted to establish Israel as a holy kingdom.⁶⁶ To enjoy this life, they had to listen to God alone.⁶⁷ Yet, Israel could not keep the covenantal law of God even though they promised to live as the people of God. If they kept covenant, they would stay safely within God's guidance.⁶⁸ However, God decided to punish them because Israel broke the covenant. Nonetheless, God still calls Israel His people even after judgment.⁶⁹ According to Calvin, when God makes Israel His people, they become happy in every aspect.⁷⁰ However, Israel always forgot this blessing, broke the covenant with God, and were forgetful about who they were.

3.3.2 Totally Depraved Man

We can understand who a man is from his knowledge of God, who judges with righteousness. The righteous God cannot judge men without right reasons. The feature that God judges indirectly proves that men are 'sinful beings.'⁷¹ In the *Institutes* (1559) 2.1.9, Calvin states that after Adam

⁶¹ CO 38. 103 (COR II 6/1. 443; Jer. 11:15). "Cum ergo promissio longe praecesserit, ..."; Therefore, Israelites were not required to or could not do anything to become God's people. The essential reason for the choice was in God Himself; CO 2. 694 (*Inst.* 3.22.7). "... eius vero intrinsecam esse in ipso causam, quia arcano suo beneplacito contentus est."; Richel, *het Kerkbegrip*, 18.

⁶² CO 38. 102 (COR II 6/1. 442; Jer. 11:4). "... sed cum dicit *se fore illis in Deum, et illos sibi fore in populum*, hic inclusa est promissio aeternae vitae, et gloriae coelestis: quemadmodum alibi dicitur, ipsum non esse Deum mortuorum, sed vivorum"

⁶³ CO 38. 657 (COR II 6/2. 1149; Jer. 31:9). "Deus populum illum dignatus fuerit eligere. Hoc ergo pertinet ad singulare privilegium seminis Abrahae: quia cum unum esset humanum genus, Deus sibi Abraham et ejus posteros voluit eligere et adoptare."

⁶⁴ CO 38. 645 (COR II 6/2. 1134; Jer. 31:3). "... nempe quod adoptio causa fuisset liberationis."

⁶⁵ CO 37. 636 (COR II 6/1. 227; Jer. 5:26). "Nam hac lege populum illum Deus sibi adoptaverat, ut regnaret in eo sanctimonia et puritas vitae."

⁶⁶ CO 39. 306 (COR II 6/2. 1600; Jer. 46:28). "... pendebat autem haec promissio, ut dictum fuit, a gratuita adoptione, quia populum illum Deus sibi elegerat, ut esset Regnum sacerdotale."

⁶⁷ CO 38. 105 (COR II 6/1. 446; Jer. 11:6). "Iam adjungit *se hoc tantum postulasse a populo electo ut audiret vocem suam.*"

⁶⁸ CO 38. 296 (COR II 6/1. 692; Jer. 18:6). "... tuti quidem erant eius praesidio, nempe si praestitissent mutuum fidem, ut vere essent ejus populus, sicuti promiserat se illis fore in Deum."

⁶⁹ CO 38. 403 (COR II 6/1. 830; Jer. 23:2). "... interea autem respectu foederis sui agnovit suos: et ideo vocat *populum suum.*"

⁷⁰ CO 38. 639 (COR II 6/2. 1126-7; Jer. 30:22).

⁷¹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 104 (Sermon 15 on Jer. 17:5-8). "... c'est à savoir que jusques à ce que nous aions congneu Dieu, il est impossible que nous congnoissions noz faultes, ..."

abandoned the source of righteousness that sin conquered most of his soul.⁷² Therefore, the sinful state of men did not come from God, but from men's corporal corruption, in other words, their human behavior.⁷³ This miserable and sinful state of men led the Israelites to Babylon as captives. God, who made a covenant with the Israelites, told them how to live. However, they left their fathers' belief and pious lives. God could not accept the Israelites as the descendants of promise, as the sons of Abraham. For God, they are foreigners and ignorant of Him.⁷⁴ Depraved Israel broke the covenant with God because of its own weakness.⁷⁵ They worshipped idols which they made with their own hands,⁷⁶ and ignored proper worship of God, taught by the first table of the Ten Commandments.⁷⁷ The wickedness of Israel appeared clearly through their attitude towards the Jerusalem Temple. Referring to Psalms 132:14, "This (Temple) is my resting place forever and ever; here I will dwell, for I have desired this home," they believed that the Temple would never collapse.⁷⁸ However, they not only worshipped the true God but also mixed piety towards the Temple with various idols.⁷⁹ Furthermore, they were proud that the Temple was among them and they were the people of the God who resided in the Land of Promise. Even more, they thought that God was bound to them.⁸⁰ To such an attitude, Jeremiah proclaims that God's promise and love do not guarantee them land and inheritance. In addition, he declares that God would not keep them safe because they acted like foreigners even though God had

⁷² CO 2. 183 (*Inst.* 2.1.9). "Quamobrem dixi cunctas animae partes a peccato fuisse possessas, ex quo a fonte iustitiae descendit Adam."

⁷³ Leith, *John Calvin's doctrine*, 140; CO 2. 184 (*Inst.* 2.1.10). "A carnis ergo nostrae culpa, non a Deo nostra perditio est;"

⁷⁴ CO 38. 244 (COR II 6/1. 625; Jer. 16:9). "... quoniam non erant ipsi Abrahae filii, sed extranei, quandoquidem ab omni pietate et fide desciverant."

⁷⁵ CO 38. 166 (COR II 6/1. 524; Jer. 13:17). "Videmus ergo ut ad lacrimas eum impellat foedus Dei, quod videt quodammodo intercidere populi culpa."

⁷⁶ CO 38. 79 (COR II 6/1. 412; Jer. 10:14). "... nam putat se Deum facere manu sua."

⁷⁷ CO 38. 475 (COR II 6/1. 921; Jer. 25:6). "... et ideo priore Legis tabula ad ejus cultum instituitur Ecclesia."

⁷⁸ CO 37. 654-655 (COR II 6/1. 249; Jer. 6:12). "Quoniam enim dictum erat, Haec requies mea in saeculum saeculi, hic habitabo (Psal. 132:14), putabant se non posse illinc evelli, ..."

⁷⁹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 99 (Sermon 14 on Jer. 17:1-4). "... car ilz ne laissoient pas de s'adonner à mal et de poluer le Temple."; CO 38. 117 (COR II 6/1. 461; Jer. 11:15). "Templum enim est viva imago unius Dei, deinde quasi Sacrarium ipsius Legis. Contemnunt ipsi Legem, et iactant innumeros deos: ideo volunt misceri Templi sanctitatem cum turba deorum, et cum suis corruptelis et figmentis."

⁸⁰ CO 38. 173 (COR II 6/1. 533; Jer. 13:24). "Judaei enim hoc solo gloriabantur, se esse Dei populum, quod Templum apud ipsos erectum esset, deinde quod habitarent in terra sibi promissa. Putabant igitur Deum quodammodo sibi esse affixum, cum illa haereditate fruerentur."

taken them as His son before.⁸¹ Judeans abandoned the promise of God and boasted about the Temple instead. What they needed most was true belief in God and sincere repentance.⁸²

3.3.3 Men Who Need Repentance

As we know, God is righteous and judge of the world. Therefore, if He does not judge sin, this contradicts His essence. Calvin argues that the unrepentant cannot avoid being punished.⁸³ Since men are sinful they have no way to be saved except by repenting of sin.⁸⁴ Those who repent are not guaranteed to be saved but without repentance s/he definitely cannot be saved. Calvin states that the purpose of God's punishment of the Judeans is to turn them to God,⁸⁵ and that the reason for Calvin's teaching and preaching is to make God's people repent.⁸⁶ Then what is repentance? Repentance is a real turning of our life towards God. In other words, a sinner feels unsatisfied with himself because of his sin, so he abandons all sinfulness and tries to follow God's righteous law.⁸⁷ This is called 'repentance.' Such repentance is always mentioned in connection with belief. These two are totally different things, but they cannot be separated.⁸⁸ Therefore, according to Calvin, repentance is an essential grace for believers and a special ministry of God.⁸⁹ Men do not repent by themselves. By the Holy Spirit, however, God turns their hearts to Him. Repentance is the ministry of the Holy Spirit.⁹⁰

⁸¹ CO 38. 469 (COR II 6/1. 912; Jer. 24:10). "Deridet Propheta hanc stultitiam, cum dicit non obstare promissionem et gratiam Dei, quin privet ipsos terra et eius possessione, et abdicet etiam eos, ut sint tanquam extranei, quamvis ipsos prius adoptaverit in filios."

⁸² CO 38. 521 (COR II 6/1. 979; Jer. 26:9). "Judei autem sine fide et poenitentia jactabant quod dictum erat de Templo: ..."

⁸³ CO 37. 618 (COR II 6/1. 202; Jer. 5:9). "Sumit autem hoc principium, Fieri non posse quin poenas sumat de sceleratis qui non resipiscunt. Nam si Deus est iudex mundi, non potest magis abnegare suum iudicium, quam propriam essentiam."

⁸⁴ CO 37. 586 (COR II 6/1. 162; Jer. 4:14). "... hoc autem non posse fieri, nisi resipiscant a suis sceleribus."

⁸⁵ Calvin, *Sermons*, 175 (sermon 25 on Jer. 18:18-23). "..., alors ilz vouldroient bien que Dieu monstrast quelque vengeance, voire afin qu'on se reduise."; CO 37. 590 (COR II 6/1. 167; Jer. 4:18). "..., nempe ut tacti Dei timore resipiscant."

⁸⁶ CO 37. 649 (COR II 6/1. 242; Jer. 6:8). "... deinde ostendit quis sit doctrinae usus, nempe ut homines invitent ad poenitentiam"; CO 37. 671 (COR II 6/1. 271; Jer. 7:1). "Summa autem concionis est, ut serio resipiscant, si velint Deum sibi placare."

⁸⁷ CO 38. 531 (COR II 6/1. 991; Jer. 26:19). "Poenitentia autem, ut satis notum esse debet, continet in se duas partes, nempe ut sibi displiceat peccator in suis vitiis, et postquam sese abdicavit pravis omnibus carnis cupiditatibus, ut cupiat formare totam suam vitam, et ejus actiones ad regulam justitiae Dei."

⁸⁸ CO 38. 532 (COR II 6/1. 992; Jer. 26:19). "Ideo Scriptura quoties de poenitentia loquitur, simul adjungit fidem. Sunt quidem res distinctae, sed tamen non diversae, nec separari debent, ut quidam parum considerate faciunt."

⁸⁹ CO 38. 672 (COR II 6/2. 1169; Jer. 31:18). "..., sed peculiare esse electo populo beneficium."; CO 38. 672 (COR II 6/2. 1170; Jer. 31:19). "..., nempe esse peculiare Dei opus cum resipiscit peccator, ..."

⁹⁰ CO 38. 671 (COR II 6/2. 1168; Jer. 31:18). "... deinde adjungit hoc non factum esse hominum virtute, quia sponte redierint ad sanam mentem, sed Deum Spiritu suo flexisse eorum corda, ut non obdurescerent ad poenas, neque contumaciter resisterent, ut plerumque fieri solet. Hinc ergo colligimus poenitentiam esse Spiritus Sancti opus."

Regarding repentance, we will look in more in detail in chapter 10 of part II. In the midst of punishment, God said that if they feared, repented, and turned themselves to God, He would forgive their sins. Moreover, God delivered His messages through Jeremiah. Israel was in a state of needing repentance because they broke their covenant with God and were far away from Him. The state of every Christian is like that of the Israelites. At this point, Calvin states that Christians need to repent before God everyday. Without any exceptions, everyone is a sinner who needs the mercy of God.⁹¹ Therefore, men need to be renewed by repentance everyday.

3.4 The Relationship between the Two Types of Knowledge and the Church

In 3.2 and 3.3, we dealt with Calvin's understanding of God and of ourselves, which is necessary to study ecclesiology in connection with Calvin's interpretation of Jeremiah. Now we will see how the two types of knowledge and the church are interrelated.

When indeed we are fully persuaded that God is the judge of the world, and when we have also *knowledge* of His goodness and paternal favor, we necessarily fear Him and spontaneously and willingly worship and serve Him. *Ignorance* of God, then, is a kind of madness that carries men headlong to every sort of impiety. On this account, God complains that He was *not known* by the people, for the fear of Him was not in them.⁹²

In his exegesis of Jer. 9:3, Calvin says that the origin of human wickedness is the abandonment of the knowledge of God, in other words, 'ignorance of God.' In the quote above, by using expressions such as 'knowledge (*Cognitio*)' twice and 'ignorance (*Ignoratio*)' once, he revealed the importance of the knowledge of God. Calvin emphasizes three things in this interpretation. First, if a man comes to know God, s/he comes to fear and worship Him. Second, the ignorance of God is a sort of mental disorder that makes people fall into unbelief. Third, God complains about the fact that

⁹¹ CO 38. 671 (COR II 6/2. 1168; Jer. 31:18). "Primum responderi posset nunquam ita respiscere homines quin opus habeant continuo Dei auxilio. Nam renovamur de die in diem, et paulatim renuntiemus cupiditatibus carnis nostrae: neque uno die exuimus veterem hominem."

⁹² CO 38. 28-9 (COR II 6/1. 349; Jer. 9:4). "Caeterum ubi hoc nobis persuasum est, Deum esse mundi Judicem, et accedit etiam cognitio bonitatis et paternae gratiae, fieri non potest quin illum et timeamus et sponte ac libenter colamus. Ergo ignoratio Dei est tanquam amentia quaedam, quae homines abripit ad quodvis impietatis genus. Hac ratione conqueritur Deus *se non fuisse cognitum a populo*, quia scilicet nullus fuerit ejus timor."; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on the Jeremiah* vol.1, 463.

His people do not know about Him. As we know from Calvin's explanation, it is important for us to know who God is. Those who know God automatically fear Him. The Bible tells us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Prov. 9:10), thereby knowing God as the true wisdom. On the other hand, a person falls into absurd sin when s/he does not know God.⁹³

According to Calvin, faith begins in knowing God. Unless the knowledge of God is within us, we cannot call on God.⁹⁴ A man can have the knowledge of God, not from within himself, but by God's revelation. Thus, by God's self-revelation a man comes to know God.⁹⁵ However, since the knowledge of God and that of man are interdependent and complementary, one needs both. A man can find God in the light of enough knowledge of man, and by the knowledge of God he can be known and understood properly.⁹⁶ Those who do not know God cannot know who they are. In fact, the Judeans did not know that God set them apart from other peoples.⁹⁷ They also denied that they were contaminated by sin. By ignoring the word of God and forgetting what it meant, they existed improperly.⁹⁸ Sinful men even argued that the church belongs to them.⁹⁹ These errors arise in those who do not know who man is, that is, because of ignorance of God. These sinful men also cannot be with God. On this Calvin says in his sermon on Jer. 15:19-21 that the only way to live in good standing with God is through knowledge of God and of ourselves.¹⁰⁰ Those who stand in the light of the two types of knowledge can be trained to become pious. Then and only then can God and people be united. In other words, the knowledge of God and that of ourselves, that is, these two types of knowledge, can help us know what the church is. These are the fundamentals of Calvin's ecclesiology.

⁹³ CO 37. 595 (COR II 6/1. 173; Jer. 4:22). "Unde etiam colligimus, tunc demum nos sapere, ubi Deum reveremur, et semper esse vesanos et socordes, ubi in illum noa respicimus."

⁹⁴ CO 38. 96 (COR II 6/1. 434; Jer. 10:25). "... qua docemur initium pietatis esse in Dei cognitione. ... quia non potest invocari Deus nisi praeleceat eius cognitio."

⁹⁵ Parker, *Calvin's doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 11-13.

⁹⁶ Barth, *The Theology of John Calvin*, 162.

⁹⁷ CO 38. 55 (COR II 6/1. 381; Jer. 9:25). "Judaei enim non tenebant Deum esse salutis suae praesidem, et se fuisse segregatos ab aliis gentibus."

⁹⁸ CO 39. 250 (COR II 6/2. 1529; Jer. 44:3). "In summa, Proficisci est erratico cursu se fatigare, ubi negligitur sermo Dei, et deseritur via illa, quam proposuit."

⁹⁹ CO 37. 684 (COR II 6/1. 287; Jer. 7:15). "... denique obdurescunt adversus Deum, quasi illis esset legitima possessio, quoniam semel praedicatum fuit Romae Evangelium, et locus ille fuit quasi prima sedes Ecclesiae tam in Italia quam in Europa."

¹⁰⁰ Calvin, *Sermons*, 56 (Sermon 8 on Jer. 15:19-21). "Or il n'y a qu'ung moyen pour nous rendre debonnaire, c'est la connoissance de Dieu et de nous mesmes. Ceulx donc qui seront illuminez en la connoissance de Dieu et d'eulx mesmes, les voila babatuz."

3.5 Conclusion: God, Men and Church

According to Calvin, the knowledge of God and that of man become true knowledge when they are understood in their relationship. These two types of knowledge also have a deep relationship with the *accommodatio Dei*.¹⁰¹ Calvin stresses the importance of the two types of knowledge in Jeremiah's lectures and sermons many times. To him, the true knowledge of God is indispensable. For we have no choice but to follow various idols if we do not know the true God.¹⁰² Based on this knowledge of God, we are also able to know ourselves. In fact, Calvin deals with the importance of the two types of knowledge in his *Institutes* 1.1.1-3. However, Calvin's biblical interpretation of Jeremiah has even more importance because it shows his practical application for the church. Specifically, his lectures on Jeremiah occupied a significant position in his personal history. Calvin lectured on Jeremiah in the Geneva Academy from 1560 to September 1562.¹⁰³ During this period, the Catholic Church's persecution of the French reformed church was getting stronger.¹⁰⁴ At that time, the French reformed church continuously called for pastors from Calvin, because his company of pastors educated pastors and then sent them to France. This work was the most important ministry to the evangelization of France.¹⁰⁵ Considering Calvin's circumstances, we can presume he thought rather a lot about his homeland's churches while he lectured on Jeremiah. Calvin knew that God wants to raise His people and is happy to care for them to the complete their salvation through the church.¹⁰⁶ Calvin dedicated himself to this. As we noted before, Calvin mentioned the knowledge of God and that of men in his lectures on Jeremiah. These two types of knowledge are fundamental to all the knowledge, as was already mentioned. So it is not surprising that Calvin explains this again in his interpretation of Jeremiah. To sum up, only those who have knowledge of God can stand in fear and awe of Him.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰¹ Dowey, *The knowledge of God*, 18-24.

¹⁰² CO 38. 80 (COR II 6/1. 415; Jer. 10:16). "... non posse ex animo et cordate rejici superstitiones, nisi postquam agnitus est verus Deus. ... Necessè igitur est, ut praecedat veri Dei cognitio."

¹⁰³ Parker, *Calvin's Old Testament commentaries*, 29.

¹⁰⁴ Olson, "The Cradle of Reformed Theology," 13-14.

¹⁰⁵ Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars*, 31-40; for more on French refugee funds, the *Bourse Française*, for the export of books and pastors to France see in Olson, *Calvin and Social Welfare*, 50-69; Maag, *Seminary or University?*, 118

¹⁰⁶ CO 2. 746 (*Inst.* 4.1.1). "Incipiam autem ab ecclesia: in cuius sinum aggregari vult Deus filios suos, non modo ut eius opera et ministerio alantur quamdiu infantes sunt ac pueri, sed cura etiam materna regantur donec adolescent, ac tandem perveniant ad fidei metam."

¹⁰⁷ CO 38. 28 (COR II 6/1. 348; Jer. 9:3). "... et Dei cognitio semper parit reverentiam et pietatis studium."

They also recognize their sinfulness.¹⁰⁸ Only then, can they become selfless and united with God. As a consequence of this, men can exist within as a church united with God. On the question of what the relationship between his ecclesiology and other theological *Loci* is, Calvin answers by presenting such knowledge of God and that of men as the foundation of his theological thought. Calvin's idea of the church was formulated in light of the relationship between God and His people.

¹⁰⁸ CO 37. 595 (COR II 6/1. 173; Jer. 4:22). "Denique convincit his verbis Deus Judaeos ingratitude et deliberatae malitiae: quoniam ipsum *non cognoverint*."

Chapter IV. The Church of Calvin's era and Jeremiah's era in Calvin's Exegesis of Jeremiah

4.1 Introduction

By quoting the book of Jeremiah in the *Institutes* 4.1.25, Calvin explains God's grace shown to the depraved Israelites and calls the Israelites a 'church.' He compares the divorce of the Israelites and God to that of the church and God.¹ This reveals Calvin's idea on the relationship between the Israelites and the church. He clearly took the Israelites, the people of God, as a 'church'. Therefore, we can apply his interpretations of Israel to be related to the 'present church.'² Calvin found similarities between his contemporary situation and the era of Jeremiah while interpreting the book of Jeremiah. In his lectures on Jeremiah, he explained what he found in the Israelites by comparing it to his church.³ Specifically, He often compared the vices of the churches of his era with that of Israel.⁴ In his sermons from Jeremiah he declared, "the word of God is not meant to be declared without any purpose, but it has a clear purpose and should be applied to its listeners."⁵ Sermons come to be meaningful when they are applied to listeners. Therefore, Calvin emphasized the idea that the word of God should be applied to contemporary congregations. He thought that there was continuity between the Israel of the Old Testament and his era, even though the churches had different circumstances. Thus, he applied what had happened in the Old Testament to his own time.⁶

Study of Calvin's background and education show that he grew up in the Catholic Church in France. In other words, his perception of the Catholic Church was a foundation to his actual ministry.⁷ In fact, the Catholic Church was unmoored from its original form. In his letter to an Italian Roman

¹ CO. 2. 763 (*Inst.* 4.1.25). "Quod gravius est flagitium rebellione? divortium enim inter Deum et ecclesiam vocatur. At hoc Dei bonitate superatur. Quis est vir, inquit per Ieremiam (3, 1 et 12), cuius si uxor corpus suum adulteris prostituerit, cum ea redire in gratiam sustineat? tuis autem scortationibus omnes viae pollutae sunt, Iuda, repleta fuit terra foedis amoribus tuis: ..."

² CO 31. 50; Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 237-8; Milner, *Calvin's doctrine*, 99.

³ CO 38. 505 (COR II 6/1. 959; Jer. 25: 32). "Sed hoc etiam ad usum nostrum accommodari potest."; CO 38. 652 (COR II 6/2. 1143; Jer. 31:7). "Et haec doctrina etiam debet accommodari ad tempus nostrum."

⁴ CO 37. 635 (COR II 6/1. 226; Jer. 5:25). "Hoc nunc intelligit Propheta. Etsi autem obiurgatio haud dubie tunc directa fuit ad Judaeos, hinc colligere oportet generalem doctrinam."; CO 38. 121 (COR II 6/1. 466; Jer. 11:18). "Et hoc non fuit unius tantum saeculi vitium, sed hodie etiam idem experimur."

⁵ Calvin, *Sermons*, 148 (Sermon 22 on Jer. 18:11-14). "Brief, la parole de Dieu n'est point pour estre jectée à l'aventure, mais il fault qu'elle ait son but certain, c'est asscavoir qu'il ne faut point jecter la parole de Dieu en l'air, mais qu'il fault qu'elle soit appliquée à ceulx qui l'oyent."

⁶ CO 38. 634 (COR II 6/2. 1120; Jer. 30:20). "Hinc colligenda est nobis utilis doctrina, Ecclesiam sic esse perpetuam, ut tamen non sit aequalis ejus conditio. ... Quod tunc accidit accommodemus ad nostrum tempus."

⁷ Weber, *Die Treue Gottes*, 20.

Catholic Cardinal, James Sadolet (1477-1547), Calvin stated that the church would have collapsed if God had not stopped the vice of the Catholic.⁸ In Calvin's eyes, the Catholic Church was totally corrupted. Criticizing the corruption of the Catholic Church, Calvin describes the true church and the false church in the *Institutes* 4.2. According to Weber, the dogma of the true church came from this issue: 'the problem was not whether there was a church at all, but whether the church that existed was the genuine one.'⁹ In the *Institutes* 4.2.3, Calvin writes, "[t]he Romanists, therefore, today make no other pretension than what the Jews once apparently claimed when they were reprov'd for blindness, ungodliness, and idolatry by the Lord's prophets,"¹⁰ and compares the vices of the Catholic Church with that of Israelites in the prophetic writings. Likewise, Calvin naturally compares the church of his time with that of the prophets. Based on this, this chapter aims to introduce the result of Calvin's comparison between the two churches in his interpretation of Jeremiah.

First of all, I will compare the 'before and after' of the Babylonian exile of the Israelites with the Catholic Church, which was a false church, according to Calvin,¹¹ and with the Reformed Church in Calvin's time.¹² I will explain this comparison in five points, based on the structure of Calvin's ecclesiology, which will be dealt with in Part II. In 4.3, we will see how Calvin's church in Geneva was like his idea of the remnant of the Babylonian exile. Calvin thought that his reformed church was similar to Israel after the Babylonian captivity.¹³ Next, I will compare the personal situation and ministry of Jeremiah the prophet with that of Calvin the reformer (in 4.4).

4.2 A Comparison Between the Church and Israel

⁸ Calvin, *CALVIN: Theological Treatises*, 242.

⁹ Weber, *Die Treue Gottes*, 27.

¹⁰ CO 2. 769 (*Inst.* 4.2.3). "Ergo non aliud hodie praetendunt Romanenses quam Iudaeos olim obtendisse apparet, quum caecitatis, impietatis, idololatriae a prophetis Domini arguerentur."; Cf. Calvin, *Institutes II*, ed. McNeill, 1043.

¹¹ CO 2. 776 (*Inst.* 4.2.12). "... dico unumquemque coetum et totum corpus carere legitima ecclesiae forma."; Lillback, *The Binding of God*, 233.

¹² Zachman, "Why John Calvin and Roman Catholicism?," 9. Calvin did not consider himself the founder of a new tradition, but rather as one who sought to restore the Catholic Church to what he called its "purer form" under the apostles and the early church. So, his engagement with contemporary Roman Catholics was not tangential to his concerns, but was directly related to the task he was called to carry out.

¹³ Calvin, *Sermons*, 81 (Sermon 12 on Jer. 16:14-19a). "N'avons nous donc pas matiere de dire: "Dieu est vivant!", voire quant il nous a retirez de ceste Babilone? ... Et puis, comment est ce que nous estions detenuz en ceste malheureuse papauté? et nous voyons comment il nous en a delivrez par sa grace."; Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 239-40. Selderhuis points out that Calvin's idea might have been influenced by Luther's *Babylonian captivity of the church*.

4.2.1 The Loss of Privilege of God's People

The reason why the children of Abraham became the people of God is that God chose them and became their God. The Israelites became special people by making a covenant with God and thus enjoyed the privilege of being God's chosen people.¹⁴ However, they chose to behave according to their sin rather than submitting to God's commands.¹⁵ What God wanted from the Israelites most was that they listen to God's word.¹⁶ However, they rebelled against God's word and chose their own will over God's. Like them, the papists did what they wanted to do. They said that they had been taught by their ancestors, boasted about their traditions, and followed what councils and the Church Fathers commended. Through these, they have been trapped by their own words.¹⁷ So like the Israelites, the papists abandoned the covenant with God, and His commands. However, they thought that they were still safe because they were the people of promise. On this, Calvin comments that the church is protected not by general measures but by God's wonderful will.¹⁸ Similarly, Calvin points out that believers in the Genevan church disobey God's words and replace them with their own. Moreover, he encourages them to obey God completely.¹⁹ Also, both Israelites and papists trusted in the cities in which they lived. The papists took what came from Rome as a heavenly prophecy. Similarly, the Israelites exalted Jerusalem as God.²⁰ However, living in these cities was not a guarantee of safety for the chosen people.

One of the privileges, which the Israelites enjoyed as the people of God was that God guided them. God sent prophets to guide them many times. However, the stubbornness of the Israelites was

¹⁴ CO 38. 115 (COR II 6/1. 459; Jer. 11:15). "... *et dilectum suum* appellat populum respectu adoptionis."; CO 38. 184 (COR II 6/1. 548; Jer. 14:8). "... nempe quoniam Deus populum illum elegerat: quoniam promiserat sibi fore in peculium."

¹⁵ CO 37. 693 (COR II 6/1. 298; Jer. 7:24). "... quod scilicet maluerint Judaei sequi propriam libidinem, quam obtemperare Deo et ejus praeceptis."

¹⁶ CO 38. 105 (COR II 6/1. 446; Jer. 11:6-8). "Jam adiungit *se hoc tantum postulasse a populo electo ut audiret vocem suam.*"

¹⁷ CO 37. 694 (COR II 6/1. 299; Jer. 7:24). "Papistae quidem obtinent antiquitatem: dicunt a maioribus ita se fuisse edoctos: et simul objiciunt concilia et statuta Patrum: sed interim nemo eorum est, qui non addictus sit suis commentis, et qui sibi non permittat libertatem, imo effraenem licentiam rejiciendi quidquid visum est."

¹⁸ CO 39. 137 (COR II 6/2. 1383; Jer 36:29-30). "... Deum scilicet fidelem esse custodem Ecclesiae suae, sed non pro carnis sensu, quia mirabiliter Ecclesia a Deo sustinetur,"

¹⁹ CO 37. 694 (COR II 6/1. 298-9; Jer. 7:24). "Jam observandus etiam nobis est hic locus, quia hodie maior pars figmenta sua Dei verbo opponit. ... Quid ergo restat? dixi obedientiam esse quasi fundamentum totius verae pietatis."

²⁰ CO 39. 263 (COR II 6/2. 1546; Jer. 44:17). "... quemadmodum hodie videmus Romam plenius buccis celebrari in Papatu, ... Quidquid ergo illinc profectum est volunt haberi pro coelesti oraculo: sic etiam miseri Judaei Jerosolymam ausi sunt Deo opponere."

so expansive that they continued on their evil way.²¹ They were hopeless.²² Like them whenever the papists were criticized for their faithlessness, they declared themselves to be faithful shamelessly.²³ Although it was a privilege that God wanted to correct the Israelites through other people, they ignored Him. Unsurprisingly, then, Jeremiah found treachery and evil in the Israelites. In fact, Israel was the people of God and they were raised in the school of God. They knew what true religion was, and could distinguish the true God from worthless idols.²⁴ Nevertheless, they deserted God. Therefore, they made two mistakes and God punished them twofold. The Catholic Church of the 16th century also knew who God was. For them, not following God's word corresponds to Israel's double sin. Those who think that they are the children of God should live life like the children of God. Noting this, Calvin points out that they still forget God's mercy and commit sin intentionally, for they lack the true knowledge of God.²⁵ Those sins can be also found among the congregations of the Genevan church. God revealed Himself to the church in Geneva. Therefore, if they neglect the privilege of knowing God and if they do not know who God is, they also commit a double sin, like the Jews.²⁶

4.2.2 The Loss of God's Word and True Worship

Calvin found the true worship of God to be important. For this reason, he points out that the core of all the vices of Israel is that Israel abandoned the Law and pure worship.²⁷ Although the Exiles knew that Yahweh was the only true God, they looked for guardians and invented many gods. They

²¹ CO 37. 572 (COR II 6/1. 145; Jer. 3:25). "Sed cum Deus quotidie Prophetas submitteret, qui clamare eorum auribus non cessabant, et tamen surdi essent, inexcusabilis fuit eorum pertinacia in malis."; Not only Jeremiah but also Isaiah and other prophets warned Israel about God's punishment. Therefore, if we think about the time period of the prophets' ministry, we can assume that the people of God had been stubborn for a long time; CO 39. 2 (COR II 6/2. 1213; Jer. 32:1). "... et perinde agebant securi ac si nunquam audivissent unum verbum ex ore Jeremiae, quanquam non solus illis minatus fuerat, sed ante ipsum Isaias, et alii: eodem etiam tempore Ezechiel qui exsulabat in Chaldaea."

²² CO 37. 633 (COR II 6/1. 222-3; Jer. 5:23).

²³ CO 37. 552 (COR II 6/1. 121; Jer. 3:6-8). "... et tamen audent praetexere titulum reformationis : quoties coarguitur eorum impietas."

²⁴ CO 38. 247 (COR II 6/1. 629; Jer. 16:13). "... verum tamen fuit maior atrocitas sceleris in populo judaico, quoniam Deus proposuerat illis Legem suam: fuerant quasi in eius schola educati: sciebant quanam esset vera pietas: poterant verum Deum a fictitiis discernere."

²⁵ CO 37. 595 (COR II 6/1. 173; Jer. 4:22). "Denique convincit his verbis Deus Judaeos ingratiitudinis et deliberatae malitiae: quoniam ipsum *non cognoverint*."

²⁶ CO 37. 595 (COR II 6/1. 173; Jer. 4:22). "Hodie autem cum Deus per Evangelium nobis propius innotuerit, haec est, quemadmodum jam dixi, gravior condemnatio, et ita duplicatur poena, si Deum, qui nobis tam familiaris est, et tam comiter ad nos accedit, non cognoscimus."

²⁷ CO 37. 490 (COR II 6/1. 43; Jer. 1:16). "... sed hic apponitur species una, quoniam erat ille primus fons malorum, quod desciverant a Lege, et puro Dei cultu:"

had many Ba'als and 'patron saints' just like the papists, who call many saints their guardians.²⁸ Idolatry and the worship of God were mixed in their religion. They were surely a great distance from God, who does not admit other gods.²⁹ Such idolatry could be found more frequently among the papists rather than the Israelites.³⁰ The papists did not think that worshipping angels, icons and dead people was against true religion.³¹ For them, worship was not restricted to God. Accordingly, when they were criticized for their worship, they did not realize that they were committing idolatry.³² Calvin criticizes all the worship services under such a papal system, describing them as trash.³³ The papists chose to be slaves of their fabrications rather than to abide in God's word, and then they abandoned the proper wisdom, which wisdom alone makes God pleased.³⁴ Even worse, the papists argued that whatever pleased them should be regarded as God's word.³⁵ However, we know that proper wisdom could only be found in God's word. The papists also justified their idolatry by suggesting that their fabricated icons and symbols functioned as books for the illiterate.³⁶ Calvin refuted their argument, saying that no one could form a proper understanding of God through icons.³⁷ Men can only acquire the true knowledge of God when they realize that only God exists and everything in this universe exists by the power of God.³⁸ But the papists intentionally denied knowledge of God and advocated their invented system or measures and thereby impaired the value of the sacraments that God instituted.³⁹ Israel and the papists, equally, did not follow the word of God and walked away from true

²⁸ CO 37. 522-523 (COR II 6/1. 84-5; Jer. 2:23). "Utunque enim Judaei agnoscerent aliquem esse summum Deum, tamen quaerebant sibi patronos: ita oriebatur magna deorum turba, ut fieri solet. ... sic etiam Baalim apud illos erant, et patroni, ut Papistae vocant suos divos, quia non audent suis figmentis tribuere nomina deorum."

²⁹ CO 37. 517 (COR II 6/1. 77; Jer. 2: 19). "... cum etiam miscerent vero Deo sua idola, hoc fuit plane a Deo ipso deficere, qui aemulus est sui honoris, quemadmodum dicitur in Lege, neque admittit ullos rivales."

³⁰ CO 37. 530 (COR II 6/1. 94; Jer. 2:27-8). "Et minime dubium est quin hodie sit crassior superstitio in Papatu, quam tunc fuerit apud Judaeos."

³¹ CO 38. 157 (COR II 6/1. 512; Jer. 13:10). "Et hinc etiam refellitur stultitia Papistarum, qui non putant duliam pugnare cum vera religione. Dicunt deberi uni Deo latrariam, hoc est, cultum: sed duliam transferunt ad Angelos, ad statuas, vel ad homines mortuos."

³² CO 37. 529 (COR II 6/1. 93; Jer. 2: 27). "... tamen ubi premuntur, non agnoscunt hunc fontem idololatriae."

³³ Calvin, *Sermons*, 84 (Sermon 12 on Jer. 16:14-19a). "Ainsi donc nous voyons que tous les services de la papauté ne sont que puantises."

³⁴ CO 38. 426 (COR II 6/1. 858; Jer. 23:16). "Et hinc etiam sequitur, Papistas ideo decipi, quoniam non dignantur interrogare os Dei, sed malunt sese mancipare hominibus, et eorum mendaciis, quam sciscitari quid Deo placeat."

³⁵ CO 38. 192 (COR II 6/1. 558; Jer. 14:14). "... et recipiatur pro oraculo quidquid illis placuerit statuere."

³⁶ CO 39. 457 (COR II 6/2. 1793; Jer. 51:18). "... nempere ferendas esse imagines, quia idiotarum libri sunt."

³⁷ CO 39. 457 (COR II 6/2. 1793-4; Jer. 51:18). "Et certe quidquid nos abducit a cogitatione veri Dei merito censetur fallacia vel deception."

³⁸ CO 39. 457 (COR II 6/2. 1794; Jer. 51:18). "Nam haec est vera Dei cognitio, ... cum scimus illum denique esse solum, proprie loquendo: coelum et terram et quidquid in ipsis continetur, subsistere in ejus virtute: ..."

³⁹ CO 38. 574 (COR II 6/2. 1044; Jer. 28:10-11). "... et ideo discipuli ejus et imitatores sunt Papistae, qui non tantum rejiciunt vel extenuant testimonia a Deo profecta, sed insultant plane ejus sacramentis, cum sua commenta vel figmenta tam proterve obtrudunt."

worship and sacraments. The Reformed Church in Geneva was no exception to these sinful situations either. As a result, Calvin teaches that the believers should not seek or desire help from idols, but rather seek God and pray directly to Him.⁴⁰ He also encourages them not to wander here and there, but to rely only on God's word.⁴¹ Calvin writes in the *Institutes* 4.1.2, "We have laid down as distinguishing marks of the church the preaching of the Word and the observance of the Sacraments."⁴²

4.2.3 The Loss of Holy Life and Repentance

Calvin's theological interest in the *Institutes* is practical. This fact could be found in the Prefatory Address to King Francis I of France in the first edition of the *Institutes* of 1536: "My purpose was solely to transmit certain rudiments by which those who are touched with any zeal for religion might be shaped to true godliness."⁴³ The true purpose of his theology is not to answer speculative questions, but to edify Christians.⁴⁴ In his commentaries, Calvin criticizes the Israelites who abandoned the pious life. They became sinful not because of other temptations or tests but because they followed idols.⁴⁵ In addition, these idolatrous Israelites were accustomed to committing sin, so they could not behave properly. Because the Israelites were so ignorant of God's word,⁴⁶ they could not help committing sin. Therefore, Calvin takes the Israelites to be without circumcision of their hearts and ears because they did not accept the teaching of the Law. He also criticizes the Israelites' stubborn and rebellious heart.⁴⁷ This stubborn attitude appears in the papists. They thought it would be shameful if they abandoned what they had been taught and had confessed for a long time.

⁴⁰ CO 37. 531 (COR II 6/1. 95; Jer. 2:28). "... non esse expectandum, ... ubi opem speravimus, et peccati sumus ab idolis, sed recta veniendum esse ad Deum ipsum, ut nobis opituletur in necessitate."

⁴¹ CO 39. 64 (COR II 6/2. 1289; Jer. 33:14). "Ergo discamus amplecti ejus promissiones, et nemo hoc vel illud sibi imaginetur: sed sciamus tunc demum nobis fore propitium, si innititur ejus sermoni."

⁴² CO 2. 754 (*Inst.* 4.1.10). "Symbola ecclesiae dignoscendae, verbi praedicationem sacramentorumque observationem posuimus."; Calvin, *Institutes II*, ed. MaNeill, 1024.

⁴³ CO 2. 9. "Tantum erat animus rudimenta quaedam tradere, quibus formarentur ad veram pietatem qui aliquo religionis studio tanguntur."

⁴⁴ Calvin, *Sermons*, 112 (Sermon 16 on Jer. 17:9-11). "Voila l'office de la doctrine, dit saint Paul, c'est à savoir "d'arguer, de reprendre, d'enseigner et de coriger". Et au lieu que nous estions en tenebres, voicy Dieu qui nous declare sa clarté."; Leith, *John Calvin's doctrine*, 26.

⁴⁵ CO 3. 514. "Ergo videmus amplificari populi crimen, eo quod nulla tentatione impulsus fuerit, ut deficeret a Deo suo, sed mera perfidia se addixerit idolis."

⁴⁶ CO 39. 141 (COR II 6/2. 1389; Jer. 37:1).

⁴⁷ CO 37. 651 (COR II 6/1. 245; Jer. 6:10). "... vocatur auris incircumcisa, quae rejicit omnem sanam doctrinam: Cor incircumcisum, quod est pervicax, ac rebelle. Sed ratio tenenda est: quoniam Circumcisio erat testimonium obsequii,"

Even though the teachings were not from God's word, they did not abandon them.⁴⁸ They did their duty to God in appearance, but their life and mind were filled with deception and unrighteousness. Calvin, who found them to be hypocrites, criticized the papists.⁴⁹ These hypocrites ironically tried to be near God in word, but wanted to be far from Him in practice.⁵⁰ They thought that if they served God with a showy worship in appearance, that they satisfied God even though their life was full of lust and filthiness.⁵¹ This hypocritical attitude appears not only in life but also in faith. There were people who thought that if their mind did not deny God it was enough. They agreed with the faulty arguments of the papists, but attended their worship in a religiously threatening situation. Calvin called them Nicodemites, and criticized their deception.⁵² Calvin found their evil incurable.⁵³ Their vice became their acquired nature and was irrevocable because it settled in their mind.⁵⁴ As a result, they could not repent unless God enlightened their mind by the Holy Spirit.⁵⁵ Nonetheless, the papists argued that a man by himself could return to God through his will.⁵⁶ Aforementioned papists depended not only on their will but also on the authority of the church or the works of their ancestors.⁵⁷ This could be compared to the Israelites' foolishness that sought security in Egypt without waiting for God's will to achieve their rescue.⁵⁸ Calvin also wanted the godly in Geneva to live

⁴⁸ CO 39. 270 (COR II 6/2. 1553-4; Jer. 44: 24-26). "Sic videmus hodie in Papatu, quo quisque senior est, ita esse magis obstinatum, Quid? ... ego a puero sic fui edoctus, et longa consuetudine assuefactus sum. Nunc igitur turpe mihi esset cursum mutare, et relinquere quam tot annis fidem secutus sum."

⁴⁹ CO 37. 576 (COR II 6/1. 150; Jer. 4: 3). "... reprehendit enim hypocrisin in Israelitis, quoniam vellent defungi erga Deum externis duntaxat caeremoniis, cum tamen corda essent implicita et fraudibus et omni genere impietatis ac malitiae."

⁵⁰ CO 39. 151 (COR II 6/2. 1401; Jer. 37:17). "Sed ita solent hypocritae: libenter paciscerentur cum Deo: interea volunt manere integri, hoc est, semper retinent pravos suos affectus."

⁵¹ CO 37. 691 (COR II 6/1. 296; Jer. 7:21-2). "Nam ubi Papistae defuncti sunt suis nugis, ubi monachi et sacrifici suis clamoribus replerunt Tempia, ubi se exercuerunt in illis puerilibus ineptiis: deinde ubi se oblectarunt sua musica et suffitu, putant Deo satisfactum esse, quamvis tota eorum vita referta sit multis spurcitiis et foeditatibus."

⁵² CO 38. 74 (COR II 6/1. 407; Jer. 10:11). "Quid ergo dicent Nicodemitae, qui hodie sibi blanditias faciunt? quia satis esse putant si non abnegent Deum ex animo, sed metu perterriti vel simulent se abnegare, vel palam ostendant se suffragari erroribus?"; Calvin, *Sermons*, 73 (Sermon 11 on Jer. 16:12-15). "... comme il est icy monstré, que nous serions bien pires que les ydolâtres, voire faisant semblant de mener vie crestienne et ce pendant avoir l'ydolâtrie."

⁵³ CO 38. 14 (COR II 6/1. 330; Jer. 8:12). "Ergo haec summa est, insanabilem esse malitiam populi, quia sit ferreae frontis."

⁵⁴ CO 38. 172 (COR II 6/1. 532; Jer. 13:23). "Quoniam enim obduruerant ad male agendum, dicit non posse respiscere, et ita haerere, vel infixam esse malitiam in ipsorum cordibus?"

⁵⁵ CO 38. 673 (COR II 6/2. 1170; Jer. 31:19). "Summa est, homines non posse concipere verum odium peccati nisi Deus illuminet eorum mentes et tangat animos."; Calvin, *Sermons*, 111 (Sermon 16 on Jer. 17:9-11). "..., assavoir qu'il n'y a que malice en nous et que c'est à Dieu à la convertir."

⁵⁶ CO 38. 673 (COR II 6/2. 1170; Jer. 31:19). "Ergo hinc colligimus quam caeci fuerint Papistae, qui dum loquuntur de poenitentia existimant hominem proprio arbitrio redire ad Deum, ..."

⁵⁷ CO 38. 200 (COR II 6/1. 568; Jer. 14:20). "... et hinc colligimus quam stulte opponant hunc clypeum Deo Papistae, dum resonat subinde in ipsorum linguis nomen Patrum."

⁵⁸ CO 39. 249 (COR II 6/2. 1528; Jer. 44:3). "..., nempe ut Judaeis exprobraret suum stuporem, quod putabant se fore incolumes in Aegypto: quam terram Deus semper abominatus fuerat."

faithfully. Moreover, he asked them to repent of their sins through reflecting on their wrongdoings.⁵⁹ Specifically, in his sermon, Calvin taught that God gave the Genevan congregations opportunity to repent. But, if they would not repent, they would be rebuked.⁶⁰

4.2.4 The Loss of the True Minister and True Teaching

“You cannot have God as your Father unless you have the church for your mother,” said Cyprian of Carthage.⁶¹ By quoting him, Calvin states that the visible church on earth works as a mother so that, the members of the church should receive ‘motherly care.’⁶² God appoints his ministers to speak his word and to educate people through the church.⁶³ He, however, did not give his full authority and dignity to his ministers. Rather, God made them God’s instruments.⁶⁴ Therefore, the authority of the church does not rest with the ministers but with God, who has appointed them. Nevertheless, the priests under the papal system occupied offices without any support from God’s word and usurped legitimate offices without any authority.⁶⁵ They were obsessed with their positions and tried to suppress the truth of God.⁶⁶ Many prophets during the era of Jeremiah utilized the name of God and did sinful acts. Jeremiah criticized their impertinence and pointed out that Yahweh did not acknowledge their offices.⁶⁷ The Judean priests and false prophets were simply satisfied with their in-name-only positions, and they were not interested in God’s work. In this way the Pope of the Catholic Church and his circle were filled with hypocrisy and deception.⁶⁸ Among them there were, therefore,

⁵⁹ CO 38. 7 (COR II 6/1. 322; Jer. 8:6). “Necesse igitur est unumquemque sibi esse exactorem, ut se ad calculum vocet, et quodammodo citet ad tribunal Dei.”

⁶⁰ Calvin, *Sermons*, 19 (Sermon 3 on Jer. 15:1-6). “Ainsy donc notons que quant Dieu nous baille les moyens de retourner à repentance et que neantmoins nous n’y voullons point entendre, cela nous sera reproché;”

⁶¹ McGrath, *Reformation Thoughts*, 157.

⁶² CO 2. 746 (*Inst.* 4.1.1); Spijker, *Bij Calvin in de leer*, 167.

⁶³ CO 2. 749 (*Inst.* 4.1.5).

⁶⁴ CO 2. 777 (*Inst.* 4.3.1). “... qualiter ad opus quoque faciendum instrumento utitur artifex.”

⁶⁵ Calvin, *Sermons*, 162 (Sermon 24 on Jer. 18:17-18). “Au contraire, la prebstraille de la papauté n’a nul passage pour montrer qu’on luy doibve donner aulcune preeminence, mais ilz ont usurpé cest office sans auctorité.”; CO 38. 425 (COR II 6/1. 857; Jer. 23:16). “... cogimur adversus eos conflare, qui arrogant sibi nomen Catholicae Ecclesiae, qui jactant se esse Episcopos, vicarios Christi, successores Apostolorum.”

⁶⁶ CO 38. 520 (COR II 6/1. 978; Jer. 26:8). “Ipsi autem arripiunt titulum, et volunt ita opprimere Dei veritatem ac si vocari Episcopum pluris esset, ...”

⁶⁷ CO 38. 520 (COR II 6/1. 977; Jer. 26:7). “Capite 23 proluxe invectus est contra eos: pluribus etiam locis perstrinxit eorum impudentiam, quod falso Dei nomen obtenderent. Tribuit ergo illis honorificum titulum, sed pro nihilo ducit, ...”

⁶⁸ CO 38. 309 (COR II 6/1. 709; Jer. 18:18). “Ita larvatos pontifices videmus contentos fuisse titulari vocatione, neque interea curasse an reddenda esset coram Deo ratio. Et ita saeculis omnibus hypocritae abusi sunt Dei donis. Clarius hoc cernitur in Papatu. Nam certe ubi omnia discussa fuerint, videbimus his armis confidere Papam cum tota sua caterva.”

many who did not belong to the Christian clergy or lawful clerical orders. This situation shows that the papists hold an empty name and do not have any authority.⁶⁹ To Calvin, the papists were seeking only economic profit. They did not hold to the truth of the gospel, but took materialistic benefits to be more important.⁷⁰ As a result, Calvin considered them to be among the worst people of the world.⁷¹ That such ungodly people despise true doctrine and occupy pulpits was widespread in ancient Israel as well as they did in the Catholic Church.⁷² They did not speak the word of God in the pulpit, but highlighted images of the cross or similar things with prejudice and delusion. This is like a theater actor acting on a play, Calvin says, and only to excite the congregation.⁷³ Therefore, they were like false prophets who did not nurture God's people but enticed them with false teachings.⁷⁴ They were separating the congregations from God. Likewise, the true church could not be found in Israel where prophets separated God's people from God, nor in the Catholic Church led by Catholic priests during Calvin's era.⁷⁵ Calvin emphasizes the importance of the ministers to believers in Geneva. If a church loses decent teachers, the essential part of the church would collapse.⁷⁶ Therefore, Calvin reproaches people for their reckless folly against ministers who are instruments of God.⁷⁷

4.2.5 The Loss of the Head of Church and True Hope

Calvin explains the character of the church's union with Christ. The church, being composed of God's chosen people, is connected to Christ. Church members become a part of the body having

⁶⁹ CO 38. 549 (COR II 6/2. 1013; Jer. 27:9). "Ergo nulla illis relinquitur autoritas, ubi conceditur per abusum simplex et inane nomen: sicuti hodie possumus vocare et Sacerdotes, et Episcopos, et presbyteros, qui larvis istis se obtegunt, interea ostendimus nihil esse in ipsis episcopale, nihil ecclesiasticum, nihil denique quod sapiat Christi doctrinam, vel ullum legitimum ordinem."

⁷⁰ CO 37. 640 (COR II 6/1. 231; Jer. 5:31). "Accipiunt, inquit, in manus, hoc est, contenti sunt, quia vident in suum quaestum cedere illas fallacias: et ideo facile subscribunt pseudoprophetis. Idem hodie cernitur in Papatu: ..."

⁷¹ CO 38. 161 (COR II 6/1. 518; Jer. 13:12-4). "Non est igitur quod hodie Papa cum suis, hoc est, cum tota sua faece superbiat."

⁷² CO 38. 449 (COR II 6/1. 887; Jer. 23:33). "Ergo cum hodie suggestus occupant illi nebulones, qui ita gravant odio et dedecore veram doctrinam, ne miremur, quando videmus hoc idem factum fuisse in Ecclesia veteri."

⁷³ CO 38. 44 (COR II 6/1. 368; Jer. 9:18). "Nam cum rabulae illi, qui occupant suggestus in Papatu, flebiliter loquuntur, etiam si non proferant syllabam ullam ex verbo Dei, et simul etiam adiungunt inane aliquod spectaculum, vel potius spectrum, nempe si proferant imaginem crucifixi, aut simile aliquid, vulgi affectus rapiunt ut fletum extorqueant: quemadmodum solent histriones in theatris oculos afficere."

⁷⁴ CO 38. 446 (COR II 6/1. 883-4; Jer. 23:30-2).

⁷⁵ CO 2. 767 (*Inst.* 4.2.1).

⁷⁶ CO 37. 563 (COR II 6/1. 134; Jer. 3:15). "Ubi autem destituitur Ecclesia probis Doctoribus, necesse est statim omnia pessum ire."

⁷⁷ CO 38. 25 (COR II 6/1. 344; Jer. 9:1). "Cum ergo hodie talis impietas in mundo non minus quam olim grassetur, hinc colligimus quanta vehementia necesse sit eos uti, quos Deus ad simile munus docendi vocat."

Christ as its head (Eph. 1:22).⁷⁸ Christ is the only head of the church, and the people of God are united according to the order and structure he created. However, the Catholic Church appears to have insulted Christ, Calvin believes, by appointing one person as the head of the Catholic Church.⁷⁹ Needless to say, the Catholic Church with the Pope as its head was nothing but an abomination before God even if it did wear the name of Christ.⁸⁰ Calvin criticized the Catholic Church because they insisted that the Pope and bishops were the successors of the apostles, so, they were sin free.⁸¹ This was similar to the false prophets who opposed Jeremiah the prophet.⁸² Moreover, Calvin used to call the Pope a demon,⁸³ and stated that the calling of all the priests under the papal system and everyone on his council was diabolic. They abolished the work of Christ that reconciles God with human beings.⁸⁴ Likewise, the Israelites avoided speaking of Jesus in their Bible even though it clearly describes Christ.⁸⁵ Without shame, they misinterpreted all witnesses of Christ.⁸⁶ Such an attitude, and the stance of the Catholic Church which denies Christ as its head are the same in terms of ‘ignoring Christ.’ Such denying Jesus means they deserted interest in the truth, and do not seek their salvation and hope.⁸⁷ However, Calvin speaks of hope in Christ. Although the church gets caught up in disturbances, the power of God is enough to revive the glory of the church. As a result, the church

⁷⁸ CO 39. 69 (COR II 6/2. 1296; Jer. 33:16). “... et Christus etiam in ipsis habitat, ut sint non modo Tempia, sed quasi pars Christi, imo etiam vocatur Ecclesia a Paulo Christus: ...”

⁷⁹ CO 2. 818 (*Inst.* 4.6.9). “... quum eo praetextu volunt hominem unum praeesse ecclesiae universae, quia haec capite carere non possit. Christus enim caput est, ...”

⁸⁰ CO 39. 70 (COR II 6/2. 1297; Jer. 33:17-8). “... ubi autem Christus non agnoscitur Rex et Sacerdos, nihil est aliud quam chaos. Quemadmodum in Papatu, etiamsi Christi nomen praetexant, quia tamen neque subijciunt se ejus imperio et Legibus, neque contenti sunt ipso Sacerdote, sed innumeros sibi patronos fabricant: hinc patet, etiamsi magnus sit splendor Papatu, meram esse abominationem coram Deo.”

⁸¹ CO 38. 309 (COR II 6/1. 709; Jer. 18:18). “... Ecclesiam non posse errare: repraesentari Ecclesiam in Papa et Episcopis et toto Clero. Deinde Praelatos, ut vocant, esse successores Apostolorum. Et ita plenis buccis detonant continuam successionem a Petro: ...”

⁸² CO 38. 310 (COR II 6/1. 710; Jer. 18:18). “Ergo cum Papistae futiliter jactant, Ecclesiam non posse errare, merito ridendi sunt: quia videmus quos sequantur: et quemadmodum olim manifesti Dei hostes congressi sunt cum Jeremia.”

⁸³ CO 38. 575 (COR II 6/2. 1045; Jer. 28:11). “... diabolus autem ille eorum princeps vocat se Christi vicarium in terris.”

⁸⁴ Calvin, *Sermons*, 164 (Sermon 24 on Jer. 18:17-18). “Voilà comment tous les prestres de la papauté et tous ceulx qui sont aux concilles des papes sont assemblez contre Dieu et leur vocation est infernale, puis qu’ilz usurpent ce qui appartient seulement à Jesucrist, c’est asscavoir de faire la reconciliation de Dieu avec les hommes.”

⁸⁵ CO 38. 411-2 (COR II 6/1. 841; Jer. 23:6). “Judaei qui videntur aliis modestiores, nec audent canina impudentia corrumpere totum contextum, eludunt hoc nomen Christi, etiam si in ipsum proprie competat.”

⁸⁶ CO 38. 408 (COR II 6/1. 836; Jer. 23:5). “... quia sine pudore pervertunt omnia testimonia, quae competunt in Christum.”

⁸⁷ CO 38. 442 (COR II 6/1. 879; Jer. 23:28). “Multi igitur hanc occasionem arripiunt socordiae, et malint non se fatigare amplius, nec quaerere quid sit Deus, quid velit, ubi salus nobis sit posita, ubi spes figenda, quam se implicare molestis et spinosis disputationibus.”

will revive.⁸⁸ Speaking of the recovery of the church, Calvin emphasizes that only Christ can revitalize His church.⁸⁹ Only Christ is the true hope of the church, leading it from death to life. Therefore, when God invites us to salvation and grace we should look to Christ only.⁹⁰ There is no exception for the believers in Geneva. Christ is the mediator, not only in the Catholic Church, but also in the Genevan church because God does not want the church to be governed without its mediator. Therefore, the faithful in Geneva should also look to Christ alone.⁹¹ In spite of such emphases, the papists thought that the revival of the church did not belong to Christ, but to themselves.⁹² The Catholic Church overlooked the fact that Christ is the head of the church and the hope of eternal life.

4.3 The Remnant Church and Israel's Remnant

It was not new to compare the worship of the Catholic Church with the idolatry of the ancient Israelites during the Reformation era. Bullinger and Zwingli compared the era of the prophets with that of their time.⁹³ In the *Institutes* of 1539, Calvin states that the idolatrous Israelites and the Catholic Church do not have the aspect of a true church any longer.⁹⁴ However, he clearly says that there is a 'remnant' that keeps the covenant with God in the Catholic Church.⁹⁵ His mention of this 'remnant' can be found in the commentary on Jeremiah.

And this also have we found in our time; for how hard was our bondage under the Papacy? and was not also its tyranny almost unconquerable? But God put forth his power and drew forth a few from under its cruel domination. In the same manner he promised formerly to the remnant of his people, that he would be so merciful to them as to rescue them from the yoke of tyrant.⁹⁶

⁸⁸ CO 38. 634 (COR II 6/2. 1121; Jer. 30:20). "... quia ut aliquando floruit Regnum Christi, sic etiam sperandum est satis esse virtutis in Deo, ..."

⁸⁹ CO 38. 635 (COR II 6/2. 1121; Jer. 30:21). "... sed Christus per se Ecclesiam vivificat."

⁹⁰ CO 38. 636 (COR II 6/2. 1123; Jer. 30:21). "... denique quoties nos ad spem gratiae et salutis invitat, semper debere nos in Christum respicere, ..."

⁹¹ CO 38. 619 (COR II 6/2. 1101; Jer. 30:9). "... quia Deus non vult immediate, ut ita loquar, regere suam Ecclesiam, sed vult Christum esse interpositum, ..."

⁹² CO 38. 463 (COR II 6/1. 905; Jer. 24:7). "... et ita putant nos sponte posse converti postquam a Deo defecimus. Sed Propheta clare ostendit hoc peculiare esse Dei donum."

⁹³ Balserak, *Establishing the Remnant Church*, 24-5.

⁹⁴ Balserak, *Establishing the Remnant Church*, 30.

⁹⁵ Balserak, *Establishing the Remnant Church*, 44; CO 2. 747 (*Inst.* 4.1.2). "Deumque mirabiliter ecclesiam suam quasi in latebris servare."

⁹⁶ CO 38. 149 (COR II 6/1. 502; Jer. 12:14). "Et hoc etiam experti sumus nostro tempore. Nam quam dura fuit servitus nostra sub Papatu? deinde tyrannis illa nonne fuit quasi insuperabilis? Sed Deus potentiam suam exseruit cum paucos extraxit ab illa violenta dominatione. Sic ergo olim promisit residuo populo, se ita fore misericordem ut eradicaret ipsos ex illa tyrannide."; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 2, 154.

Calvin compares the Israelites' release from Babylon with the Christians' release from the Catholic Church of his time. He also calls the Christians a 'remnant.' In this context, the Christian churches of Calvin's time were remnant churches.⁹⁷ According to Calvin, this remnant was a few believers who had true faith in God.⁹⁸ God wanted to announce that there was hope for them.⁹⁹ He also showed that the promise between Him and Israel would not be broken thanks to the remnant.¹⁰⁰ However, God did not spare all the people of Israel, but only a few.¹⁰¹ God specifically selected those few people.¹⁰² Besides, God plucked them as roots from ruin, and let branches grow from the roots.¹⁰³ Jeremiah knew that the true people of God remained.¹⁰⁴ God showed His mercy to the remnant, and proclaimed that without His mercy there would be no other way to save people.¹⁰⁵ Likewise, God promised the restoration of Israel through the remnant. This promise gave comfort to those captives who lived in Babylon. Similarly, a remnant of believers during Calvin's era, specifically the French Reformed Church, must have received the same comfort through such promises of God and encouragement from the prophet.¹⁰⁶

4.4 Calvin's Self-Awareness: Calvin and Jeremiah

⁹⁷ Balsarak, *Establishing the Remnant Church*, 190. According to Balsarak, Calvin took the reformed church members in France and those who served the members as a 'remnant church'; Calvin, *Tracts and Letters. vol. 7*, 49-53. While teaching the book of Jeremiah, Calvin sent his recommendations through letters to the French church in pain; Balsarak, *John Calvin as Sixteenth-Century Prophet*, 85.

⁹⁸ CO 37. 606 (COR II 6/1. 187; Jer. 5: 1). "Videmus ut Deus quasi seorsum colligat paucos illos in quibus residuum erat pietatis semen, imo in quorum animis vigeat aliqua religio."

⁹⁹ CO 37. 599 (COR II 6/1. 178; Jer. 4:27). "... nempet ut aliquid spei residuum maneat fidelibus, neque prorsus exanimetur."

¹⁰⁰ CO 38. 627 (COR II 6/2. 1111; Jer. 30:14). "... non ita debet accipi quasi abolitum esset foedus, quo filios Abrahæ sibi adoptaverat. Semper enim misericordia sua complexus est aliquas reliquias."; CO 38. 149 (COR II 6/1. 501-2; Jer. 12:14); CO 39. 464 (COR II 6/2. 1802-3; Jer. 51:25).

¹⁰¹ CO 39. 462 (COR II 6/2. 1800; Jer. 51:24). "... non quod unquam Deus totum populi corpus restituerit, sed dirigitur haec promissio ad reliquias duntaxat, ..."

¹⁰² CO 39. 47 (COR II 6/2. 1268-9; Jer. 32:42). "... sed Dominus voluit Ecclesiam suam manere superstitem in aliquo numero, quamvis exiguo. Promissio igitur haec non extenditur indifferenter ad omnes duodecim Tribus, sed specialiter respicit electos, ..."

¹⁰³ CO 39. 307 (COR II 6/2. 1601; Jer. 46:28). "... sed manet viva radix, quae deinde pullulat, et ex qua nascuntur surculi."

¹⁰⁴ CO 38. 187 (COR II 6/1. 552; Jer. 14:12). "Sciebat enim semen aliquod manere quamvis occultum: ..."

¹⁰⁵ CO 39. 414 (COR II 6/2. 1738; Jer. 50:20). "Deus ergo hic pronuntiat reliquias fore salvas non aliter quam mera sua liberalitate, ..."

¹⁰⁶ Balsarak, *Establishing the Remnant Church*, 202.

Calvin thought that the Israelite prophets of the Old Testament went through a similar situation as his contemporaries.¹⁰⁷ He also identified with the prophets of the Old Testament rather than the apostles of the New Testament.¹⁰⁸ In this respect, what was the most important aspect of the prophets that Calvin took upon himself when he carried out his ministry in the midst of 16th century? According to Balke, the core of Calvin's ministry was to interpret the Bible. Calvin was - according to Balke - the greatest interpreter of the Bible of his time.¹⁰⁹ He actually established a church by interpreting and teaching Scripture.¹¹⁰ In other words, his interpretation focused on the reformation of the church. According to Calvin, God also appointed the Old Testament prophets in order to reform the church.¹¹¹ In ancient Israel, being endowed the authority of a prophet meant that the word of God came upon their lips.¹¹² Jeremiah the prophet declared that God stretched His hand, touched Jeremiah's lips and gave His word to him. The prophet often mentioned that he was sanctified.¹¹³ Moreover, in his interpretation of Jeremiah 32:32 Calvin emphasized the fact that the prophet's ministry was closely related to God's word. God appointed the Old Testament priests as interpreters of the Law. However, since they failed in their duty, God appointed prophets.¹¹⁴ Through this, Calvin says that both prophets and priests were the interpreters of God's Law. In the preface to the commentary on Isaiah¹¹⁵ and the argument presented in the lectures on Hosea,¹¹⁶ Calvin introduces the suggestion that prophets are the interpreters of the Law. In addition, through his sermons on Jeremiah 17:13 and 15-16, he states that the duty of prophets is not just to recite the Bible, but to explain its meaning by studying it in depth.¹¹⁷ To sum up, Calvin took the prophets to be interpreters and preachers of the Bible. He also saw himself as a prophetic 'reformer', just like the prophets in the Old

¹⁰⁷ Balsarak, *John Calvin as Sixteenth-Century Prophet*, 75.

¹⁰⁸ Balsarak, *John Calvin as Sixteenth-Century Prophet*, 73.

¹⁰⁹ Balke, *Calvijn en de Bijbel*, 39-40. *Corpus reformatorum* has 59 books of Calvin's work. Among them, 35 books are about interpretations of the bible and sermon.

¹¹⁰ Balke, *Calvijn en de Bijbel*, 40-42.

¹¹¹ Balsarak, *John Calvin as Sixteenth-Century Prophet*, 77.

¹¹² CO 37. 479 (COR II 6/1. 29; Jer. 1: 9). "Testatur igitur rursus se non venire proprio motu, sed divinitus esse missum, et instructum autoritate Prophetica. Dicit in hunc finem posita fuisse verba Dei in ore suo."

¹¹³ CO 37. 480 (COR II 6/1. 30; Jer. 1:9-10). "Speciale autem hoc fuit in Jeremia quod Deus manu extenta tetigit os eius, nempe ut palam ostenderet os illud dicatum sibi esse."

¹¹⁴ CO 39. 28 (COR II 6/2. 1246; Jer. 32:32). "Cum autem Sacerdotes in officio cessarent vel inscitia, vel ignavia, Deus substituit prophetas in eorum locum, ..."

¹¹⁵ CO 36. 19.

¹¹⁶ CO 42. 198. "Iam quod ad prophetas spectat, hoc omnibus commune est, ut sint legis interpretes, quemadmodum aliquando diximus."

¹¹⁷ Calvin, *Sermons*, 125 (Sermon 18 on Jer. 17:13, 15-16). "Vray est que Dieu <ne> nous a pas commis, afin de reciter l'Esriture tant seulement, mais afin de exposer sa volonté."

Testament¹¹⁸ because he became a reformer of the church of his time by interpreting the word of God. Accordingly, Calvin implicitly understood his own position in his church as a prophet like Jeremiah, even though Calvin does not speak directly of such a thing.¹¹⁹

4.5 Conclusion

Calvin thought that the Israelites in the prophetic books mirrored the church of his own time.¹²⁰ The present chapter examined the elements of Calvin's thought on the locus of the church of his time and on the Israel of Jeremiah's time as well as comparing the conditions of both times. Calvin compares the corruption of ancient Israel with the Catholic Church and also with the Reformed Church of his time. He also compares the remnant of the Babylonian exile to the believers in the Reformed Church against their oppressors the papists. Furthermore, he took himself as a prophet speaking God's word just like the prophets of the Old Testament. The importance of this comparison is that Calvin vividly shows his ideas about the church through these comparisons. His ecclesiology does not appear in his doctrines alone. His hermeneutics can be considered another area where his ecclesiology is revealed. In addition, his practical application still influences churches of our time. In fact, his comparisons make the research found in Part II possible.

¹¹⁸ Engamare, "A Prophet without a prophecy," 661; Balsarak, *John Calvin as Sixteenth-Century Prophet*, 92.

¹¹⁹ Cf. Selderhuis, "We zijn altijd onderweg naar de dood," 91-2. On this, there is a similar example. This is Calvin's interpretation of David's emotion after he lost his son by Bathsheba. Although David's emotion is not described in detail in the Bible, Calvin explains David's sadness by identifying himself with David. This is because Calvin also experienced a son's death; Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 30. In a similar manner we can understand, according to Selderhuis, in Calvin's commentary on the Psalms that Calvin sees himself as David. This is shown both by Calvin's emphasis on the similar circumstance between the church of Israel and the church of Geneva, and by the situations that David and Calvin faced.

¹²⁰ CO 37. 664 (COR II 6/1. 261; Jer. 6:22). "Sed in hoc speculo perspicere licet, ..."

Chapter V. Covenant: *The Motif of Populus Meus I*

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to show that Calvin's thought on the covenant is a key motif in his view of the church as God's chosen people. The covenant begins with a relationship. According to Calvin, a man can live life for the glory of God and for his salvation only if he stays in relationship with God.¹ As we need another person when entering into a relationship, there must be a partner in making a contract. In the Scriptures, a man generally makes promises not only with other people, but also with God. We call the promise-relation between man and God the covenant. In other words, from the beginning of the world, a man has had a covenantal relationship with God, which He himself established.² In Calvin's view, the essence of the covenant is the binding or union of God and man.³ God wanted to be in union with His people, so He made a promise with the chosen people, Israel. Thus, the covenant is the means of binding God and man. Moreover, this union between God and man is the result of God's promise to adopt the people as His children.⁴ Calvin's concept of the covenant in his exegesis of Jeremiah can be explained by the relationship or the binding of Yahweh and Israel. This notion of the covenant also plays an important role in indicating the nature of the church for the Genevan reformer because God made the church 'Mother' for those who take God as their Father.⁵ In other words, those who have a relationship with God as Father may be guided by the Church's motherly care until they reach the goal of faith.⁶ In this chapter, therefore, Calvin's thoughts on the church will be illuminated by looking closely into the correlation between the covenant, God's people, and the church.

5.2 Foundation of the Concept of the *Populus Meus*: Abraham's Covenant

¹ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 211.

² Robertson, *The Christ of the Covenants*, 4-6.

³ Lillback, *The binding of God*, 137.

⁴ Lillback, *The Binding of God*, 137-8.

⁵ CO 2. 746 (*Inst.* 4.1.1). "Haec enim quae Deus coniunxit separari fas non est (Matth. 10, 9), ut, quibus ipse est pater, ecclesia etiam mater sit;"; McGrath, *Reformation Thoughts*, 157.

⁶ Steinmez, "The theology of John Calvin," 122.

To make a covenant, the will of the covenantal parties is essential above all things. In the covenant between God and Abram, however, God's sovereignty takes precedence over Abram's will. God said to Abram, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless, that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly (Gen. 17:1,2. ESV)." In this covenant, expressions like -'God first asked for agreement with Abram' or 'Abram was concerned whether he would accept the covenant' - cannot be found. God made the covenant sovereignly according to His will.⁷ The covenant between God and Abram, hence, has to stand on God's plan and purpose. It was impossible to achieve the covenant without God's will. Calvin asserts, "If the cause or origin of this covenant is sought for, we must necessarily fall back upon the Divine election."⁸ The covenant began with God's election of Abram. As might be expected, the covenant already existed before Abraham's era.⁹ Calvin, nonetheless, regards the covenant with Abraham as the authentic establishment of God's covenant.¹⁰ This can be verified by the fact that Calvin called the Israelites 'Abraham's offspring' when explaining the chosen people.¹¹ God made a covenant with Abraham through His grace, and He adopted Abraham's descendants as His children. Calling them God's children shows clearly that they are special to God.¹² We cannot understand why God chose Abraham as His covenant partner. That was purely God's decision. Moreover, the purpose of the covenant is that Abraham will belong to God, and God will be Abraham's father.¹³ This notion of what it meant to be God's people, therefore, played a significant role in the Abrahamic covenant.

While explaining the Mosaic covenant, Calvin emphasizes that Israel has become the people of God.¹⁴ He mentions the Abrahamic covenant in his exegesis as follows.

⁷ Robertson, *The Christ of the Covenants*, 127.

⁸ CO 31. 813 (Ps. 89:3). "Ergo si quaeritur foederis causa vel origo, venire ad Dei electionem necesse est."

⁹ CO 2. 317 (*Inst.* 2.10.7). "... sed istam specialem qua piorum animae et illuminantur in Dei notitiam, et illi quodammodo copulantur. Huiusmodi verbi illuminatione, quum adhaeserint Deo Adam, Abel, Noe, Abraham, et reliqui patres, ..."

¹⁰ Lillback, *The Binding of God*, 145.

¹¹ CO 38. 255 (COR II 6/1. 639-640; Jer. 16:19).

¹² CO 38. 675 (COR II 6/2. 1173; Jer. 31:20). "Nam filii nomine designat specialem illam foederis gratiam, qua amplexus fuerat semen Abrahae. [...], quemadmodum passim vocat filios suos quicumque genus ducebant ab Abraham."

¹³ CO 38. 692 (COR II 6/2. 1195; Jer. 31:33). "Ergo his verbis breviter significat Propheta huc tendere summam foederis Dei, ut sit nobis Pater, a quo salutem petamus et expectemus: et nos vicissim simus eius populus."

¹⁴ CO 24. 196. "Clarius et pluribus verbis designat quomodo pretiosi Deo futuri sint Israelitae nempe quia erunt in regnum sacerdotale et in gentem sanctam."

He (God) had indeed made with Abraham an eternal, and inviolable covenant; but because it had grown into disregard from the lapse of time, and the carelessness of mankind, it became needful that it should be again renewed. To this end, then, it was engraved upon the tables of stone, and written in a book, that the marvelous grace, which God had conferred on the race of Abraham, should never sink into oblivion.¹⁵

According to Calvin, God entered into a covenant with Abraham, but it was necessary to renew it repeatedly. God, for instance, made a covenant with Moses, and He gave the Israelites commandments. As a result, the covenant of Moses was dependent upon God's covenant with Abraham. In other words, it was not a new one.¹⁶ Therefore, it is clear that there is a consistency between the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants. From the Abrahamic covenant, the counterpart of the covenant is explicit. That is, "Abraham and his descendants." His descendants became the people of God, and He became their God. That is the covenant between God and Abraham. Moreover, the object of the covenant is unchangeable because God is unchanging and His covenant with His people is also. From this fact it can be assumed that divine covenant is connected to the covenant with the church through the covenants of the Old Testament.¹⁷ Dealing with the covenant between God and Abraham, Calvin explains that 'God's people' have extended to the church, so the church has received the same grace which God had given to Abraham's offspring. The covenant between God and His people, Calvin says, will be kept in this world until it exercises its ultimate purpose.¹⁸

5.3 Covenantal Conditions of the *Populus Meus*: Mutual Relationship in Moses' Covenant

Interpreting Jer. 32:40, Calvin takes notice of the differences between the Law of Moses and the covenant which Jeremiah mentioned in chapter 31.¹⁹ In other words, Calvin understands the new

¹⁵ CO 24. 192. "Foedus quidem aeternum et inviolabile percusserat cum Abraham: sed quia longo tempore et incuria hominum obsoleverat, iterum renovari necesse erat. Atque in hunc finem insculptum fuit tabulis lapideis, et conscriptus liber, ne unquam obreperet oblivio singularis gratiae, quam Deus generi Abraham contulerat."; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on The Four Last Books of Moses, vol. I*, 313.

¹⁶ CO 28. 688. "... deinde iam ante percusserat foedus suum cum Abraham : et lex fuit confirmatio illius foederis. Quum ergo lex pendeat a foedere, quod Deus cum Abraham servo suo pepigit, sequitur fieri non posse ut Deus unquam potuerit pacisci foedus novum, hoc est, aliud vel diversum."

¹⁷ CO 39. 75 (COR II 6/2. 1303; Jer. 33: 25-6). "Ego enim idem sum Deus, qui creavi coelum et terram, qui constitui totius uaturae Leges, quae firmatae manent, et qui percussi etiam foedus cum Ecclesia mea. Si non mutatur veritas mea in Legibus naturae, cur mutabitur in foedere illo sacro, quod cum electo populo meo pepigi?"

¹⁸ CO 23. 238. "Aetatum successio clare testatur sic assumptos fuisse in ecclesiam Abrahae posteros, ut illis nascerentur filii eiusdem gratiae haeredes. ... Fateor quidem carere fine, et proprie vocari posse aeternum, quatenus ad totam ecclesiam pertinet: ..."

¹⁹ CO 39. 41 (COR II 6/2. 1262; Jer. 32:40). "Notanda est antithesis inter foedus Legis, et inter Foedus de quo nunc disserit Propheta."

covenant through comparing to Moses' covenant understanding. In the covenant with Moses, a mutual relationship between God and the Israelites is found. In the Mosaic covenant, God made a covenant with the Israelites and showed the duties which were assigned to the two parties. In other words God showed them their duties while carrying out his own. Likewise, God accommodated Himself and made a mutual covenant with His people.²⁰ In fact, the mutual feature of the covenant comes from when God established a covenant with Abraham. God made a covenant with Abraham under the condition that he had to walk with Him completely. Under this covenant only could Abraham and his descendants enjoy their privileges endowed by God.²¹ As we know, God is sincere, therefore He carries out anything He has promised. The descendants of Abraham, who are the counterpart of the covenant, should have kept their covenant with God.²² But what did Israel have to do to fulfill their part of the agreement? In the covenant with Moses God made a covenant with every Israelite, and gave them tablets on which His law was written. Israel should have believed God, who ought to be exalted above any other nation if they would but obey His law.²³ If God formed a relationship with one family in the Abrahamic covenant, He formed a relationship with one nation in the Mosaic covenant. This is because Abraham becomes a nation later. As a result, Israel needed statute law.²⁴ That is, the law which God gave to Moses. God gave Israel the law, and they had to keep the law.²⁵ Nevertheless, the Israelites made the law invalid by violating it.²⁶ Accordingly, Israel had no choice but to lose the privileges that they had enjoyed as God's people.

Calvin also applies this covenantal relationship to the church of his time: "When God established a church, He treated it like a treasure and entered into a mutual relationship with it."²⁷ God

²⁰ Lillback, *The binding of God*, 137; Opitz, *Ulrich Zwingli*, 111-112. Zwingli also put an emphasis on covenantal thought which recognizes man as a covenantal partner of God; Woosey, *Unity and Continuity*, 307. Calvin regards mutual stipulations as essential to a covenant.

²¹ CO 38. 202 (COR II 6/1. 571-2; Jer. 14:21). "... fuit quidem mutua stipulatio, quia Deus pepigit foedus cum Abraham hac Lege, ut integer cum ipso ambularet. Hoc verum est, et eadem stipulatio vigeat sub Prophetis: ..."

²² CO 38. 294 (COR II 6/1. 689; Jer. 18:1). "Atqui scimus in foedere Dei fuisse mutuam stipulationem, nempe ut genus Abrahæ pure Deum coleret, sicuti Deus paratus erat præstare quaecunque fuerat pollicitus."

²³ CO 24. 196. "Verum ut in possessione tanti boni maneat, mutua erga Deum fides exigitur."

²⁴ Robertson, *The Christ of the Covenants*, 186-7.

²⁵ CO 28. 275. "Nam requirebatur aliquid mutuum, ut scilicet occurrerent ipsi Deo, et locum darent ejus beneficiis."

²⁶ CO 38. 296 (COR II 6/1. 692; Jer. 18:1-6). "... tuti quidem erant ejus praesidio, nempe si praestitissent mutuam fidem, ut vere essent ejus populus, sicuti promiserat se illis fore in Deum: sed cum pro nihilo ducerent totam ejus Legem, et irritum facerent foedus illud, de quo stulte gloriabantur: ..."

²⁷ CO 39. 38 (COR II 6/2. 1257; Jer. 32: 38). "... quia sicuti Ecclesiam colligit sibi tanquam peculium, ut passim loquitur: ita non potest stare haec appellatio absque relatione mutua, ..."

accepted all the churches as His children, and He became their God. Therefore, the church is obligated to obey the word of God. It is clear that God will not break His covenant, because He is faithful.²⁸ So, if the covenant is broken, humans are to blame.²⁹

In this regard, a question is raised: *Does God's covenant depend on man's obedience?*³⁰ An answer to this question can be found in Calvin's exposition of Jer. 14:21. If humans, as a covenantal party, broke it the covenant should be terminated, but God has kept it. Temporally, the divine covenant appears to be revoked,³¹ but God did not abolish His promise.³² God kept His promise by Christ who would come to Israel as an Abrahamic descendant.³³ This means that the achievement of the divine covenant depends on the divine will and plan and not on human obedience. Nevertheless, there is a reason why God made a covenant with Israel: God wanted to give His people an opportunity to obey Him.³⁴ However, Israel abandoned the covenant which God had made with their ancestors.³⁵ Such behavior caused judgment³⁶ and they lost their land and became captives of other nations. Because of this it seemed that the divine covenant was broken. In His wrath, nevertheless, God remembered the covenant with His people, and announced that they have a chance to avoid judgment if they would repent.³⁷ God remained merciful.³⁸ The hope for Israel, their renewal, is not possible by their will or effort. Explaining the mutual relationship of the covenant, Calvin asserts, the Israelites

²⁸ Calvin, *Sermons*, 7 (Sermon 2 on Jer. 14: 20a, 21b, 22; 15-1). "..., c'est assavoir que nonobstant noz faultes son alliance dure tousjours. Vray est que de nostre part nous l'avons cassée, mais si est ce qu'il nous veult encores recevoir à mercy et veult que ses promesses aient tousjours lieu."; Woolsey, *Unity and Continuity*, 306.

²⁹ CO 2. 970 (*Inst.* 4.16.17). "Quoniam, utcumque foedus ab illis violatum foret, symbolum tamen foederis ex Domini institutione firmum inviolabileque semper manebat."

³⁰ Selderhuis, *The Psalm*, 213.

³¹ CO 38. 203 (COR II 6/1. 572; Jer. 14:21). "Quidquid sit, habuit justam rationem precandi, cum diceret, *Ne foedus tuum dissolvas nobiscum*. Sed Deo fuit alia occulta ratio: sic enim delevit, quoad sensum communem hominum, foedus illud, ..."

³² Selderhuis, *The Psalm*, 213.

³³ CO 38. 202 (COR II 6/1. 572; Jer. 14:21). "Non posse in totum deleri Dei gratiam: quia elegerat genus Abrahae, ex quo tandem nasceretur redemptor mundi."

³⁴ CO 38. 109 (COR II 6/1. 451; Jer. 11: 10). "... quod scilicet non tantum Deus tradiderat regulam bene vivendi, sed etiam ipsos adoptaverat in populum, si essent morigeri."; Woolsey, *Unity and Continuity*, 315-316.

³⁵ CO 38. 319 (COR II 6/1. 721; Jer. 19:1). "... quia desciverant prorsus a foedere quod Deus pepigerat cum ipsorum Patribus."; From the view of human responsibility, these persons are those who "degenerate from legitimate children to bastards." Lillback, *The binding of God*, 217.

³⁶ CO 38. 475 (COR II 6/1. 921; Jer. 25:6). "..., et prope infinitis iram Dei in se accenderant, tamen superstitionibus praecipue accersiverant sibi gravius iudicium."

³⁷ CO 38. 484 (COR II 6/1. 932; Jer. 25:14). "Propheta ergo prosequitur eandem doctrinam, nempe quod Deus tandem re ipsa ostensurus sit, cum iratus fuit Ecclesiae suae, non tamen spem omnem misericordiae fuisse ablatam, quia memor esset foederis sui."

³⁸ CO 38. 162 (COR II 6/1. 519; Jer. 13: 14). "Deus ergo quamvis tam horrendo exemplo populum suum perdidit, non tamen exiit tunc suam naturam, neque misericordiam suam abiecit, sed incomprehensibili modo ita exsequitur sua iudicia adversus reprobos, ut tamen nihil depereat ex ejus perpetua misericordia, et simul etiam fidelis maneat in sua electione."

cannot return to God if God does not turn them back. They can be restored to God only by the work of Holy Spirit.³⁹ That is, the mutuality of the covenant can be satisfied completely only by the divine sovereign.

5.4 The True *Populus Meus*: One Covenant and the New Covenant

In the *Institutes* 2.11.1 Calvin states that the new covenant is not different essentially from the old covenant.⁴⁰ His thought can be also found in his exposition of Jer. 31:31.

Now, as to the *new* covenant, it is not so called, because it is contrary to the first covenant; for God is never inconsistent with himself, nor is he unlike himself. He then who once made a covenant with his chosen people, had not changed his purpose, as though he had forgotten his faithfulness.⁴¹

Discussing the covenant's stability,⁴² Calvin explains that the new covenant is identical to the old covenant, regarding the fundamental instructions of that divine covenant. "God put fully the principle of life into the law, the evidence of the covenant, so He showed His people what the way of salvation was. Then, He revealed His people's sins, and led them to Christ. Consequently, He let them know what is necessary for their salvation."⁴³ This means that God taught them how to be saved in the covenant of Moses. Moreover, in every covenant with Israel God shows how the Israelites can live. God also did not discard the covenant or break it. Moreover, God did not change the purpose nor the essence of the covenant. Therefore, the essence of the new covenant is the same as the old covenant.⁴⁴

³⁹ CO 38. 465-6 (COR II 6/1. 908; Jer. 24:7). "Est enim mutuum hoc vinculum coniunctionis, ut Deus nos praevenerit sua gratia, deinde ut ad se nos vocet: denique ut trahat, et sentiamus in nobis opus illud Spiritus Sancti. Nos quidem non convertimur, nisi conversi, nec sponte, vel propria industria nos convertimus, sed hoc est opus Spiritus Sancti."

⁴⁰ CO 2. 329 (*Inst.* 2.11.1). "Hac ratione nihil impedit quominus eadem maneat veteris ac novi testamenti promissiones, ..."

⁴¹ CO 38. 688 (COR II 6/2. 1190; Jer. 31:31-2). "Jam quod ad Novum Foedus spectat, non sic vocatur quia aliud sit a primo foedere. Deus enim secum non pugnat: neque est sui dissimilis. Qui ergo semel percussit foedus cum electo populo, non mutavit consilium, ac si oblitus esset suae fidei."; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 4, 126.

⁴² CO 37. 497 (COR II 6/1. 51; Jer. 2: 1-2). "... quia ostendit Deus foedus suum, ..., tamen esse firmum et stabile."; Stephens, *Zwingli*, 91. The concept of 'One Covenant' can be found in Zwingli's view. He explains in his exposition of infant baptism, "Just as God is only one, the covenant is one, and as Israel is God's children, we are God's people. In addition, Abraham's God is our God."

⁴³ CO 38. 688 (COR II 6/2. 1190; Jer. 31:31-2). "Substantiam intelligo doctrinam, ... Complexus est enim in Lege regulam perfecte vivendi: deinde ostendit quanam esset salutis via, et sub figuris populum adducit ad Christum, ut remissio peccatorum illic clare monstraretur, et quidquid cognitum necessarium est."

⁴⁴ Spijker, *Bij Calvin in de Leer*, 94-5; Robertson, *The Christ of the covenants*, 41; Lillback, *The Binding of God*, 147.

According to Calvin's explanation of Jer. 31:33, God did not say, "I will put 'other' laws in their minds," but He said "I will put my law in their mind and write it on their heart." In other words, God did not give His people new laws. He gave them the same law which He had given to Israel's forefathers, and He wrote it on their hearts.⁴⁵

The form of the new covenant is, however, different from that of the old covenants.⁴⁶ Jeremiah did not compare the new covenant just with the covenant of Moses. He compared the new covenant with all of the covenants between God and Israel.⁴⁷ Through comparisons, some features of the new covenant are revealed. First of all, the new covenant may imply that the Israelites, the Babylonian captives, would come back to their own land. In Jer. 30:3, this is clearly expressed. "For behold, days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah, says the Lord, and I will bring them back to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall take possession of it (ESV)." Due to God's covenant, all the tribes of Israel will return to the Promised Land which God gave to their fathers. In addition, God allowed Judah to return as well as Israel which had been taken from their homeland into exile in Assyria previously. Nevertheless, God said that He would cause both of them to form one reunited body.⁴⁸ God will also care for them with His love, as He promised, after they come back to their homeland.⁴⁹ Second, the new covenant will be written on the hearts of the Israelites. The covenant with Moses was literal, but the new covenant is not. The new covenant penetrates people's hearts, reforms them within, and leads them to obey God from their hearts.⁵⁰ This is the most prominent feature of the new covenant. By writing the new covenant on His people's hearts, God prevents them from feelings inconsistent with God's words, and from disobeying God's commandments.⁵¹ This is possible only through the work of the Holy Spirit. He gives God's words physically to peoples' ears, spreads them out in front of peoples' eyes, and at

⁴⁵ CO 38. 691 (COR II 6/2. 1195; Jer. 31:33). "Neque enim dicit hic Deus, Legem aliam dabo: Sed *scribam Legem meam*: nempe eandem, quae tradita olim fuerat Patribus."

⁴⁶ CO 2. 329 (*Inst.* 2.11.1).

⁴⁷ Robertson, *The Christ of the Covenants*, 281.

⁴⁸ CO 38. 687 (COR II 6/2. 1189; Jer. 31:31). "Deus ergo promittit rursus fore unum corpus, quia ipsos colliget ut simul coalescant, neque sint quasi diversae domus."

⁴⁹ CO 39. 36 (COR II 6/2. 1255; Jer. 32:37). "Postquam reditum illis promisit, simul adjungit tranquillum statum: alioqui satius fuisset Judaeis semper manere in exilio, et externis regionibus, quam redire in patriam, et illic misere degere."

⁵⁰ CO 38. 690-1 (COR II 6/2. 1193; Jer. 31:33). "... , ideoque non sit literalis ejus doctrina, sed in corda ipsa penetret, ac omnes sensus reformet in obsequium justitiae Dei."

⁵¹ CO 38. 692 (COR II 6/2. 1195; Jer. 31:33). "... , *et scribere in cordibus* tantundem valet atque corda ipsa sic formare, ut Lex illic dominetur, et nullus sit affectus cordis, qui non ejus doctrinae subscribat atque consentiat."

the same time controls peoples' hearts.⁵² Third, God appeared Himself only in a shadow under the old covenant, but He will clearly and brightly appear under the new covenant. As a result, everyone can share the knowledge of God.⁵³ No matter how poor their knowledge is, they will know God and their salvation more clearly than before. This is because God will pour the gift of knowledge into His people more and more.⁵⁴ Fourth, God does not remember the sins of His people in the new covenant. The origin of the new covenant is God's invaluable remission of sin, which He gives in order to be reconciled with His people.⁵⁵ Jeremiah affirms that God is benevolent and merciful enough to forgive sins. Most importantly, moreover, the promise of this remission will be achieved completely through Christ.⁵⁶ Last, the new covenant will remain in effect for all time. The new covenant is based on God's eternal mercy, not on man's ability.⁵⁷ Therefore, it cannot be temporary but must be forever, because God's mercy is everlasting.⁵⁸

In reference to the new covenant, however, there is an apparent inconsistency. In Jer. 31:31, Jeremiah said that God will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. However, in Jer. 31:33 God said he will put His law in His peoples' mind and write it on their hearts. On the surface, those two verses seem to be inconsistent. But it is because God decides to enter into a covenant with the whole of Israel, while He will put covenantal rules in each persons' heart. If so, did God make a covenant with the Israelite community or with each person? It is not easy to answer that question. We learn, nonetheless, that the new covenant is both 'communal' and 'individual.' In Jer. 32: 39 God says, "I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, *for their own good and the good of their children after them* (ESV)." In line with this view,

⁵² CO 38. 691 (COR II 6/2. 1194; Jer. 31:33). "... est spiritus, hoc est, Deus non tantum dirigit sermonem ad aures, et oculos hominum in Evangelio, sed intus etiam docet corda ipsa et mentes."

⁵³ CO 38. 693 (COR II 6/2. 1196; Jer. 31:34). "Hic statuitur aliud discrimen Veteris et Novi Testamenti, nempe quod Deus, qui obscurius se patefecerat sub Lege, plenum fulgorem emittet, ita ut ejus cognitio futura sit familiaris."

⁵⁴ CO 38. 694 (COR II 6/2. 1198; Jer. 31:34). "Hodie autem qui minimus est inter fideles, eo usque progressus est, ut clarius multo cognoscat quidquid pertinet ad summam salutis, quam qui tunc fuerunt etiam non vulgares. Summa est igitur, omnes Dei electos fore etiam instructos dono intelligentiae, ut non subsistant in primis elementis."

⁵⁵ CO 38. 695 (COR II 6/2. 1200; Jer. 31:34). "Ergo si originem Novi Testamenti quaerimus, est gratuita peccatorum remissio, quia Deus populo suo se reconciliat."

⁵⁶ CO 38. 696 (COR II 6/2. 1201; Jer. 31:34). "... , quia Deus promittit se non fore amplius memorem iniquitatum, dum novum foedus percutiet cum populo suo: id factum est adventu Christi."

⁵⁷ CO 39. 397 (COR II 6/2. 1716; Jer. 50:5). "Neque enim est in hominum arbitrio praestare se ita constantes, ut nunquam intercidat Dei foedus: ..."

⁵⁸ CO 39. 397 (COR II 6/2.1716-7; Jer. 50:5). "Unde colligimus, perpetuitatem de qua locutus est, fuisse fundatam potius in mera Dei benevolentia quam in ipsius populi virtute. Foedus ergo perpetuum vocat, ..., quia scilicet recordabitur suae misericordiae erga electum populum: ..."

the new covenant was made not only with the covenant participants, but also with their descendants.⁵⁹ In short, not just with individuals, but in accord with God's dealing with His people throughout redemptive history, this new covenant will enter into the two houses of Israel (Jer. 31:31).⁶⁰ However, it has been engraved and will be engraved in the heart of each individual. While interpreting Jeremiah, Calvin implies that the new covenant is the same as previous covenants in essence. However, he describes the characteristics of the new covenant by comparing it to the previous covenants. And, he explains who the people of God are under the new covenant.

5.5 Preservation of the *Populus Meus*: The Covenant and Christ

As we have seen in 5.4, God does not remember His people's sins under the new covenant. He not only forgives them, but also ignores insincere sacrifices and rituals. He will also make His people know Him more clearly than before.⁶¹ To put it plainly, the new covenant will be superior to the old ones, and enable things that were not possible under the old covenants. Still, this new covenant needs one thing in order to be complete: the presence of Christ.⁶² Calvin maintains, in his exposition of Jer. 33:15, that the effect of God's covenant rests only on Christ because all covenants are worthless without Christ.⁶³ God's covenant will vanish, be incomplete, or be in vain without Him.⁶⁴ Quoting Jer. 33: 31-33, Calvin also explains in 2 Cor. 3:6 that under Christ's reign the Holy Spirit will write the gospel or the new covenant on the hearts of God's children.⁶⁵ According to Calvin, the fulfillment of God's covenant requires not only the work of the Holy Spirit, but also the rule of

⁵⁹ Referring to the offspring of Israel in his lecture on Jer. 30:10, Calvin points out that they have the hope of salvation even though the Israelites in Jeremiah's time could not be saved from Babylon: CO 38. 621 (COR II 6/2. 1104; Jer. 30:10). "Haec igitur ratio est cur Propheta commemoret semen: quasi diceret Etiam si ad vos non perveniat effectus redemptionis, Deus tamen non fallat spem vestram, quia posteri vestri sentient ipsum fuisse veracem."

⁶⁰ Robertson, *The Christ of the Covenants*, 287.

⁶¹ CO 38. 693-6 (COR II 6/2. 1196-1201; Jer. 31:34).

⁶² "That doesn't betoken an annulment of the covenant between God and Israel, for that is fulfilled in the coming of Christ." Milner, *Calvin's doctrine of the Church*, 86; To study briefly on the theme 'Christ and Covenant,' see Clark, "Christ and Covenant: Federal Theology in Orthodoxy," 403-428.

⁶³ CO 39. 64 (COR II 6/2. 1290; Jer. 33:15). "Efficacia igitur promissionum Dei in solo Christo consistit. Et ideo Prophetae dum concionantur de gratia Dei, tandem proponunt Christum, quia sine ipso evanescerent omnes promissiones."

⁶⁴ CO 38. 407 (COR II 6/1. 835; Jer. 23:5-6). "Quod ergo tam frequenter occurrit apud Prophetas observatum dignum eat, ut sciamus promissionos Dei frigere apud nos, vel esse suspensas, vel etiam evanescere, nisi erigimus sensus omnes ad Christum, ..."

⁶⁵ CO 50. 40 (2 Cor. 3:6). "... promittit autem spiritum regenerationis sub regno Christi, qui evangelium suum, hoc est, foedus novum, cordibus inscribat."

Christ.⁶⁶ Therefore, the complete achievement of the divine promise and the presence of Christ cannot be separated.⁶⁷

Moreover, in Calvin's interpretation of Jeremiah 50:20, which explains the relationship between the covenant and Christ, the duration of the covenants' effectiveness is related.

This promise then ought not to be confined to that short time when the people returned from their Babylonian exile, but ought on the contrary to be extended to the Kingdom of Christ, for it was then that this prophecy was fully accomplished, because our sins do not appear before God when he is reconciled to us.⁶⁸

Calvin clarifies first that the effectiveness of the new covenant does not end with the return from captivity. As discussed above, the new covenant is written on the heart, so, it will be eternal.⁶⁹ The finite time of human history, therefore, cannot be regarded as the valid period of the new covenant. In addition, this new covenant is spiritual because it is related to features of Christ's government.⁷⁰ Hence, this covenant will last as long as the Spirit of God wishes. Since the return of Israelites from Babylon, God planted His true people in the Promised Land, Canaan.⁷¹ But they were not all Israelites. He also appointed Christ as the covenantal assurance of His people. For that reason, the prophet encourages the faithful to look to Christ.⁷² Calvin calls God's people, who are planted in this way, the holy church of God. Although they suffer difficulties in this world, they are a true and eternal church that God cares for in His remarkable way.⁷³ It is important here to bear in mind that the foundation of the new covenant is Christ.⁷⁴

⁶⁶ CO 31. 688. "Sed non satis erat Christum venisse nisi adiuncta fuisset regeneratio per spiritum sanctum."

⁶⁷ CO 39. 45 (COR II 6/2. 1267; Jer. 32:41). "... ideoque necesse est transire usque ad Christum, si volumus habere complementum huius promissionis."

⁶⁸ CO 39. 413 (COR II 6/2. 1737; Jer. 50:20). "Promissio igitur haec non debet restringi ad breve aliquod tempus, ex quo populus reversus est ab exilio babilonico, sed potius extenditur ad Regnum Christi, quia tunc vere demum completa fuit haec prophetia: quoniam non apparent peccata nostra coram Deo, dum nobis propitius est."; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 5, 157.

⁶⁹ CO 39. 42 (COR II 6/2. 1263; Jer. 32:40). "..., Legem fuisse temporale foedus, quia nulla fuit eius stabilitas, quum tantum esset literalis: Evangelium vero esse Foedus perpetuum, quia inscribitur cordibus."

⁷⁰ CO 38. 704 (COR II 6/2. 1211; Jer. 31:40). "... nempe quae respondet naturae Regni Christi, ideoque spiritualis est."

⁷¹ CO 39. 46 (COR II 6/2. 1267; Jer. 32:41). "Tunc ergo Deus vere plantavit populum suum."

⁷² CO 39. 63 (COR II 6/2. 1291; Jer. 33:15). "..., deinde Christus ipse fuit arra et pignus tam foederis quam adoptionis gratuitae. Hinc fit ergo, ut Propheta, dum vult obsignare suum vaticinium, jubeat fideles in Christum aspicere."

⁷³ CO 38. 702 (COR II 6/2. 1211; Jer. 31:40). "... quia etiam si quotidie Satan, et totus mundus minetur ei interitum, Dominus tamen mirabiliter eam usque ad finem conservabit, ut non pereat in saeculum."

⁷⁴ Richel, *Het Kerkbegrip van Calvijn*, 31.

5.6 Adoption: Faith and the Extension of Covenant

God adopted the Israelites as His own people through the new covenant, and proclaimed at the same time as follows, “You shall be my people, and I will be your God (Jer. 11:4, ESV).” In light of this verse, the ‘covenant’ runs parallel meaningfully with the ‘becoming God’s people.’

Accordingly, the terms ‘adoption’ and ‘being called God’s people’ are encountered frequently in the semantic field through Calvin’s usage of ‘covenant.’ In other words, ‘adoption’ plays a role as a synonym of covenant in terms of its meaning.⁷⁵ God accommodated Himself to meet Abraham’s offspring in person, and adopted them as His children.⁷⁶ That is the covenant between God and His people. Nonetheless, the Israelites have invalidated the covenant through ingratitude.⁷⁷ The Israelites are God’s children, Calvin points out, but they are wicked, disobedient sons. They also distress God their father.⁷⁸ As is well known, everyone in Abraham’s bloodline only by the flesh cannot be true Israelites.⁷⁹ Only for the true people of God among all of the Israelites is God’s covenant valid, and thus they alone can be the true church of God.

Then, what are the characteristics of those who have been adopted by God? In Jer. 32:40 God says, “*I will make with them an everlasting covenant, [...]. And I put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me* (ESV).” Interpreting this verse, Calvin explains that the fear of God consists of ‘faith in God.’⁸⁰ This faith is the characteristic of God’s adopted children. In addition, when God received them as His children, He forgave all of their sins and then governed them by the Holy Spirit.⁸¹ The apostle Paul calls the Holy Spirit, whom God’s children receive, ‘the Spirit of adoption as sons (Rom. 8:15),’ because the Holy Spirit comes to their hearts, and gives confidence of

⁷⁵ Lillback, *The Binding of God*, 141

⁷⁶ CO 38. 109 (COR II 6/1. 451; Jer. 11:10). “... quod scilicet non tantum Deus tradiderat regulam bene vivendi, sed etiam ipsos adoptaverat in populum, si essent morigeri.”

⁷⁷ CO 38. 675 (COR II 6/2. 1173; Jer. 31:20). “Erat enim bonum inestimabile adoptio qua ipsos dignatus fuerat. Atqui sua ingratitude quodammodo exinanierant illam gratiam.”

⁷⁸ CO 38. 676 (COR II 6/2. 1173; Jer. 31:20). “... sic etiam nunc dicit filios quidem sibi esse Israelitas, sed filios pravi ingenii, filios immorigeros, filios qui tantum patrem exasperent, qui vulnerent ejus animum, qui moerore ipsum conficiant.”

⁷⁹ CO 37. 497 (COR II 6/1. 51; Jer. 2:1-2). “Nam quamvis non omnes, qui genus ducunt ab Abraham secundum carnem sint veri et legitimi Israelitae: ...”

⁸⁰ CO 39. 44 (COR II 6/2. 1265; Jer. 32:40). “..., quin Deus sub timore nominis sui etiam fidem comprehendat: ...”

⁸¹ CO 39. 44 (COR II 6/2. 1265; Jer. 32:40). “..., duobus membris constat Novum Foedus, nempe quod Deus, ubi nos semel adoptavit in filios, nobis ignoscit, et dat veniam nostris infirmitatibus: deinde Spiritu suo nos gubernat: ...”

their adoption there.⁸² Therefore, the other characteristic of God's adopted people is to be governed by the Holy Spirit. In other words, those who have been adopted by God have received faith in Christ through the Holy Spirit. Calvin also teaches, in his exposition on Gal. 3:14, that the new covenant can be received only through faith because it is spiritual. At this point it should be mentioned that without lineage both the Jew and the Gentile could receive it because faith does not come through lineage.⁸³ In Calvin's view of Jer. 32:41, the church of God was planted only in the Kingdom of Judah. However, Christ broke the wall among those who dwelt there, so that there were no differences between Jews and Gentiles.⁸⁴ The people of God, hence, are those regenerated by belief in Christ through the Holy Spirit, not by their lineage.⁸⁵

Moreover, it is important for God to take care of His own people. Seen in this light, the worst sin of Babylon was to oppress God's people.⁸⁶ God, besides, saw that Babylon inflicted damage not on them, but on Himself.⁸⁷ So God's fatherly love for His people comes to light more clearly through the restoration of Israel from Babylonian captivity.

Hence God promises a restoration of their own country, which would be evidence of pardon and of mercy; for when God gathered his people, it was the same as though he had openly showed that their adoption remained unchanged, and that the covenant which seemed for a time to fail was still valid.⁸⁸

⁸² CO 49. 148. "Huius fidem nobis certam fieri docet a spiritu adoptionis, qui kobis fiduciam precandi non dictaret, nisi gratuitam veniam obsignando."; CO 2. 711 (*Inst.* 3.24.1). "Qua ratione spiritum quem accipiunt, et adoptionis spiritum, ... vocat Paulus (Rom. 8, 15; Eph. 1, 13 et alibi), quia scilicet eorum cordibus futurae adoptionis certitudinem suo testimonio stabilis et obsignat."

⁸³ CO 50. 210. "Ergo ex natura promissionis demonstrat, Iudaeos nihil differre agentibus: quia si spiritualis est, sola fide percipitur."; Milner, *Calvin's doctrine of the Church*, 98.

⁸⁴ CO 39. 46 (COR II 6/2. 1267; Jer. 32:41). "Sciamus ergo plantatam fuisse Ecclesiam in Iudaea, quoniam superstes fuit usque ad Christi adventum. Quoniam autem Christus maceriem diruit, ut nullum iam sit discrimen inter Iudaeos et Graecos, ..."

⁸⁵ To know the role and significance of "the Holy Spirit and faith" in the relationship between the covenant and church, see Milner, *Calvin's doctrine of the Church*, 58-65.

⁸⁶ CO 39. 406 (COR II 6/2. 1728; Jer. 50:14). "Ergo inter omnia scelera hoc praecipuum fuit, quod Chaldaei opprimerant Dei Ecclesiam."

⁸⁷ CO 39. 406 (COR II 6/2. 1729; Jer. 50:14). "Hinc colligitur utilis doctrina, tam pretiosam esse Deo salutem Ecclesiae, ut sibi existimet fieri injuriam, quae infertur fidelibus: ..."

⁸⁸ CO 39. 411 (COR II 6/2. 1734; Jer. 50:19). "Promittit igitur Deus reditum in patriam, qui testimonium esset veniae et misericordiae. Nam ubi Deus populum suum collegit, perinde hoc fuit ac si palam ostenderet firmam manere suam adoptionem, et non esse mortuum foedus illud, quod tamen ad tempus visum fuerat intercidisse."; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on The Prophet Jeremiah*, vol. 5, 153.

God adopted them to be His children by ‘recalling’ them to their homeland, and kept the covenant between Him and them. At this point, ‘Keeping the covenant’ and ‘adoption’ make an appearance side by side. Furthermore, God promised them to be a faithful shepherd after gathering them again. God took care of His people for Himself, watched over them with His own eyes, and protected them from harm.⁸⁹ God wanted to be their shepherd, to be with them. As a result, becoming God’s people by the covenant is a sign indicating Israel’s identity, but it shows “the principle of Immanuel,” which means “God with us” always.⁹⁰ To be with His people, God has adopted them as His children, accommodated Himself to them in order to form a relationship, and looked after them. In this way, God’s presence with His people can be considered the reason as to why the church exists in the world.⁹¹

5.7 Conclusion

The covenant between God and the Israelites shows the identity of Israel. Through it they have the status of the chosen people of God. The divine community began based on the covenant. Calvin connects the Israelite identity as the people of God with the identity of the church.⁹² As the people of God have been adopted into the church by faith in Christ, the church has existed within this adoption. According to Calvin, the church has its identity as the people of God. This identity is the starting point of the present study. In other words, the initiation of the covenant means the beginning of the people of God, and is the major event in the establishing of the church. In his interpretation of Jeremiah, as he discusses the features of the new covenant, Calvin states that Christ is the center of the covenant and the covenant is engraved on the hearts of God’s people by the Holy Spirit. This

⁸⁹ CO 39. 411 (COR II 6/2. 1735; Jer. 50:19). “Summa tamen est, Deum quasi fidum fore Pastorem electo populo, ubi eum rursus collegerit, . . . , sed Deum fore praesidem suae salutis, ut eos perpetuo tueatur, ut eorum curam gerat, ut ipsos defendat contra omnes hostes.”

⁹⁰ Robertson, *The Christ of the Covenants*, 46.

⁹¹ Parker, *Calvin. An Introduction to His Thought*, 131.

⁹² According to Calvin, God planted us in Christ when He chose us as His church. God, who planted His own people in Judah, also connected us with Christ. The Church was fixed in the land of Judah until Christ came to the earth, but we as members of the church already became people of the kingdom of heaven when we were implanted into the body of Christ. Therefore, it is highly probable that the Church’s identity as God’s people is the same as Israel’s identity: CO 39. 46 (COR II 6/2. 1267-8; Jer. 32:41). “Dicimur autem inseri in Christum et plantari, cum Deus in Ecclesiam suam nos adoptat : et hinc etiam illud Christi (Mat. 15, 13), . . . quemadmodum exposuimus Ecclesiam fixam fuisse in Judaea, donec advenit Christus, qui attulit solidum effectum huius plantationis, quia dum in ipsum inserimur, iam possidemus quodammodo vitam aeternam, et cives sumus coelorum.”

shows what the church is. As Christ is the center of the covenant, so too the center of the church is Christ. As the covenant is engraved by the Spirit, the church is the holy temple where the Holy Spirit dwells (Eph. 2:21). Therefore, those who belong to the church are regenerated by their faith in Christ through the Holy Spirit, not by their lineage. Those who became the people of God by the covenant are the ones adopted into the church in Christ. Therefore, the people of God cannot be separated from God.⁹³ As a result, Calvin's concept of the covenant clearly asserts that God is with His people.

⁹³ CO 38. 158 (COR II 6/1. 514; Jer. 13:11). "... et tamen quasi descenderet e coelesti sua gloria, ita sibi devinxit genus Abrahae, ut mutuo etiam se obstringeret. Fuit igitur quasi conjunctionis mutuae vinculum illa Dei electio, ut nollet a populo separari."

Chapter VI. Israel: *The Motif of the Populus Meus II*

6.1 Introduction

God established a covenant with Israel and took them as His people. Through this covenant, the New Testament church, formed by belief in Christ, became connected to Israel. Thus, the church forms a united community with Israel. Therefore, the church came to have the identity of being God's people. In the book of Jeremiah, the expression, *populus meus*, meaning 'the people of God' appears 42 times. The expression, *Deus Israel*, meaning 'the God of Israel'¹ occurs 48 times. According to Calvin, the expression, 'the God of Israel' links the divine covenant with the Israelites.² This expression reminds God's people of the divine grace of adoption, and becomes a sign of God's love towards Abraham's descendants.³ Furthermore, this exhibits the fact that the Israelites are God's chosen people and His covenantal partner.⁴ Having investigated the relationship between the divine covenant and the church, this chapter aims to clarify who 'the people of God' are. Although Calvin had few chances to meet Jews in person through his life,⁵ he had much interest in Jewish exegesis and their language, *Hebrew*.⁶ Rather than Calvin's thought on the Israelites, this chapter seeks to explore Calvin's theological view of the Israelites in his interpretation of the book of Jeremiah.

6.2 Israel and the Covenant

In Genesis it is stated that God made a covenant with Israel, Abraham's descendants. Moreover, He treasured them more than any other tribe and took them as his special people. Later, He brought His people out of Egypt and kept them safe. Finally, He made Israel an independent country

¹ Woolsey, *Unity and Continuity*, 326.

² CO 39. 171 (COR II 6/2. 1427; Jer. 38:17). "Vocat Deum exercituum, et Deum Israel, priore elogio notatur omnipotentia Dei, altero autem foedus, quod cum Iudaeis pepigerat."

³ CO 39. 315 (COR II 6/2. 1612; Jer. 48:1). "Secundo autem epitheto testatur amorem, quo complexus est filios Abrahae, quia dignatus est sibi eligere in peculium et haereditatem."

⁴ Vreekamp, "In het beeld van God," 9.

⁵ Ravenswaay, "Calvin and the Jews," 143; Robinson, *John Calvin and the Jews*, 17-19; de Greef, *Van één stam*, 70.

⁶ Calvin frequently refers to Jewish commentaries in his biblical interpretations. CO 37. 563 (COR II 6/1. 135; Jer. 3:16). "Versum hunc torquent interpretes quia nemo assequitur Prophetarum consilium. Iudaei magna ex parte commentum frigidum et longe petium afferunt, ..."; CO 38. 88 (COR II 6/1. 424-5; Jer. 10:23); CO 38. 408 (COR II 6/1. 836; Jer. 23:5-6). "Pervertunt etiam hic Iudaei ipsa verba, ..."; CO 39. 65 (COR II 6/2. 1291; Jer. 33:15). "Iudaei prodent suam impudentiam cum magno ludibrio, si tergiversentur, et contentur trahere locum hunc alio quam ad Christum."; Berg, *Het rijk van Christus*, 236-237; de Greef, *Van één Stam*, 46-65; Robinson, *John Calvin and the Jews*, 15.

and promised that the kingdom of David would last forever.⁷ God treated Israel well compared to other nations, and saved other nations through Israel. The exceptionalism of the covenantal relationship between God and Israel is a mystery difficult to explain.⁸ However, during Jeremiah's time God chose to overthrow Israel and send them to Babylon despite his special relationship with them. If the kings and people of Israel had not caused God to be angry, this tragedy would not have happened, since God did not want to be estranged from Israel.⁹ Nevertheless, He did not forget His covenant with them even when they did not keep it.¹⁰ Circumcision, which Israelites practiced, represents the covenant; meaning that they were God's people.¹¹ Through circumcision, the Israelites remembered that they were chosen and lived a new life in covenant with God. Nonetheless, they did not live up to being God's people.

Sometimes Calvin compares the covenantal relationship between God and Israel to the marital vow, which is mentioned in other Scriptures.¹² In this view, the Israelites were God's wife, and their purity was required. In other words, they needed to be spiritually faithful, that is, live fully their faith in God.¹³ However, the Israelites broke the marital vow. They left their husband and wandered around living like a lustful woman.¹⁴ The Israelites were like an unfaithful wife because they abandoned God and fell in love with various superstitions and evil idols. This kind of behavior was shameful and disgraceful to God.¹⁵ Nevertheless God, who demanded spiritual fidelity, was a faithful husband. Furthermore, He did not turn away from His wife carelessly.¹⁶ However, Israel

⁷ CO 38. 319 (COR II 6/1. 721; Jer. 19:1-3). "Sed nos sumus vas pretiosum, et Deus formam nobis indidit. Simul enim atque pepigit foedus cum Abraham, decoravit nos singulari ornamento: postquam vero eripuit Patres nostros ex Aegypto, tunc accessit etiam melior forma: Et tandem cum erexit Regnum apud nos cum hac promissione ut esset aeternum solium Davidis, fieri aliter non posset quin permaneamus in statu nostro."

⁸ Laar, "Ontmoeting met Israel;" 37.

⁹ Robinson, *John Calvin and the Jews*, 41; CO 39. 268 (COR II 6/2. 1551; Jer. 44:20). "Nisi enim Reges et totus populus provocassent iram Dei, nunquam dirutum fuisset Templum, nunquam Regnum collapsum esset: denique nunquam Deus ita alienatus fuisset a suo populo, quem ipse adoptaverat: ..."

¹⁰ CO 37. 489 (COR II 6/1. 41; Jer. 1:16). "... neque etiam oblitum esse foederis sui, ..."

¹¹ CO 37. 651 (COR II 6/1. 245; Jer. 6:10). "Nam Circumcisio dabat illis non vulgarem materiam fiduciae, cum esset symbolum et pignus adoptionis: et cum scirent ea se ab aliis gentibus segregatos esse, ut essent sacer Dei populus."

¹² CO 37. 555 (COR II 6/1. 124-5; Jer. 3:9). "... quoniam Deus conjunxerat populum illum sibi, ac devinxerat quasi sacro conjugio."; Cf. Isa. 54:5-6, Hos. 2:2-3.

¹³ CO 37. 555 (COR II 6/1. 125; Jer. 3:9). "... nam simplicitas fidei est spiritualis castitas: ..."

¹⁴ CO 37. 602-603 (COR II 6/1. 182; Jer. 4:30). "Deus enim sacrum conjugii foedus pepigerat cum illis: defecerant: ergo illa perfidia similis fuit defectioni mulieris adulterae, quae relicto marito vagatur huc et illuc, et prostituit corpus suum."

¹⁵ CO 38. 303 (COR II 6/1. 701; Jer. 18:13). "Populus autem Israel, qui debuerat esse quasi sponsa Dei, multo foedius peccavit, et cum maiori dedecore, et infamia, cum ita se prostituit tam superstitionibus, cam perversis consiliis."

¹⁶ CO 37. 649 (COR II 6/1. 242; Jer. 6:8). "Deus enim locum et personam sponsi sustinet erga Ecclesiam: et ideo hic ostendit nondum amorem mariti se abjecisse, quo uxorem suam complexus fuerat."

betrayed God completely. Therefore, God had no choice but to judge Israel. The result was the Babylonian exile. Calvin points out that the Babylonian exile was like a divorce.¹⁷ While describing this condition of the Israelites, Jeremiah addressed God as ‘the LORD Almighty.’ The expression in the book of Jeremiah, ‘the LORD Almighty,’ describes the God who is faithful and able to save Israel.¹⁸ This God Almighty will not divorce and will instead revive Israel again. Likewise, the prophet compares the covenant between God and Israel to ‘adoption.’ These two metaphors (adoption and marriage) show that the relationship between God and Israel is that of a family. These metaphors may imply that Israel enjoyed a special status as God’s family, which other nations did not have.

6.3 The Privilege and Responsibility of the Israelites

The special relationship between God and Israel begins with God, who chooses Israel as His people. Through His choice, the Israelites became the chosen people, and the sovereign God of all nations became a ‘God of the chosen people’ rather than the God of all people.¹⁹ That God became ‘God of Israel’ was a special right given to the Israelites because the God of Israel was gracious to His people just like any other father is to his children.²⁰ Such grace comes from divine unconditional love rather than from any compensation for Israel’s work. God became their God, and they had His special love. This is Israel’s incomparable privilege. Another privilege was that when God punished the people, He did it as their father.²¹ This punishment was carried out in order that His people would be sustained.²² When punishing Israel, God advised Israel to repent and indirectly promised to forgive them.²³ God could condemn Israel for betraying Him. However, He instructed His prophets to tell

¹⁷ CO 37. 561 (COR II 6/1. 132; Jer. 3:14). “Nam exilium erat instar divortii.”

¹⁸ CO 39. 441 (COR II 6/2. 1775; Jer. 51:5). “... deinde adjungit, *A Iehovah exercituum*: quo epitheto extollit Dei potentiam: quasi diceret, Sicuti fidelis est Deus in suis promissis, et constanter foedus suum servat, ita non destitui virtute, quin possit servare suos, et eripere a morte ipsa, ubi visum ita fuerit.”

¹⁹ CO 39. 38 (COR II 6/2. 1257; Jer. 32:38). “Notemus interea, quamvis Deus imperium obtineat totius mundi, non tamen proprie vocari Deum, nisi electi populi: ...”

²⁰ CO 38. 95 (COR II 6/1. 434; Jer. 10:25). “Deum esse patrem erga electos suos, iudicem erga omnes reprobos.”

²¹ CO 38. 92 (COR II 6/1. 430; Jer. 10:24). “Quamvis ergo promiscue poenas exigat Deus de sceleribus totius mundi, est tamen magnum discrimen inter electos et reprobos, quia hoc privilegio electos suos dignatur, quod scilicet castigat eos paterna manu quasi filios: ...”

²² Calvin, *Sermons*, 23 (Sermon 4 on Jer. 15: 6b-10). “... quant nous sentons quelque affliction, c’est affin de ne nous point abuser en ce monde.”

²³ CO 38. 366 (COR II 6/1. 781; Jer. 21:11). “Hortatur enim eos ad poenitentiam, et oblique veniam illis promittit.”

them His will first, and allowed the prophets to mediate the relationship between God and Israel.²⁴ By doing this, He showed His love for the covenantal people. These were the privilege that the Israelites enjoyed.

However, they also had responsibilities. They were raised in God's school (*in eius schola*) through his laws.²⁵ Therefore, the Israelites were able to know what true religion is, and who the true God is. Thus, when they committed sin before God, they had to be held more responsible for their sin.²⁶ Even though the Israelites had to live according to God's laws, they were obsessed with their privileges as the chosen people.²⁷ When Jeremiah proclaimed God's judgment, they did not listen to him. Rather, they maintained the arrogant stance that they would not perish because they were God's special children.²⁸ Through this, Israel demonstrates that it was ignorant of its responsibility. Nevertheless, God still loved them, so He made the gospel known to Israel first, and then to other nations.²⁹ God fulfilled His will only through Israel. In this way, the Israelites reminded other nations how God works in human history.³⁰ It is of great importance that Israel has been used by God for God's work in salvation.

6.4 Land, Temple and Israel

Among the privileges given to Israel, their land was included. They lived in Canaan, which belonged to God (Lev. 25:23). God chose the land, and gave it to Israel as a token of portion of an

²⁴ CO 39. 225 (COR II 6/2. 1499; Jer. 42:7-10). "... deinde erat medius intercessor inter Deum et populum."

²⁵ In Calvin's interpretation of Jeremiah, one can seldom find the expression that the Israelites were raised in God's school. However, he clearly mentions 'God's school' in his lecture on Jer. 16:11 (see the footnote #26); On Jer. 26:5, Calvin emphasized listening to and learning from God's word while using the expression, "the school of Christ". Specifically, He compares the law to a teacher or a leader; In this context, Calvin compares God to a teacher who teaches and disciplines. CO 39. 42 (COR II 6/2. 1263; Jer. 32:40). "Non dubium est, quin Deus illic testetur se fore semper Magistrum populo et Doctorem. ... ita Deus se comparat Magistris, quibus traduntur pueri in disciplinam: ..."; Cf. Blacketer, *The School of God*, 37-52. Blacketer emphasizes that Calvin frequently uses the image of the divine school.

²⁶ CO 38. 247 (COR II 6/1. 629; Jer. 16:11). "... verum tamen fuit maior atrocitas sceleris in populo iudaico, quoniam Deus proposuerat illis Legem suam: fuerant quasi in ejus schola educati: sciebant quanam esset vera pietas: poterant verum Deum a fictitiis discernere."

²⁷ CO 38. 43 (COR II 6/1. 366; Jer. 9:15). "... quia semper Judaeos fallebat stulta illa gloriatio, cum obtenderent se esse progenitos ex Abraham, et proinde sanctum illius genus et electum a Deo."

²⁸ CO 38. 119 (COR II 6/1. 463; Jer. 11: 16-7). "... deinde, nonne sumus grex ipsius? nonne sumus filii? nonne sumus sanctum genus? Ergo quod solebant Judaei arroganter praetendere, ..."

²⁹ CO 2. 986 (*Inst.* 4.16.14). "Ergo sua praerogativa ne fraudarentur, evangelium illis primo loco annuntiari oportuit. Sunt enim in Dei familia velut primogeniti."

³⁰ Robinson, *John Calvin and the Jews*, 113.

everlasting inheritance.³¹ Finally, all the blessings of the land come from God's hand. Israel could possess and enjoy the blessings of the land freely. In other words, Canaan was a symbol of divine grace and a prototype of God's kingdom.³² However, the Israelites never possessed the land completely. Including Solomon, the Israelite kings worshipped foreign gods and contaminated God's holy land. Foreign armies invaded Israel and harassed it. In these historical situations, the Israelites seemed not to possess the land in a perfect sense. Furthermore, as Jeremiah proclaimed God's message, the Israelites would be exiled from the land. However, amid such miserable situations, the Israelites living in Jerusalem thought that the city would not be ruined. They believed that they lived in the city under divine protection because they were the holy people. Moreover, the city was also holy, with its temple and altar. So, they believed that Jerusalem would not be conquered.³³ Specifically, the Israelites had a strong belief that the temple was invincible.³⁴ This attitude towards the symbol of religious power was similar to that of the Catholic Church during Calvin's era. Calvin rebukes the foolish boast of the papists. They believed that they had legitimate title to the gospel since the gospel was first preached in Rome, and Rome was the chief city in the whole of Europe. Yet, Calvin clearly points out that God did not give preference to Rome nor say that His residence is there.³⁵ Also, since it is obvious that God is not limited to a certain place, Calvin considers the papists foolish because they subvert all truth and all fear of God and true religion by the name of apostolic authority.³⁶ Calvin compares the Jew's belief in the Temple to the Catholic Church's belief in the city of Rome. Judeans believed:

[...] their dwelling would be perpetual; for they boasted that they could never be excluded, as it had been declared, "This is my rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have chosen it." (Ps.

³¹ CO 38. 405 (COR II 6/1. 832; Jer. 23:3). "Deus enim terram illam elegerat in qua habitarent, et eam sibi consecraverat, cum destinaret ipsis in arrham, vel pignus aeternae haereditatis."

³² de Greef, *Van één stam*, 114. "Kanaän is zowel een teken van Gods genade als een beeld van de hemelse erfenis."; CO 2. 331 (*Inst.* 2.11.2-3).

³³ CO 37. 620 (COR II 6/1. 206; Jer. 5:10). "Nam Judaei turgebant hac inani fiducia, quod putabant se latere sub Dei praesidio: fingeant enim sibi Deum esse custodem Urbis, quia illic erat sanctuarium, illic erat."

³⁴ CO 37. 491 (COR II 6/1. 45; Jer. 1:17). "Gloriabantur enim sancto suo genere: deinde, ut postea videbimus, Templum erat illis quasi inexpugnabilis munitio adversus Deum."

³⁵ CO 37. 684 (COR II 6/1. 287; Jer. 7:15). "... denique obdurescunt adversus Deum, quasi illis esset legitima possessio, quoniam semel praedicatum fuit Romae Evangelium, et locus ille fuit quasi prima sedes Ecclesiae tam in Italia quam in Europa. Atqui Deus nunquam illo privilegio insignivit urbem Romam, neque dixit illic sibi esse domicilium."

³⁶ CO 37. 684 (COR II 6/1. 287; Jer. 7:15). "Cum ergo tot documentis Deus ostenderit se non alligatum esse ullis locis, quam stolidi est ista ferocia, quod volunt titulo sedis apostolicae Romanenses evertere et omnem doctrinam et omnem timorem Dei, et quidquid ad religionem spectat?"

132:14) As then God had testified that it would be a quiet habitation to his people, they thought that they were fortified by a triple wall and rampart, and that the city was altogether unassailable.”³⁷

Nevertheless, the prophet proclaims that they would be exiled to another country. The city of Jerusalem would also not exist for much longer. Even though their temple was built in three-part (court, Temple, Holy of holies),³⁸ the prophet prophesied that their temple and city would fall. Despite Jeremiah’s prophecy, Israel was so arrogant as to think that God was on their side as long as they had the temple and His heritage.³⁹ As they believed, God promised to abide at the temple in Jerusalem. However, He declared one condition for that promise: His people must worship Him at the temple in a sincere and proper way.⁴⁰ God did not want to be confined to the temple in Jerusalem. He wanted His name to be proclaimed from there.⁴¹ Equally, Calvin clarifies in his sermon on Jeremiah 14:19 that God built the Jerusalem temple in order for His name to be called upon and to hear there those who called for His help.⁴² God wanted it to be a holy place. God took the kingdom of Judah as His dwelling place, and Jerusalem belonged to the kingdom. Therefore, the Israelites enjoyed safety and stability under the shadow of the temple. However, God would not stay in a temple contaminated by His sinful people. Thus, He said that He would desert the temple. This meant that the land of Judah

³⁷ CO 38. 46 (COR II 6/1. 370; Jer. 9:19). “... in qua tamen putabant sibi fore perpetuum nidum: sic enim habitabant in terra, ut jactarent se nunquam posse inde excludi, quoniam pronuntiatum fuerat, Haec requies mea in saeculum saeculi, hic habitabo, quia elegi eam. Quoniam ergo Deus testatus fuerat quietem fore illud domicilium populo suo, putabant se triplici muro et fossa esse probe munitos, et urbem suam esse prorsus inexpugnabilem.”; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 1, 490.

³⁸ CO 37. 673 (COR II 6/1. 273; Jer. 7:1-4). “... neque id unum et simplex palatium, sed habet triplicia palatia, habet suum Atrium, habet suum Templum, habet Sanctum Sanctorum.”

³⁹ CO 38. 173 (COR II 6/1. 533; Jer. 13:24). “Putabant igitur Deum quodammodo sibi esse affixum, cum illa haereditate fruerentur.”

⁴⁰ CO 38. 22 (COR II 6/1. 340-1; Jer. 8:19). “Deus quidem promiserat se habitaturum in Templo, sed certa Lege, nempe si pure et legitimo ritu illic coleretur.”; CO 37. 620 (COR II 6/1. 206; Jer. 5:10). “... quia Deus elegerat quidem illic sibi domicilium et sedem, sed hac lege ut pure coleretur a populo.”

⁴¹ CO 38. 201 (COR II 6/1. 570; Jer. 14:21). “*Solum gloriae Dei* nominat Jerosolymam, quia Deus Urbem illam sibi elegerat, ubi invocaretur: non quod Templo esset inclusus, sed quoniam illic erat memoria nominis eius: ...”; As Calvin wrote in his interpretation on Psalm 132:14, the reason why God decided to stay in the temple was to make Israelites worship Him in His way and enjoy grace coming out from Him. CO 32. 350. “Ita in Sion habitavit, quia illic rite ex legis praescripto eum invocaverunt fideles: neque etiam luserunt operam, quoniam votis eorum respondit.”

⁴² Calvin, *Sermons*, 1 (Sermon 1 on Jer. 14:19, 20b, 21a). “... mais ce pendant considere qui est Jerusalem; c’est le lieu où ton Temple est basti, et as voulu que ton nom soit invocqué en ce lieu, et qu’on vienne de si loing pour t’y invocquer, et as dit que tu exaulceroyes ceux qui te prioient en ce lieu.”

and the Israelites would be destroyed,⁴³ because the Israelites polluted the temple and the city through their sinfulness.⁴⁴

God, however, who had foretold the fall of Canaan, gave a new promise to the Israelites. Moreover, He promised a revival of the temple and the city when they returned from Babylonian captivity. Even though the land of Canaan was in chaos, God still chose it to be His dwelling place and placed His temple there. He wanted to revive Jerusalem.⁴⁵ If the temple had not been restored at their return, the return would not have had any importance.⁴⁶ God was a creator of Jerusalem in order to distinguish it from other cities.⁴⁷ So, He would recreate the city and reestablish it after their return. Therefore, Jerusalem would not remain destroyed forever.⁴⁸

Furthermore, in order for Israel to continue to be the people of God, the land must also be holy. As God chose Jerusalem, which is like a mother to all churches,⁴⁹ to be His dwelling place, God took the churches as His eternal dwelling place. Hence, what is important to church members is not the Holy Land but Emmanuel, the God who wants to be with His people in the land.⁵⁰ Much attention is given to the fact that as long as God remains in a church, the church is a holy place. Likewise, the land and the temple given to Israel play an important role in showing the close relationship between God and the Israelites.⁵¹

6.5 Israel's Significance and Role in Biblical History

⁴³ CO 38. 138 (COR II 6/1. 488; Jer. 12:7). "Templum quidem hoc elogio ornatum fuit, sed respectu Templi etiam tota regio erat Dei habitaculum. Nam obtegebatur Judaea Templo, et secreta atque incolumis erat sub umbra Templi. Ergo extenditur hoc nomen ad totam terram et populum, cum dicit Deus, *Deserui domum meam, ...*"

⁴⁴ CO 38. 330 (COR II 6/1. 735; Jer. 19:11). "Sed quoniam Templum profanaverant, et Urbem inquinaverant suis sceleribus, ideo Jeremias admonet nihil fiducia, aut spei ponendum esse in Urbe illa, ..."

⁴⁵ CO 38. 702-3 (COR II 6/2. 1209; Jer. 31:38). "Nam terra ipsa semper fuit deformis usque ad Urbis restitutionem: illic enim Deus elegerat sibi domicilium: et quoniam Templum illic exstructum erat, ..."

⁴⁶ CO 38. 659 (COR II 6/2. 1152; Jer. 31:12). "Dicit venturos, *ut canant laudes in excelso Sion*, quibus verbis promittit Jeremias Templi restitutionem: et alioqui reditus in patriam Judaeis non erat magni momenti, ..."

⁴⁷ CO 39. 51 (COR II 6/2. 1274; Jer. 33:2) "Deus enim voluit censeri conditor Jerosolymae, ut statum eius discerneret a reliquo mundo."

⁴⁸ CO 39. 51 (COR II 6/2. 1274; Jer. 33:2-3). "... nempe quod Deus ab initio condiderit Jerosolymam, et sit ejus opifex, vel quod in animo habeat ipsam rursus ac de integro creare et formare. ... et ideo probe et scite ratiocinatur Propheta cladem Urbis non fore perpetuam, quia Deus ipsam condiderit."

⁴⁹ CO 49. 533. "Ierosolyma Ecclesiarum omnium mater erat, quia inde exortum fuerat verbum Domini: ..."

⁵⁰ de Greef, *Van één Stam*, 117; "Calvin sometimes took Geneva as a God's chosen land." Calvin, *Sermons*, 155 (Sermon 23 on Jer. 18:13-16).

⁵¹ Campen, *Leven uit Gods beloften*, 124; de Greef, *Van één Stam*, 113-4; Campen, "Calvin en de Joden," 247.

As we have seen earlier, Israel enjoyed the privilege of being God's people. However, the privilege made certain demands of the Israelites. Specifically, in the history of God's salvation, Israel is very important.

First, they knew how to be in fellowship with God. God established His dwelling place through Israel, and made His people worship there.⁵² God also told Israel how to worship, established a priesthood, and gave detailed rules for worship.⁵³ Likewise, Israel was the only nation that knew how to worship God. God told Israel not only the form of worship but also its spiritual meaning. Therefore, God wanted their confession to match their life through sincere worship.⁵⁴ Regarding the priests, God gave them special blessings beyond the ordinary people.⁵⁵ God took the fathers of Israel as priests and made the covenant through them.⁵⁶ However, throughout the history of Israel the Israelites did not worship properly.⁵⁷ The fundament of worship was Christ, the Priest who came to this world. In other words, the system and service of Israel were the means by which God chose to testify of Christ.⁵⁸ Although Israel had to make God's will concerning this system and service known to other nations, it did not fulfil its mission. God wanted Israel to be a light to other nations and to show the way of salvation to them.⁵⁹ However, by being bad examples to ordinary Israelites the priests corrupted Israel and diminished awe towards God in their eyes.⁶⁰ In his commentary on Jeremiah, Calvin often points out the fact that Israel did not fulfil its function and role as priest.

⁵² CO 37. 678 (COR II 6/1. 280; Jer. 7:10). "Invocari enim nomen Dei super Templum, nihil aliud est quam Templum ei consecrari, ut illic colatur."

⁵³ CO 37. 690 (COR II 6/1. 295; Jer. 7:22). "Deinde ante latam Legem semper fuit usus Sacerdotii in populo, ut Moses demonstrat. Postremo videmus quam sollicite mandaverit de offerendis sibi sacrificiis."

⁵⁴ CO 37. 672 (COR II 6/1. 272; Jer. 7:2-3). "Deus enim pro nihilo ducit hunc externum cultum, nisi praecedat interior veritas: hoc est, nisi vitae integritas respondeat professioni. Hoc est unum."

⁵⁵ CO 38. 663 (COR II 6/2. 1158; Jer. 31:14). "... specialis benedictio promittitur Sacerdotibus in communi piorum felicitate: ..."

⁵⁶ Campen, *Leven uit Gods Beloften*, 118

⁵⁷ Calvin, *Sermons*, 83 (Sermon 12 on Jer. 16:14-19a). "..., après avoir parlé des abominations, il spécifie notamment les ydolatries que le peuple avoit commises en sa terre. ... Car nous estimons, quant nous avons corrompu le service de Dieu, que ce n'est pas si grant chose; mais cela vient de ce que nous ne prions Dieu comme nous devons, ..."

⁵⁸ CO 38. 287 (COR II 6/1. 680; Jer. 17:22). "..., quam alias ceremonias fuisse umbras Christi venturi, in ipso esse solidum corpus."

⁵⁹ CO 37. 656 (COR II 6/1. 251; Jer. 6:13). "Deus enim illos ordinaverat ut praeferrent lucem, quemadmodum dixi, et viam salutis monstrarent reliquis omnibus."

⁶⁰ CO 37. 656 (COR II 6/1. 251; Jer. 6:14). "Hoc refertur ad solos Sacerdotes et Prophetas, quod scilicet non tantum malo exemplo corruerint populum, sed etiam excusserint omnem metum Dei, et suis imposturis perversaque jactantia abstulerint omnem reverentiam doctrinae propheticae."

Second, the Israelites had a role in showing God's will. God's chosen people showed that everything had been done by divine providence.⁶¹ God took care of His people as their father,⁶² and wanted Israel to know it.⁶³ Furthermore, He wanted other nations to know Him through Israel. God revealed Himself through Israel in history. This was possible through the messengers of God's word. Even though Israel was disobedient to His will and command, God led the Israelites to follow His will by sending prophets to them. Especially did the Babylonian captivity show the renewal of the kingdom of God and the renewal of the church.⁶⁴

Third, Israel was a special instrument of God in salvation history,⁶⁵ because Christ the eternal King and the high Priest came to this world through Israel. The Davidic kingdom represented Israel having the characteristics of priests. Moreover, the kings of the Davidic kingdom were models of Christ.⁶⁶ God manifested salvation history through Israel. That was the most important role given to Israel. God saved other nations through Israel. As Calvin notes, the salvation of the Israelites extends to the eternal salvation of the church.⁶⁷

6.6 Israel and Other People

Jeremiah worked as a prophet for 40 years. At that time, religion was corrupted badly and many people devised wrongs. Accordingly, Jeremiah's ministry was certainly difficult.⁶⁸ By prophesying the destruction of the temple and the city to the Israelites, Jeremiah constantly demonstrated that he was sent from God.⁶⁹ The prophesy of divine judgment was not confined to the

⁶¹ CO 38. 91 (COR II 6/1. 428; Jer. 10:23). "Nam quod homines vulgo fortunam appellant, nihil aliud est quam providentia Dei. Cum igitur Deus occulto suo consilio gubernet res humanas, sequitur omnes successus tam prosperos, quam adversos esse in ejus arbitrio."

⁶² CO 38. 317-8 (COR II 6/1. 719; Jer. 18:23). "Beneplacitum ergo populi Dei est favor ille paternus quo Deus prosequitur Ecclesiam suam."

⁶³ de Greef, *Van één Stam*, 119.

⁶⁴ CO 37. 566 (COR II 6/1. 138; Jer. 3:18). "Sed quia reditus ille, ac restitutio populi quoddam fuit Regni Christi praeludium, ideo semper incipere convenit a tempore illo, quoties vaticinantur Prophetæ de nova Ecclesia."

⁶⁵ Robinson, *John Calvin and the Jews*, 113; Campen, *Leven uit Gods Beloften*, 122; de Greef, *Calvijn en het Oude Testament*, 204.

⁶⁶ CO 38. 372 (COR II 6/1. 789; Jer. 22:2). "... scimus tamen solium Davidis fuisse aliis omnibus excellentius, quia erat Regnum illud sacerdotale, et erat imago coelestis Regni, quod postea in Christo solide patefactum fuit. Ergo cum Reges Jehudah, qui erant posterii Davidis essent Christi imagines, ..."

⁶⁷ CO 38. 679 (COR II 6/2. 1178; Jer. 31:22). "Et hoc etiam notandum est, quia quod semel dixit Jeremias de redemptione populi extenditur ad aeternam Ecclesiae salutem."

⁶⁸ CO 37. 470 (COR II 6/1. 16; Jer. 1:1). "Cum enim religio sic esset corrupta, et cuique pro arbitrio liceret fabricare varios errores, difficile et arduum munus sustinuit Jeremias."

⁶⁹ CO 39. 260 (COR II 6/2. 1542; Jer. 44:15-6). "Quod si illum contempserant annis quadraginta et diutius, tamen fidem fecerat suae legationis cum de clade Urbis et Templi constanter vaticinatus esset usque ad extremum."

Israelites. Jeremiah shared a message of the destruction of foreign nations according to God's order. However, the prophesy against the foreign nations was related to the interest of Israel because Jeremiah was God's servant for Israel, and not for foreign nations.⁷⁰

Therefore, comparing Israel with other nations makes Israel special. First, God made His people to know that God ruled the world by means of the prophesy about the destruction of the foreign nations.⁷¹ The collapse of the foreign nations was one of the ways that helped Israel know God. Second, through the fall of the foreign nations, God showed His fatherly love for the Israelites. This can be explained as God's revenge on the wrongdoings done by foreign nations to Israel.⁷² God levelled His judgment on the foreign nations as righteous compensation for the unrighteousness they had perpetrated against His people.⁷³ God takes the pain of Israel as His own.⁷⁴ In other words, God considered His chosen people to be Himself and saw the nations' unrighteousness done to Israel as actually done to Him.⁷⁵ He also wanted Israel not to despair in judgment.⁷⁶ Third, the difference between foreign countries and Israel appears when God punishes Israel. Before He punishes Israel, He warns her. Through this warning, He informs the Israelites that He gives them laws, and still governs them in the midst of judgment.⁷⁷ Even when God punishes the Israelites, He treasures them.⁷⁸ In his sermons, Calvin emphasizes that when God punished His people He did it with tenderness and

⁷⁰ CO 39. 304 (COR II 6/2. 1597; Jer. 46:27). "Diximus enim non fuisse profanis gentibus ordinatum Doctorem. Ergo quidquid de profanis gentibus concionatus est, hoc ad populi utilitatem spectavit."

⁷¹ CO 39. 322 (COR II 6/2. 1622; Jer. 48:12). "Hoc autem non tantum Moabitarum respectu dicitur, sed ut statuatur Judaei, quamvis terra illa diu tranquilla fuisset, tamen non posse effugere Dei manum, ..."; CO 39. 304 (COR II 6/2. 1597; Jer. 46:27). "Prophetae igitur quasi in speculo repraesentarunt Dei potentiam, ut scirent Israelitae illam extendi ad totum orbem, et singulas gentes."

⁷² CO 39. 348 (COR II 6/2. 1656; Jer. 49:2). "... nempe cladem Ammonitarum fore testimonium paternae Dei benevolentiae erga electum populum, quoniam scilicet eorum injurias tanquam sibi illatas ulcisci statuit."

⁷³ CO 39. 374 (COR II 6/2. 1688; Jer. 49:23). "Deus ergo hic ostendit cladem, quae ipsos manebat, esse justam mercedem impiae crudelitatis, quam exercuerant adversus electum populum."

⁷⁴ CO 39. 330 (COR II 6/2. 1632; Jer. 48:27). "... significat enim his verbis Deus se ita conjunctum esse fidelibus, ut suscipiat eorum causam quasi sibi propriam, ..."

⁷⁵ CO 39. 330 (COR II 6/2. 1632; Jer. 48:27). "... quod scilicet Deus hac lege adoptaverit sibi Ecclesiam, ut nihil separatum ab ipsa habeat. Sciamus ergo Deum perinde affici ubi videt injuste nos aliquid pati, ac si injuria in ipsum directe tenderet."

⁷⁶ CO 39. 358 (COR II 6/2. 1668; Jer. 49:12). "Propheta igitur noster hoc loco ut saepius alibi, respexit fideles, et voluit ipsos fulcire, ne succumberent oneri cum Deus tam ipsos affligeret quam Idumaeos: ..."

⁷⁷ CO 39. 379 (COR II 6/2. 1694; Jer. 49:28). "Ergo non abs re praemonuit Deus fideles, ne in tanta rerum vicissitudine et turbulentis mutationibus putarent omnia permixta esse, sed agnoscerent Deum e coelo moderari tales confusiones."

⁷⁸ CO 39. 339 (COR II 6/2. 1643; Jer. 48:38). "... quia Deus etiam de suis poenam sumit cum peccarunt: sed non desinit eos amare, et habere pretiosos."

affection.⁷⁹ Therefore, God's punishment was temporary and helpful.⁸⁰ Sometimes the punishment aided their salvation.⁸¹ By contrast, the punishment of the foreign nations was eternal judgment. While the punishment of the foreign nations was a curse of their roots, the judgment of God's people left a living stump so that branches could grow from it again.⁸² The foreign nations were needed as implements aiding God's kingdom, but Israel was the object of God's love and care. Specifically, the judgment on Babylon contains further important aspects. In Calvin's lecture on Jeremiah 50:28, he says;

We now then see the meaning of this passage. The Prophet first teaches us, that God would have a regard to his people in so rigidly punishing Babylon; and second, he adds an exhortation, lest the faithful should be unthankful to God, but acknowledge that God, for the sake of their deliverance had undertaken war against that monarchy; [...] As, then, the Prophet shows that that monarchy would be dispersed, in order that the faithful might again be gathered, and that all might worship God together in the Temple, or on mount Zion.⁸³

God showed His steadfast love for Israel through the fall of Babylon, and wanted Israel to know about the plan of salvation. Besides, God brought Babylon down in order to make it possible for Israel worship Him in Zion again. In the quote above there appears not only God's love and providence but also a correlation between the fall of Babylon and the renewal of the temple and of worship. God had a plan to make the remnant ascend Zion and worship Him by scattering Babylon to the wind. In other words, God punished Babylon, which He once used, in order to be with His people and to receive praise from them by renewing them.⁸⁴ Likewise, God's love for and plan for the Israelites appears clearly through comparing Israel and the foreign nations in Calvin's interpretation.

⁷⁹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 24 (Sermon 4 on Jer. 15:6b-10). "Quant il nous a chastié d'une sorte, il nous laisse un peu en repos. Voila donc comment il mesle ses douceurs avec ses corrections."

⁸⁰ CO 39. 488 (COR II 6/2. 1832; Jer. 51:50). "Denique poenae, quas Deus filiis suis infligit, totidem sunt medicinae."

⁸¹ CO 39. 360 (COR II 6/2. 1670; Jer. 49:12). "Sunt enim salutis adjuncta quaecunque patimur, ..."

⁸² CO 39. 307 (COR II 6/2. 1600-1; Jer. 46:28). "In summa, cum Deus dicit se consumptionem facere in gentibus profanis, hoc intelligi debet, quoniam a radice Deus illis maledicit, ..., Consumptio autem dicitur fieri in filiis Dei, ubi nihil apparet in superficie terrae, nisi forte aridus truncus, sed manet viva radix, quae deinde pullulat, et ex qua nascuntur surculi."

⁸³ CO 39. 420 (COR II 6/2. 1746; Jer. 50:28). "Nunc tenemus summam huius loci: primo loco docet Propheta, Deum habiturum rationem populi sui cum tam rigide puniet Babylonios: deinde adjungit exhortationem, ne fideles ingrati sint Deo ubi agnoverint in gratiam suae salutis Deum suscepisse bellum contra illam Monarchiam: ... Quoniam ergo erant Judaei tanquam corpus lacerum apud Chaldaeos, ostendit Propheta Monarchiam illam dissipatum iri, ut rursus in unum coeant fideles, et simul omnes Deum adorent in Templo, vel in monte Sion."; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 5, 168-9.

⁸⁴ Calvin, *Sermons*, 81 (Sermon 12 on Jer. 16:14-19a).

6.7 The True Israel: The Future of Israel

God decided to send the Israelites to Babylon and made Jeremiah proclaim God's will until they were exiled. However, Jeremiah not only talked about their fall but also their return to Canaan after their restoration. In fact, his prophecy was fulfilled in the history of Israel.⁸⁵ However, their return did not include all the Israelites.⁸⁶ God gathered His true people by His will,⁸⁷ and guided them to Canaan again. According to Calvin, the scattering of God's people signifies the purification of the church. God separated the true Israelites from false while they were in captivity.⁸⁸ This means that God left a remnant of Israelites. When Israel seemed to be brought to the ground, there was always remnant.⁸⁹ Thus, Calvin recommended to the members of the Genevan church that they be hopeful about God's plan to save His remnant when everything seemed to be a failure.⁹⁰ Calvin's sermon reminds the Genevan congregation of their time as papists. And he recommends that the congregation shall not suffer again because the congregation is free of them. Also, he wants the congregation to pray that they shall rest under God and receive the grace necessary to obey Him.⁹¹ In this sermon, Calvin considers the Genevan congregation a 'remnant' that escaped the papists like the Judeans had escaped Babylon. The remnant is God's chosen people who repent and submit to Him.⁹² They are the body of Christ and have given up their bodily desires because of the Holy Spirit. In other words, they are circumcised in their mind and ears.⁹³ As we have seen in Chapter 5, this "remnant" is not limited to the Israelites. In his exposition of Jer. 33:9 he says that the people of the New Covenant include gentiles all over the world and not just Israelites. Those who submit to God among the gentiles will be

⁸⁵ de Boer, *the Visions of Ezekiel*, 253-5.

⁸⁶ Campen, "het verbond en Israël bij Calvijn," 160-162; de Greef, *Van één stam*, 109.

⁸⁷ CO 38. 598 (COR II 6/2. 1073; Jer. 29:14). "... nempe Deum occulta ratione congregaturum esse omnes suos electos, ..."

⁸⁸ CO 38. 405 (COR II 6/1. 832; Jer. 23:3). "Dissipatio igitur populi in varias terras fuit Ecclesiae purgatio: quemadmodum etiam Deus dicit se discernere quisquilias et paleam a tritico, dum populum suum castigat."

⁸⁹ CO 37. 599 (COR II 6/1. 179; Jer. 4:27). "... tamen tenendum est aliquid semper fore reliquum, ..."

⁹⁰ Calvin, *Sermons*, 79 (Sermon 11 on Jer. 16:14-19a). "Au reste en ce qu'il fait une délivrance si admirable, congnoissons que c'est une chose que jamais nous n'eussions peu apprehender par nostre sens, ..."

⁹¹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 77 (Sermon 11 on Jer. 16:14-19a). "Or puisque nous l'avons expérimenté et que maintenant nous sommes délivrés de servir aux dieux étrangers, regardons de nous assubjectir à Dieu tellement, que nous ne luy donnions point occasion de nous renvoyer à ce torment et que nous <ne> soyons beaucoup plus tormentés que nous ne fusmes jamais. Et le prions qu'il nous face la grace que nous luy obeyssions en nous reposant soubz son joug, ..."

⁹² CO 38. 672 (COR II 6/2. 1169; Jer. 31:18). "... quasi diceret non contingere hoc promiscue omnibus ut respiciant, et se subiciant Deo, ubi poenas exigit de ipsorum peccatis, sed peculiare esse electo populo beneficium."

⁹³ CO 37. 651-2 (COR II 6/1. 246; Jer. 6:10). "... et gubernati ejus Spiritu renuntiemus cupiditatibus carnis nostrae. ... ostendite vobis circumcisa esse corda et aures."

called the remnant and will be God's people.⁹⁴ In other words, gentiles and Israelites were all able to become the people of God, the true Israel.⁹⁵ These gentiles are also 'saved by grace.'⁹⁶ This 'calling of the gentiles' is compared to an engrafting because they can become God's people when they are grafted to the stem of Abraham.⁹⁷ God calls His people a vine rather than green fields or a farm.⁹⁸ Thus, this analogy of engrafting is proper. However, gentiles cannot be the trunk of the tree. They should be satisfied with their status of being the same body as Israel by being engrafted onto the Israelites through faith in Christ only.⁹⁹ Surely, the Israelites can be engrafted just like the gentiles are. Calvin is sure that some of the unfaithful Israelites also turned toward God through Christ since reconciliation between God and the unfaithful is a special work of Christ.¹⁰⁰ The church of God will expand more and more thanks to this engrafting.¹⁰¹ In other words, those who became God's people by faith in Christ should unite in one faith,¹⁰² and they will form the one righteous community of believers through the righteousness of Christ.¹⁰³

6.8 Conclusion: Israel and Church

⁹⁴ CO 39. 58 (COR II 6/2. 1283; Jer. 33:9). "Sed minime dubium est quin hic Propheta significet gentium conversionem, cum dicit *pavebunt et contremiscent a beneficentia*. Quasi diceret non fore modo celebre Dei nomen apud gentes, ut praediceret ipsum fuisse misericordem populo suo, sed simul alium fore effectum huius gratiae, nempe ut gentes se Deo subjiçant."

⁹⁵ Campen, "het verbond en Israël bij Calvijn," 162-163; de Greef, *Van één Stam*, 103. God reveals Himself as the God of Israel and the gentiles; Calvin takes 'all Israel' in Romans 11:26 as Israelites and God's people from foreign nations. This can be found in the following commentary. CO 49. 226. "... atque ita complebitur salus totius Israelis Dei, quem ex utrisque colligi oportet: sic tamen ut priorem locum Judaei obtineant, ceu in familia Dei primogeniti."; de Greef, *Van één Stam*, 171. There were some theologians who held different views from Calvin. Vermigli took 'all Israel' as Israelites only. Bucer had the same idea as Vermigli; the theological thoughts about the Israelites after Calvin can be found in M. van Campen, *Gans Israël II. Voetiaanse en coccejaanse visies op de joden gedurende de seventiende en achttiende eeuw*, Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2006.

⁹⁶ CO 38. 256 (COR II 6/1. 640; Jer. 16:19). "... semper fore salvas reliquias gratiae."

⁹⁷ CO 49. 221. "Unde sequitur, gentium vocationem insitioni similem esse, nec aliter coaluisse in Dei populum, nisi quatenus radicem egerunt in sobole Abrahæ."

⁹⁸ CO 37. 520 (COR II 6/1. 82; Jer. 2:21). "... ideo quo testetur Deus quanti aestimet Ecclesiam suam, potius nomen vitis elegit, quam nomen prati, vel agri, ubi de ipsa loquitur."

⁹⁹ de Greef, *Van één Stam*, 100.

¹⁰⁰ CO 49. 227 (Rom. 11:26). "Huc enim tantum respicere satis habuit Paulus, quia Christi proprium munus est reconciliare Deo populum apostatam et foedifragum, certo sperandam esse aliquam conversionem, ne omnes simul intereant."

¹⁰¹ CO 37. 566 (COR II 6/1. 138; Jer. 3:18). "... ampliorem scilicet fore Ecclesiam, ubi Deus populum reduxerit, quam prius fuisset: ..."

¹⁰² CO 38. 649 (COR II 6/2. 1139; Jer. 31: 6). "Est autem locus hic apprimè utilis, quia hinc colligimus quisnam sit verus Ecclesiae status, ubi scilicet consentiunt omnes in unam fidem."

¹⁰³ CO 39. 68-69 (COR II 6/2. 1294-7; Jer. 33:16-8).

Even though not all Israelites are the true people of God, Calvin does not differentiate between ‘church’ and ‘people of Israel’ clearly in his biblical interpretation.¹⁰⁴ To Calvin, a church is ‘another expression’ for the people of God.¹⁰⁵ As God chose His people, He planted His church.¹⁰⁶ God also proclaimed that He called Himself God of the church. Furthermore, He differentiated His people and proclaimed that they would become the true church of God after their return from Babylon.¹⁰⁷ The God of Israel became the ‘God of the church’ and those who returned from Babylon became the ‘true church of God.’ The church was also placed in the place of Israel and all the covenants passed to the church.¹⁰⁸ The Promised Land also became a symbol for the covenant between God and His people.¹⁰⁹ It is certain that Israel, in Jeremiah, does not mean ethnic Israel. The true Israelites among the nations are those who gather in Christ. God, who once made a covenant with Israel, makes a covenant with the church.¹¹⁰ Then, He rules and preserves the church.¹¹¹ As God governs the church with His word, Calvin argues that without the word of God the church cannot exist. According to him, the church is built upon the word of God.¹¹² In the next chapter, we will deal with the divine word which is the foundation of the church.

¹⁰⁴ The outstanding example is that Calvin sees the return of the Israelites as the renewal of the church; CO 37. 566 (COR II 6/1. 138; Jer. 3:18). “Sed quia reditus ille, ac restitutio populi quoddam fuit Regni Christi praeludium, ideo semper incipere convenit a tempore illo, quoties vaticinantur Prophetae de nova Ecclesia.”; CO 39. 26 (COR II 6/2. 1242-3; Jer. 32:30); CO. 39. 308 (COR II 6/2. 1602-3; Jer. 46:28); CO 39. 406 (COR II 6/2. 1728-9; Jer. 50:14); CO 39. 439 (COR II 6/2. 1771-2; Jer. 51:1).

¹⁰⁵ de Greef, *Van één Stam*, 166.

¹⁰⁶ CO 38. 120 (COR II 6/1. 465; Jer. 11:16-7). “Ergo sicuti electos suos plantat Deus, ita etiam dum Ecclesiam aliquam sibi colligit externa specie, dicitur eam plantare.”

¹⁰⁷ CO 38. 464 (COR II 6/1. 906; Jer. 24:7). “Tametsi enim dominatur Deus toti mundo, asserit tamen se Deum esse Ecclesiae: et fideles, quos adoptavit, dignatur hoc elogio quod sint eius populus, ... cum exitus e Chaldaeae promissus illis fuerit, et data libertas urbis aedificandae, sed simul futuri sint vera Dei Ecclesia.”

¹⁰⁸ Campen, *Leven uit Gods Beloften*, 115.

¹⁰⁹ Campen, “het verbond en Israël bij Calvijn,” 164.

¹¹⁰ CO 39. 75 (COR II 6/2. 1303; Jer. 33:25). “Ego enim idem sum Deus, ..., et qui percussi etiam foedus cum Ecclesia mea.

¹¹¹ CO 39. 76 (COR II 6/2. 1304; Jer. 33:25). “Ergo hoc modo Deus servavit Ecclesiam suam cum Regem praefecit toti populo, quia non poterat Regnum separari, ut diximus, a populi salute.”

¹¹² CO 2. 771 (*Inst.* 4.2.4).

Chapter VII. Word: *The Foundation of the Church I*

7.1 Introduction

Besides many proofs,¹ God has given the Israelites His ‘word’ through the prophets in order to reveal Himself. This ‘word’ has become a clear and direct means by which God’s people know God. His people can see that God is Creator and Savior through His ‘word.’² In the preface to his lectures on Jeremiah, Calvin describes disorder and confusion in Judah during the time of Jeremiah. At that time, since no one listened to God’s word in the temple, the Israelites did not know what the temple should be and how they should behave in it.³ The ignoring of the word brought a distortion of worship and doctrine, and hindered the way the people of God should follow Him in order to know Him. True knowledge of God could not be obtained without the Bible. Thus, the most important thing for them was the renewal of the pure doctrine of the law.⁴ Calvin took the teaching of doctrines as important in the church.⁵ He thought that the church without doctrine was like a dead body. This is because the church experiences serious turmoil and decline if there is no teaching and discipline through doctrine.⁶ During the most turbulent days in Judah (due to the absence of the divine word and doctrine), Jeremiah was sent to restore the word of God to the Israelites.

God *speaks*. His word created the world, and God revealed Himself through His word. In other words, God exists through His word in this world.⁷ Such a divine word becomes the foundation of the church. God’s special grace given to the church is meant to have church members hear ‘His voice’ through men’s tongues and mouths. The presence of God is the presence of the word through

¹ Calvin understood that God revealed Himself through laws by which this world has been created and maintained by His providence (Cf. Schreiner, “Creation and Providence,” 267-275). For details, see *Institutes* 1.16.1-1.16.7. Furthermore, other than words, God showed Himself when He called Moses (see Exo. 3). Also, God delivered His message through angels as in the announcement of Jesus’ conception to Mary (See Luke 1:26-38).

² CO 2. 53 (*Inst.* I.6.1). “Hunc ordinem ab initio erga ecclesiam suam tenuit, ut praeter communia illa documenta verbum quaque adhiberet; quae rector est et certior ad ipsum dignoscendum nota. ... Deum non modo creatorem agnoscere necesse fuit, sed redemptorem quoque; ut certe utrumque adepti sunt ex verbo.”

³ CO 37. 469 (COR II. 6/1. 16; Jer. 1:1). “Etsi autem probabile est, non prorsus fuisse abolitam ejus memoriam, tamen restabant duntaxat quaedam fragmenta, ut certo colligere non possent, qualis ratio Ecclesiae gubernandae divinitus fuisset tradita.”

⁴ CO 37. 472 (COR II 6/1. 19; Jer. 1:1). “Cum ergo jam longa consuetudine impietas Regnum occupasset apud Judaeos, tunc repente emersit Jeremias. ... cum vellet populum reducere ad puram Legis doctrinam, ...”

⁵ Selderhuis, “Der Begriff ‘Doctrina’,” 415. According to Selderhuis, Calvin used doctrines in many ways as well as in his systematic theology classes. In other words, Calvin applied doctrines to his sermons, books, and many materials about education and faith. Specifically, this doctrine is related to his pastoral care.

⁶ Selderhuis, “Der Begriff ‘Doctrina’,” 427.

⁷ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 134.

the church. Therefore, whether a church is built on the word of God or not distinguishes a true church from a false one.⁸ Thus, declaring the true word of God at churches is the most important thing. Calvin considered the word of God important and this can be found in his last will, dated April 25, 1564. Calvin described himself as ‘a servant of the word of God at the Genevan church in the name of God.’⁹ He dedicated himself to the interpretation and testimony of God’s word. Without a doubt, Calvin took his ministry of God’s word as the most important among his ministries in Geneva.¹⁰ God’s word is needed not only in the time of Calvin in Geneva but also in every church of all time. This is because there is only darkness if God’s word is absent.¹¹

This chapter demonstrates Calvin’s thought on the word of God in ecclesiological perspective. Also, it will deal not only with His written word, the Bible, but also with ‘proclamation’ as well as Calvin’s thought on God’s spokesperson and congregants.

7.2 God’s Revelation and Accommodation

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the reason that God chose Israel to be His people reveals God’s desire to be with them. However, God and His people had differences. As Calvin noted, God is so great that His magnificence covers all the world.¹² However, Calvin describes human beings negatively.¹³ A man cannot understand God because He is beyond a man’s ability to understand. So, a man confesses that the divine wisdom and power are infinite. Therefore, unless God reveals Himself to a human being, a man is not able to know God. The difference between God and a human being requires God to act first in order to have a relationship with man. Thus, God came down from His heavenly glory to Earth to be with His people.¹⁴ In other words, God revealed Himself to His own people. According to C. van der Kooi, when Calvin explains this divine revelation, he uses

⁸ CO 51. 174. “... nempe si fundati sint in apostolorum et prophetarum doctrina. Unde etiam de vera aut falsa ecclesia iudicium facere licet: ...”

⁹ CO 20. 299. “Au nom de Dieu. Je Iean Calvin, Ministre de la parole de Dieu en l’Eglise de Geneve, ...”

¹⁰ de Greef, “Calvin’s Understanding and Interpretation,” 67.

¹¹ Muller, “The Foundation of Calvin’s Theology,” 23.

¹² CO 38. 71 (COR II 6/1. 403; Jer. 10:10). “... ubi in medium prodierit ejus majestas, quia tantus sit ejus fulgor, ut omnia quae alioqui miratur mundus in nihilum redigat.”

¹³ In Calvin’s interpretation on Psalm 90:3, the psalmist mentions the meaninglessness of human life and laments its wretchedness: CO 31. 834. “Primum commemorat quam fragilis et caduca sit hominum vita, eiusque aerumnas deplorat:”

¹⁴ CO 38. 158 (COR II 6/1. 514; Jer. 3:11). “Quid simile inter Deum et homines? et tamen quasi descenderet e coelesti sua gloria, ita sibi devinxit genus Abrahae, ut mutuo etiam se obstringeret.”

'*descendere*' meaning 'coming down'. This word pairs up with '*ascendere*'. These paired words imply the divine revelation, van der Kooi says, "because by his movement God comes down closer to man, to be within the reach of the human capacity to know, Knowledge of God arises."¹⁵ In other words, the divine coming-down (*descendere*) allows human beings to reach God above (*ascendere*). God must come down and reveal Himself to a man in order for him to know God. Through this, a man acknowledges God and is able to have a relationship with Him. The same explanation can be found in Calvin's sermon on Jeremiah 18:1-10.

For if He wanted to speak in His majesty, He would not be heard; and yet He has to come down and use words that are familiar to us, so that we can hear Him. In that we must know our inability to understand, when we see that He has to adapt to us, otherwise He would not be heard.¹⁶

Here again, Calvin discusses the difference between God and man. Unless God accommodates Himself to man, he cannot comprehend the divine word. So, God humbled Himself and used the language that man can understand. In other words, God accommodated Himself to man. In order for God to reveal heavenly teaching (*caelestis doctrina*) to man, He must take human capacity into account. Human capacity is limited.¹⁷ Therefore, God accommodated Himself to a level that His people could comprehend.¹⁸ Only this accommodation enabled God to deliver His word. First of all, God had to adjust to the prophets' capacity. God managed their mind and lips with His Holy Spirit to deliver His word. The prophets received divine messages from the Holy Spirit and delivered repeatedly to His people what God commanded.¹⁹ Therefore, the prophets' words did not originally come from themselves. They were the ministers of God's words and the servants of God, doing only

¹⁵ der Kooi, *As in a Mirror*, 41; Moehn, *Calvin's Sermons on Acts*, 190; Blacketer, *The School of God*, 101. Calvin frequently speaks of God's gracious condescension in teaching such unruly and slow students. God accommodates his wisdom to our level.

¹⁶ Calvin, *Sermons*, 144 (Sermon 21 on Jer. 18:1-10). "Car s'il vouloit parler en sa majesté, il ne seroit pas entendu; et pourtant il faut qu'il s'abaisse et qu'il use de termes qui nous sont congneuz, afin que nous l'entendions. En quoy il faut que nous congnoissions nostre rudesse, quant nous voyons qu'il fault qu'il s'accommode à nous, autrement il ne seroit point entendu."

¹⁷ Huijgen, "The Dynamic Character," 326.

¹⁸ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 128.

¹⁹ CO 39. 118 (COR II 6/2. 1360; Jer. 36:4-6). "... quia Deus Spiritu suo praeivit, et gubernavit Prophetarum mentem ac linguam. Prophetarum autem duce Spiritu et magistro recitavit quae Deus jubebat."

what they were told to do by God.²⁰ Through them, the word of God were accommodated to the people. In other words, the proclamation of the prophets were God's self-revelation and divine action accommodated to His people's capacity. Such divine accommodation rendered His words sensible to his people.²¹ In this way, God's people could have a relationship with God.

Believers can understand God only through the accommodated revelation that God offers through the Holy Spirit. The church does not have to understand more than God reveals. If it seeks out more, it can fall into various superstitions and fanatical interests.²² Those who are aware of the divine accommodated revelation can consider God's infinity. However, since God delivers His knowledge in a way suitable to human capacity, He does not show explicitly who He is in reality.²³ He came down to earth simply because He wanted to be with His people. His people learn only what God reveals about Himself.²⁴ Moreover, they should be satisfied with this. Hence, divine revelation and accommodation depend on divine sovereignty and choice. The church formed by divine choice is aware of and understands God in His consent. Also, it enjoys a relationship with the revealed God. All of the churches which have a relationship with God should be humble in the presence of His revelation.

7.3 Scripture: The Written Word of God

Even if divine revelation were clear to men, unless they listened to God's word carefully or remembered it clearly, the word of God would be useless. Calvin introduces the Israelites who abandoned divine law, or God's word, in his lecture on the first verse of Jeremiah. In the era of Jeremiah Judah ignored the book of the law thereby losing true religion and the condition of the Israelites was extremely corrupted. No one knew that God's people should worship God and as a

²⁰ CO 37. 474 (COR II 6/1. 22; Jer. 1:3). "Dicit igitur se tantum exequi quod Deus mandavit, quia fuerit discipulus ipsius Dei, antequam Doctoris partes sibi sumeret."

²¹ Huijgen, "The Dynamic Character," 328.

²² CO 39. 459 (COR II 6/2. 1796; Jer. 51:19). "Ergo cum se fatigant vani homines in speculationibus, quae non habent notitiam practicam, ut ita loquar, non mirum est si se demergant in multa deliria. Ergo sobrii simus in illa parte, nempe ne investigemus Dei essentiam supra quam par est."

²³ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 129, 134. Furthermore, Selderhuis says that God hides Himself actively or passively from men. In fact, men cannot understand God completely due to His hiddenness. Calvin always warns against judging the heavenly situation through our earthly experiences. CO 2. 90 (*Inst.* 1.13.1). "Proinde tales loquendi formae non tam ad liquidum expriment qualis sit Deus, quam eius notitiam tenuitati nostrae accommodant. Quod ut fiat, longe infra eius altitudinem descendere necesse est."

²⁴ Huijgen, "Divine Accommodation," 129.

result the true knowledge of God could not be found.²⁵ This phenomenon could also be seen in the Catholic Church during Calvin’s era. The papists clearly had the written word that God had given to church. However, the papists valued the doctrines of the Church Fathers and the decisions of the Catholic Church more than the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospels. In other words, the word of God was less important to them, and they resisted proclaiming the word or submitting themselves to the word.²⁶ God showed Himself through His word, but the Israelites (as well as churches during Calvin’s era) did not listen to the word. Men’s contempt, indifference and absolute rejection on the word appear explicitly through the prophet’s message.²⁷

In Jer. 36:1-4, Jeremiah had Baruch write God’s word according to the divine command. While Calvin interprets this passage, he mentions the efficiency of the written scriptures. First, the written divine word does not vanish, but remains. As a result, the Bible is called the written “depository of doctrine” (*caelestis doctrinae consignatio*).²⁸ When the word is proclaimed, the hearers listen to some parts of it while dismissing other parts, depending on their own capacity. This is the limitation of the proclaimed word. Nevertheless, believers can repeatedly read what they would not listen to with the help of the written word, the Bible.²⁹ Through this, the word of God could be delivered more clearly. People can understand easily the will of God with the help of the Bible.³⁰ Additionally, God wanted His people to have unwavering belief stronger than their views and knowledge through the Bible.³¹ Furthermore, another reason for the existence of the Bible is to have the divine teaching permanently available. Even though God taught His people His will through the

²⁵ CO 37. 472 (COR II 6/1. 19; Jer. 1:1). “... nempe quia status populi valde corruptus erat, tota religio vitata ob perditum librum Legis. Neque enim alibi petenda erat regula colendi Dei, neque aliunde etiam poterat sumi recta intelligentia quam ex illo fonte.”

²⁶ CO 37. 692 (COR II 6/1. 297; Jer. 7:22-23). “Et videmus etiam pertinaciter in hoc principio ipsos insistere, non standum esse, neque acquiescendum verbo Dei, quia nihil certum sit illic: ideo pluris aestimant doctrinam Patrum et perpetuum consensum Ecclesiae Catholicae, ut vocant, quam et Legem, et Prophetas, et Evangelium.”

²⁷ CO 37. 693 (COR II 6/1. 298; Jer. 7:23). “Nam hac locutione significat Propheta non modo contemptum verbi et socordiam, sed perversitatem, ...”

²⁸ CO 2. 55 (*Inst.* 1.6.3); Opitz, “Scripture,” 240. Selderhuis, “Der Begriff ‘Doctrina’,” 426-432; “... it is a matter of concern to him to stress, in particular, the authority, source, and foundation of the *doctrina*, which rest in Christ, which comes from the mouth of God and is in accordance with Scripture.” D’Assonville, “Exegesis and Doctrina,” 379-380.

²⁹ CO 39. 116 (COR II 6/2. 1357; Jer. 36:1-2). “... deinde ut etiam legatur: quoniam quod scriptum est, potest melius expendi per otium. Si quis loquatur duntaxat, quisque pro suo captu et pro attentione sua aliquid percipiet: verum quoniam labuntur sermones ex ore hominis, ideo major est Scripturae utilitas quia si quod statim non fuerit intellectum repetitur, plus habet lucis: deinde quod hodie quispiam legerit, cras iterum poterit legere, et post annum, et plures annos.”

³⁰ CO 38. 41 (COR II 6/1. 363-4; Jer. 9:13). “Lex enim ponitur nobis coram facie, ut patefiat nobis Dei voluntas.”

³¹ CO 2. 54 (*Inst.* 1.6.2). “Semper enim Deus indubiam fecit verbo suo fidem, quae omni opinione superior esset.”

prophet, they did not make good on what they heard.³² Thus, God recorded His words publicly and wanted them to continue to be available.³³ Since the written divine word is the records of what the Holy Spirit has spoken,³⁴ the Bible does not change. This point shows a different role for the written word and the spoken word.

In Calvin's sermon on Jeremiah 16:19-21, Calvin emphasizes belief based on the Bible. He recommends that the people of God should have their belief and doctrines based on the written scriptures,³⁵ and that they should examine their life to see if it mirrors the divine word. The word of God mirrors the life of the believers.³⁶ Further, the children of believers can find God through the word. Therefore, the word of God becomes the school of God's children.³⁷ Such is Calvin's view of the Bible that it shows that he lived his life following the teachings of the Bible. He thought, spoke, and wrote based on the Scriptures, thus clearly demonstrating how important the Bible was for him.³⁸ In his exegesis of Jer. 15:16, Calvin testifies that Jeremiah the prophet knew how sweet the word of God is.³⁹ Likewise, it can be inferred that Calvin loved the Bible, as he makes clear in his exposition of Jeremiah.

7.4 Inspired Word

The word as divine revelation needs a medium to be delivered to men. And the medium is the 'Holy Spirit'. In other words, the divine word is composed through holy inspiration. Those who delivered the divine word were just speaking what the Holy Spirit had commanded.⁴⁰ This teaches us that the authority of the word does not come from the church or the preachers, but from God.⁴¹ Since

³² CO 39. 116 (COR II 6/2. 1357-8; Jer. 36:1-2).

³³ CO 2. 54 (*Inst.* 1.6.2). "Tandem ut continuo progressu doctrinae veritas saeculis omnibus superstes maneret in mundo, eadem oracula quae deposuerat apud patres, quasi publicis tabulis consignata esse voluit."

³⁴ CO 39. 118 (COR II 6/2. 1360; Jer. 36:4). "Iterum repetit Jeremias nihil ex sensu suo esse profectum. Videmus ergo non dictasse pro arbitrio quae venirent in mentem, sed Deum suggestisse quidquid voluit scribi per manum Baruch."

³⁵ Calvin, *Sermons*, 90 (Sermon 13 on Jer. 16:19-21). "Et non seulement toute religion qui n'est point fondée sur la parole de Dieu est faulce, mais toute doctrine qui luy est contraire est du diable, ..."

³⁶ Calvin, *Sermons*, 148 (Sermon 22 on Jer. 18:11-14). "Quant la parole de Dieu est preschée, il fault que je face là ung examen de ma vie et que je me mire en la doctrine de Dieu. Aussi la parole de Dieu nous doit servir d'un miroir,"

³⁷ CO 2. 55 (*Inst.* 1.6.4). "..., hanc esse peculiarem filiorum Dei scholam."; Greef, "Calvin's Understanding and Interpretation", 71. To research more on the meaning of 'the school', see footnote 25 of Chap. 6.

³⁸ de Greef, "Calvin's Understanding," 69.

³⁹ CO 38. 228 (COR II 6/1. 604; Jer. 15:16). "... quod scilicet Propheta cognoverit nihil esse melius, quam amplecti quidquid a Deo profectum est. Et haec fuit dulcedo quam se testatur sensisse in sermone Dei."

⁴⁰ CO 37. 653 (COR II 6/1. 248; Jer. 6:11). "Sed non dubium est quin hic loquatur ex Spiritu Sancti instinctu: quasi diceret se non proferre quod in animo suo concepit, sed quod dictatum fuit a Spiritu Dei."; Opitz, "Scripture," 241-2.

⁴¹ CO 2. 56. (*Inst.* 1.7.1); Muller, "The foundation of Calvin's Theology," 18.

God speaks by His own spirit (*testimonio Spiritus*) the authority of the word is God alone.⁴² A prophet as a tool of the Holy Spirit could not deliver to people what he merely fabricated.⁴³ Furthermore, the Spirit controlled his mind as well as his tongue.⁴⁴ Also, when the word of God was recorded a human author wrote what God spoke by the Holy Spirit.⁴⁵ Every word of God came from God. Then His ministers, who were inspired by the Holy Spirit, delivered the word. That the origin of the word is God is the true authority of the word. In order to reveal the divine authority, the prophet declares God's will.⁴⁶

According to Calvin, the word of God has their own power through the Holy Spirit; the word can be proclaimed everywhere even if the prophet is in jail.⁴⁷ Moreover, the proclaimed word has been accomplished in substance throughout history. This means that the collapse of Israel in the book of Jeremiah was proclaimed by God through the prophets beforehand, as recorded in the Bible, and realized in the history of human beings. This means that the lip and hands of God cannot be separated, and that the word, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and delivered by the Holy Spirit is accomplished absolutely.⁴⁸ It should be noted that all the words inspired by the Holy Spirit have their own authority and power in themselves. Therefore, even if no one obeys the word, the vitality and power of the word can never be diminished.⁴⁹ In other words, for those who comply with the word, the vitality and power of the word works as the bread of life. But, those who do not comply with the word must face disaster because of the word. Since the power of the word does not disappear in the disobedient, the word judges those who are not qualified to receive grace.⁵⁰ Likewise, the effect of the word appears in

⁴² Hesselink, "Pneumatology," 302.

⁴³ CO 38. 163 (COR II 6/1. 520; Jer. 13:15). "... nam his verbis affirmat se nihil afferre proprium, sed loqui velut ex ore Dei, vel, (quod tantundem valet) se esse organum Spiritus Sancti pronuntiat, ..."

⁴⁴ CO 39. 170 (COR II 6/2. 1427; Jer. 38:17). "..., Spiritus tamen Dei impulit ipsum, et gubernavit tam cor ejus quam linguam."

⁴⁵ CO 39. 118 (COR II 6/2. 1360; Jer. 36:4). "Iterum repetit Jeremias nihil ex sensu suo esse profectum."

⁴⁶ CO 39. 329 (COR II 6/2. 1630; Jer. 48:25). "Quoniam ergo non satis autoritatis habuisset Jeremias si locutus esset in sua persona, ideo producit rursus Deum, et pronuntiat haec esse ejus verba."

⁴⁷ CO 39. 1 (COR II 6/2. 1212; Jer. 32:1). "Hic narrat Propheta quamvis inclusus esset in carcere, sermonem Dei non fuisse alligatum, ..."

⁴⁸ CO 39. 22 (COR II 6/2. 1238; Jer. 32:24-5). "Quidquid sit, os Dei non potest separari ab ejus manu. Propheta igitur ostendit justum esse judicium Dei, cladem Urbis, quia prius de ea locuti fuerint Prophetae."

⁴⁹ CO 38. 445 (COR II 6/1. 882; Jer. 23:29). "Summa est, verbo Dei semper constare suam dignitatem: quod si contingat vilipendi ab hominibus, tamen non posse spoliari vigore suo et efficacia: ..."

⁵⁰ CO 38. 444-445 (COR II 6/1. 881-2; Jer. 23:29). "Nam qui verbum Dei amplexantur reverenter, ut decet, et pia docilitate fidei, sentiunt sibi esse in cibum: sed reprobi, quia indigni sunt tanto beneficio, longe aliud experiuntur. Sermo enim ille, qui erat natura vivificus, vertitur in ignem qui eos consumat et devoret: deinde est instar mallei ad illos frangendos et conterendos et dispergendos."

both parties, yet the word does not work positively in the disobedient. Only those with the Holy Spirit experience the effect of the word.⁵¹ So it is that only the Holy Spirit causes the divine word to be meaningful and powerful. God makes His word effective through the Holy Spirit.⁵²

7.5 Speakers and Hearers of the Word

Although Calvin studied the book of Jeremiah, he did not record what he learned from the text himself. Calvin's exegesis of Jeremiah was delivered through his sermons (1549-50) and lectures (1560-62) and members of his audiences recorded them.⁵³ Therefore, unlike other of his commentaries,⁵⁴ Calvin's interpretation of Jeremiah was not originally written but spoken. The congregations were familiar with listening to the spoken word during the Reformation era. Kingdon says, "the key shift in public worship during the Reformation was from a form of worship centered on the Mass to a form of worship centered on the sermon."⁵⁵ In the midst of such change, Calvin noted his thoughts about preachers and hearers in his lectures and sermons on the book of Jeremiah.

As mentioned above, Calvin as 'a speaker' emphasizes that preachers should deliver what God has commanded. In the church of God, nothing other than the voice of God should be heard.⁵⁶ In his sermon on Jer. 17:15-16, Calvin points out that mixing divine words with other contents contaminates the message.⁵⁷ Delivering these mixed messages shows that the preacher is a false prophet, and that he should not be trusted.⁵⁸ However, those who testify to God's word did not simply recite what God has taught. They had to explain what God wanted by interpreting the words.

Therefore, those who deliver God's will have to accommodate the message to their congregation for

⁵¹Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 123.

⁵² CO 2. 71 (*Inst.* I.9.3).

⁵³ See Chap. 1.1

⁵⁴ Among the books in the Old Testament, Calvin wrote commentaries only on Isaiah (1551), Genesis (1554, 1563), Psalms (1557), Exodus through Deuteronomy (1563), and Joshua (1564). According to de Greef, Calvin always noted simple interpretations of the text. However, he dealt with the text more precisely in his lectures rather than his commentaries. So, he concentrated on biblical exegesis and did not add doctrinal explanations during the lectures. For further studies, see de Greef, *The Writings*, 101-7.

⁵⁵ Kingdon, *Reforming Geneva*, 27.

⁵⁶ CO 38. 193 (COR II 6/1. 559; Jer. 14:14). "Nam ita significat nullam hominis vocem audiendam esse in Ecclesia, sed suam duntaxat."

⁵⁷ Calvin, *Sermons*, 125 (Sermon 18 on Jer. 17: 13b, 15,16). "Il faut donc que les hommes ne s'abusent point de meller leur parole avec la parole de Dieu, car c'est autant de pollution."

⁵⁸ CO 38. 193 (COR II 6/1. 559; Jer. 14:14). "Si quid ergo de suo Propheta miscet, convincitur falsi, et ita indignus est ulla fide."

true understanding to occur.⁵⁹ Jeremiah wanted God's people to reform their life through true worship after they listened to God's word.⁶⁰ In his own sermons, Calvin wanted his congregation to form their life by God's word while his sermon connected with their heart, not their ears.⁶¹ Calvin recommended they learn to benefit from the word, to obey the word and not to sin.⁶² Explaining God's word well and building a pious community through those words was Calvin's purpose for his sermons.⁶³ For this reason, Calvin rebuked those who delivered their own thoughts and not God's word and exposed their ambition.⁶⁴ Also, he reproached those who took the position of a preacher to make money and be successful.⁶⁵ Furthermore, Calvin criticized those who pretended to preach, such as the papists. They confused the world with false doctrine and continued to boast themselves to be the servants of God.⁶⁶

Calvin also thought that the positions of speaker and listener were the same before God. What God commanded His people to do is to listen to the voice of God.⁶⁷ This is not just for congregations. Preachers should listen to the voice of God. Speakers and listeners understand the word of God through the same Holy Spirit.⁶⁸ They are all sinners and have to obey God. Thus, in his sermons and lectures, Calvin uses the first person plural "we (*nous*)" rather than the second person plural pronoun "you (*vous*)."⁶⁹ If he had addressed the audience with 'vous,' he would stress the difference between the audience and the preacher. Nonetheless, even if he rarely uses a second-person plural pronoun "vous," both pronouns indicate that the preacher identifies with his congregation. With this, there apparently appears no difference between listener and speaker as the audience of God's word, and the

⁵⁹ Moehn, *Calvin's Sermons on Acts*, 191.

⁶⁰ CO 37. 671-2 (COR II 6/1. 271-2; Jer. 7:1). "Summa autem concionis est, ut serio respiscant, si velint Deum sibi placare. ... nempe ut vitam suam mutant in melius:"

⁶¹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 74 (Sermon 11 on Jer. 16:12-15). "Voila une bonne doctrine", mais il faut la recevoir en nos cœurs, et de fait il ne parle pas à nos oreilles, il parle à notre cœur. Il faut donc que la parole de Dieu prenne son siège au cœur et qu'elle y règne. ... puisque nous avons sa parole, que chacun advise de se reformer."

⁶² Calvin, *Sermons*, 132 (Sermon 19 on Jer. 17:17-23). "Apprenons donc que chacun y profite, tellement qu'il ne se plaigne point de nous et que nous ne soyons trouvez dignes de telle condamnation, ne voulans point nous y assubjectir."

⁶³ Manetsch, *Calvin's Company*, 160.

⁶⁴ CO 38. 322 (COR II 6/1. 725; Jer. 19:2). "... quanta est eorum temeritas, qui volunt superare ipsum, et ingerendo sua commenta, interea postulant censeri pro oraculis?"

⁶⁵ CO 38. 282 (COR II 6/1. 673; Jer. 17:16). "Mercenarii autem, quibus nulla est religio adulterare Dei verbum, expetunt munus illud."

⁶⁶ CO 38. 435 (COR II 6/1. 869; Jer. 23:22). "Nam scimus pessimos quosque proterve obtendere sermonem Dei: quemadmodum hodie Papistae quamvis inebriaverint totum mundum impiis deliriis, jactant tamen se esse Dei servos."

⁶⁷ CO 38. 105 (COR II 6/1. 446; Jer. 11:6-8). "Jam adjungit se hoc tantum postulasse a populo electo ut audiret vocem suam."

⁶⁸ Muller, "The Foundation," 19.

⁶⁹ Manetsch, *Calvin's Company of Pastors*, 162.

message and application of His word should be directed to both preacher and listener.⁷⁰ For example, in his lecture on Jeremiah 11:8, Calvin uses the first person plural suffix saying “we” did not listen to the words of God while not following the word’s authority and advice.⁷¹ And when he recommends that his congregation listens carefully to his sermons, he uses ‘we.’⁷² Sermons are for the edification of the congregation, therefore, preachers should first receive the teaching from God before they hand it off to the congregation.⁷³ Consequently, preachers should be aware that they are learners as well. Calvin obeyed the word and preached with a mind intent on learning.⁷⁴

Calvin emphasizes that the congregation should obey the word they hear because God takes obedience to be more important than any offerings and sacrifices (1 Sam. 15:22).⁷⁵ A proper attitude is essential to the congregation because they can find happiness and receive benefits from God only when they are ready to obey.⁷⁶ In this context, Calvin criticizes the attitude of the hypocrites among the congregation. When they listen to God’s word, they pretend to listen carefully but they do not obey. They act like the hearing-impaired.⁷⁷ Sometimes, those who listen to God’s word also feel burdened, according to Calvin, because they have weaknesses.⁷⁸ So, when the congregation listens to the word of God they should receive God’s promises and concentrate on the words without swerving from them.⁷⁹ While Calvin argues in his sermon that believers do not listen to the teachings of God

⁷⁰ Parker, *Calvin’s Preaching*, 116-7; Cf. Moehn, *Calvin’s Sermons on Acts*, 197-198. Moehn says that if Calvin had addressed the listeners with “vous,” he would have emphasized the difference between preacher and listeners.

⁷¹ CO 38. 106 (COR II 6/1. 447; Jer. 11:6-8). “Hoc autem signum est extremi contemptus, ubi non tantum repudiamus eum qui loquitur, et nolumus ejus imperio vel consilio parere, sed ubi praecludimus omnem aditum, et quantum in nobis est vetamus ipsum loqui, hoc certe nimis est contumeliosum.”

⁷² Calvin, *Sermons*, 71 (Sermon 10 on Jer. 16:8-12). “Soyons y donc attentifz et apportons des oreilles au sermon, et jamais nous ne serons trompez.”

⁷³ “... in brief, we need to have been taught by God before we can be masters or doctors.” Parker, *Calvin’s preaching*, 37.

⁷⁴ Moehn, “Sermons,” 177; Moehn, *Calvin’s Sermons on Acts*, 220-221. In this context, Moehn insists that a preacher will always be a student for his entire life.

⁷⁵ CO 37. 693 (COR II 6/1. 297; Jer. 7:23). “... nempe hanc esse praecipuam partem veri et recti cultus, ubi audimus Deum loquentem: et pluris esse obedientiam quam omnes victimas, et omnia sacrificia, sicuti jam citavimus ex decimo quinto capite primi Samuelis.”

⁷⁶ CO 38. 454 (COR II 6/1. 893; Jer. 23:37). “... quia si auditor esset paratus ad obsequium, reperiret apud probum Doctorem quod merito placeret.”

⁷⁷ CO 38. 41 (COR II 6/1. 364; Jer. 9:13-5). “Fingunt enim etiam hypocritae se audire, et annunt etiam auribus quemadmodum asini; sed quia non obsequuntur loquenti Deo, hinc patet eos surdos esse.”; de Greef, “Calvijn en het omgaan,” 19.

⁷⁸ CO 38. 452 (COR II 6/1. 891; Jer. 23:36). “... sic etiam a nobis, et culpa nostra provenit quod sermo Dei vocatur Onus.”

⁷⁹ CO 39. 64 (COR II 6/2. 1289; Jer. 33:14). “Ergo discamus amplecti ejus promissiones, et nemo hoc vel illud sibi imaginetur: sed sciamus tunc demum nobis fore propitium, si innitimus ejus sermoni.”

due to their evil, it is Christ's duty to open their ears so they can hear the word of God.⁸⁰ Such help enables the congregation to listen to the word, so that God forms them in His image and changes their falsehood to truth. This means that when the congregation comes to a worship service, they should let God evaluate their spiritual condition like a doctor evaluates the body. Then they should follow His instructions.⁸¹ Even though congregations generally have passive attitudes, Calvin wants the congregation to participate in worship services and sermons more actively.⁸² At this point, he requires that not only preachers but also the congregation should possess the right attitude towards the word.

7.6 The Word as the Sign of the Church

According to Selderhuis, Calvin's conviction is that the church's right to exist depends solely on whether the word of God is proclaimed there. In other words, a church exists where the word of God is sincerely proclaimed and God is properly served. Thus, preaching and the church cannot exist without each other.⁸³ Calvin argues that "wherever we see the word of God purely preached and heard, and the sacraments administered according to Christ's institution, there, it is not to be doubted, a church of God exists."⁸⁴ He also argues that the existence of the church parallels the proclamation of God's word. That is, the proclamation of God's word is the sign of a true church. Another sign of the church, he says, is the 'sacraments' which enables believers to trust the truth of the word more.⁸⁵ Consequently, Augustine calls the sacraments "visible words."⁸⁶ Centering on the word of God, the church is the place where the gospel is delivered through the word and through the visible word, the sacraments.⁸⁷ Likewise, the proclamation of God's word is the essential sign showing the identity of

⁸⁰ Calvin, *Sermons*, 71 (Sermon 10 on Jer. 16:8-12). "Et c'est pourquoy il est dict si souvent en l'Escripture: "Qui a des aureilles pour oyr, qu'il entende!", pour monstrier que l'office de Jesuscrist est de les nous ouvrir. Mais quoy que ce soit, si est ce que si nous n'entendons la doctrine de Dieu, que cela procede de nostre malice; ..."

⁸¹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 112 (Sermon 16 on Jer. 17:9-11). "Voila que alors Dieu use d'office de medecin envers nous et reduist ceste mensonge en verité, quant il nous reforme à son ymage; car nous portions l'ymage du diable, pere de mensonge. ... Et pourtant, quant nous venons au sermon, pensons que Dieu renouvelle cest examen, ... Il est besoing que Dieu nous reforme d'heure en heure, et pourtant aprenons de nous excercer en ceste doctrine."

⁸² Parker, *Calvin's Preaching*, 48; Witvliet and Bierma, "Liturgy," 417.

⁸³ Selderhuis, "Church on stage," 51. "Doctrina, praedicatio and ecclesia cannot exist without each other."

⁸⁴ CO 2. 753 (*Inst.* 4.1.9). "Ubi enim cunque Dei verbum sincere praedicari atque audiri, ubi sacramenta ex Christi instituto administrari videmus, illic aliquam esse Dei ecclesiam nullo modo ambigendum est;"; Cf. Calvin, *Institutes II*, ed. McNeill, 1023.

⁸⁵ CO 38. 573 (COR II 6/2. 1043; Jer. 28:10). "Ergo ligamen in collo Jeremiae erat instar sacramenti, quoniam erat signum visibile ad stabiliendam doctrinae fidem."

⁸⁶ CO 2. 945 (*Inst.* 4.14.6). "Sacramenta igitur exercitia sunt quae certiozem verbi Dei fidem nobis faciunt; ... Hac ratione Augustinus sacramentum verbum visibile nuncupat; ..."; Janse, "The Sacraments," 347.

⁸⁷ McGrath, *Reformation Thought*, 153.

the true church. Through the word God is present in and rules the church. In this context, Calvin says the following:

This, then, is the only true happiness of the Church, even to be in subjection to Christ, so that he may exercise towards us the two offices (as a king and a priest) described here. Hence also we gather, that these are the two marks of a true Church, by which she is to be distinguished from all conventicles, who falsely profess the name of God, and boast themselves to be Churches. For where the kingdom and priesthood of Christ are found, there, no doubt, is the Church; but where Christ is not owned as a king and a priest, nothing is there but confusion,⁸⁸

In his exegesis of Jer. 33:17-18, Calvin explains that the continuity of the Davidic kingship and priesthood in the Israelites implies the restoration of the church.⁸⁹ Also, the sole blessing of the church is that Christ has these two offices: king and priest. Therefore, Calvin argues that there is a church where Christ is recognized as king and priest. In the quote above, Calvin connects the two signs of the church with Christ's two offices. He also insists that the place where the word of God is preached and the sacraments are present is in the name of Christ, and that therefore, Christ is there and a church exists.⁹⁰ Likewise, Christ is revealed to believers through word and sacrament. Therefore, the two signs of the church, word and sacrament, are two means of grace helping God's people to be in communion with Christ.⁹¹ Moreover, Christ remains as king and priest among them. However, the word as a sign of the church includes right preaching (*praedicari*) as well as a right listening (*audiri*) to the word.⁹² Every grace comes from hearing. Accordingly, right hearing of the word is as important as right preaching in the church. Nevertheless, the Catholic Church during Calvin's era did not take the word of God into account,⁹³ and the Catholic priests, as a result, could not deliver the word of God

⁸⁸ CO 39. 69 (COR II 6/2. 1297; Jer. 33:17-8). "Haec igitur unica est Ecclesiae felicitas, subesse Christo, ita ut munus utrumque quod hic describitur exerceat. Unde etiam colligimus has esse notas verae Ecclesiae, quibus discernitur ab omnibus conventiculis, quae falso obtendunt Dei nomen et sese pro ecclesiis venditant. Ubi enim conspicitur Regnum et Sacerdotium Christi, illic certum est esse Ecclesiam: ubi autem Christus non agnoscitur Rex et Sacerdos, nihil est aliud quam chaos." Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 4, 257.

⁸⁹ CO 39. 69 (COR II 6/2. 1296; Jer. 33:17). "Locutus est Propheta de restitutione Ecclesiae: eam doctrinam nunc confirmat, quia promittit Regnum una cum Sacerdotio perpetuum fore."

⁹⁰ CO 2. 754 (*Inst.* 4.1.9). "... quae si ministerium habet verbi, et honorat, si sacramentorum administrationem, ecclesia procul duliohaberi et censi meretur: ..."

⁹¹ Parker, *Calvin's Preaching*, 42. He says, "Just as Christ is present at the Supper spiritually, that is, by the working of the Spirit, so he is present in the preaching spirituaaly – by the working of the Spirit."

⁹² CO 2. 753 (*Inst.* 4.1.9). "Ubi enim cunque Dei verbum sincere praedicari atque audiri, ..."; Moehn, *Calvin's sermons on Acts*, 198.

⁹³ CO 38. 548 (COR II 6/2. 1012; Jer. 27:9). "... sicuti hodie cum jactatur Catholicae Ecclesiae nomen in Papatu, videtur hoc totum referri ad Deum. Sed ubi profertur sermo Dei, ubi ostenditur quid locutus fuerit per Apostolos et Prophetas, hoc fere pro nihilo ducitur."

adequately while the Catholic congregation could not listen to the word properly. In addition, in his sermon on Jer. 17:17-23 Calvin criticizes those who do not participate in hearing sermons or receiving sacraments.⁹⁴ They cannot be regarded as members of the church because they do not hear nor follow the word. Likewise, it should be noted that both preaching and hearing the word comprise the sign of the true church.

Sincere proclamation and hearing are a clear sign to differentiate the true church from other assemblies. In proclamation, hearing and sacraments, Christ exists in His two offices: king and priest. When these are carried out, the church that was previously invisible appears visibly.⁹⁵

7.7 Comparative Study: Jer. 17:12-18

Calvin's interpretation of Jeremiah is recorded in two genres: sermons and lectures. In this section what Calvin emphasizes about God's word in both genres will be discussed. For this, Jeremiah 17:12-18 will be the test case. In this passage, Jeremiah the prophet appeals to God because of his position of serving as a messenger of God's word.

In his sermon and lectures on Jeremiah 17:12-18, Calvin speaks of a preacher of God's word. He mainly deals with who a preacher is, since Jeremiah the prophet is a messenger of God's word. Calvin's argument can be divided into three parts. First, a minister is chosen by God and has a mission to obey God's word. Calvin teaches, furthermore, in his lectures that only those who are chosen by God's hand and received a calling from Him can become pastors, prophets and teachers of the church.⁹⁶ Likewise Calvin, in his sermons, emphasizes that those who follow God's calling are the true ministers of God.⁹⁷ Second, he who is chosen to be a preacher must deliver only God's word and should not add any other thing to the word arbitrarily. Those who deliver God's word are not called to

⁹⁴ Calvin, *Sermons*, 131 (Sermon 19 on Jer. 17:17-23). "Mais ce pendant ceux qui ne viennent point au sermon ny à la cene monstrent bien que Jesucrist ne leur est rien, et voila que le mespris du signe monstre le mespris de la verité."

⁹⁵ Milner, *Calvin's Doctrine*, 100.

⁹⁶ CO 38. 280 (COR II 6/1. 671; Jer. 17:16). "Ille igitur demum censeri meretur legitimus Dei Minister et Propheta et Ecclesiae Doctor, qui non fertur carnis suae impulsu, neque inconsiderato zelo, sed cui Deus manum porrexit, et qui vocatus duntaxat parat."

⁹⁷ Calvin, *Sermons*, 122 (Sermon 18 on Jer. 17:13b, 15,16). "..., c'est à savoir que les hommes ne s'ingerent point d'eux mesmes mais qu'ilz suyvent Dieu, c'est à savoir sa vocation."

proclaim whatever they want, but to deliver only God's word.⁹⁸ When they receive their calling, they are commissioned to share the word of God alone.⁹⁹ Third, he must sometimes struggle against those who listen to his sermons. From the moment Jeremiah was obliged to deliver God's word as a prophet, he confessed, he knew that he had to strive with the people of Judah.¹⁰⁰ Through his lectures Calvin explained that preachers suffer numerous difficulties. Likewise Calvin, in his sermons, argued that those who deal with the word faithfully will suffer in due time.¹⁰¹ They are the ones who fight against the hypocrites. When they deliver just God's word, there will be trouble and suffering caused by the congregation.

Nonetheless, differences also can be found in the interpretations found in these two genres. In his sermons, Calvin says more about the attitudes of hearers. He points to the fact that the congregation does not think very much about what they hear in worship. While listening, they do not concentrate on the sermons but instead have their minds focused on other things. Calvin criticizes the fact that they do not focus on sermons.¹⁰² Even if they listen to preaching every day,¹⁰³ Calvin rebukes them because they do not further ponder the words.¹⁰⁴ Calvin insists that they should respect the sermon more and focus on it as if it were already realized.¹⁰⁵ Through these recommendations, Calvin teaches the congregation how to follow a sermon properly. However, Calvin does not essentially deal

⁹⁸ CO 38. 280 (COR II 6/1. 671; Jer. 17:16). "Secundo loco ostendit eos, qui vocati sunt ad munus docendi, non ornari potestate regia, ut proferant quidquid visum est, sed esse Pastores post Deum."

⁹⁹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 122 (Sermon 18 on Jer. 17:13b, 15,16). "C'est que après qu'ilz auront recue <la parole> de Dieu, qu'ilz l'anoncent et qu'il<Z> n'y adjoustent rien d'eux. ... Nous avons donc seulement ceste commission de declarer sa parole, ..."

¹⁰⁰ CO 38. 281 (COR II 6/1. 673; Jer. 17:16). "Nam statim ab initio comperta fuit mihi conditio hujus officii, nempe, quod mihi certandum esset cum toto populo et cum singulis."

¹⁰¹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 123 (Sermon 18 on Jer. 17:13b, 15, 16). "En somme, la parole de Dieu emporte cela, que si on la veult traicter fidellement, qu'on sera persecuté. Et de fait nous le voions aujourd'hui; mais ce n'est pas du jourdhuy, c'est de tousjours. ... Quant donc on contestera ainsi contre la saincteté du monde, c'est à savoir contre son ypochrisie, on aura ces combatz."

¹⁰² Calvin, *Sermons*, 117 (Sermon 17 on Jer. 17:11-14). "Tant s'en faut que nous nous applicquions à rememorere la doctrine après que nous l'avons ouye, que les uns n'en veullent point avoir les aureilles rompues, et encores quant nous serons icy pour la devoir oyr, noz espritz sont ailleurs et faisons des chasteaulx en Espagne." Here, the expression "*faisons des chasteaulx en Espagne*" means "building castles in the air".

¹⁰³ McKee, "Sermons, Prayers, and Detective Work," 72; Selderhuis, *John Calvin*, 112. In October 1549, when Calvin preached the book of Jeremiah weekdays, the city council decided that there should be more preaching, and expanded the schedule to include sermons on every day instead of only three days a week. From then on, Calvin preached twice each Sunday and every other week on all workdays as well.

¹⁰⁴ Calvin, *Sermons*, 121 (Sermon 18 on Jer. 17:13b, 15,16). "Encores nous craindrions le chien qu'il ne nous mordist, mais voicy Dieu qui parle et n'est point oy en noz cueurs, et mesmes le son de ses parolles ne vient pas jusques à noz aureilles."

¹⁰⁵ Calvin, *Sermons*, 121 (Sermon 18 on Jer. 17:13b, 15,16). "Or par cecy nous sommes admonestez de donner plus de reverence à la parole de Dieu, et que, si c'est que nous entendions ses menaces, nous en soions estonnez comme si elles estoient deja advenues, et que sa parole ait autant de poix envers nous comme si la chose estoit presente."

with this attitude of the congregation in his lectures. Instead, in his lectures, Calvin deals with the preacher's attitude; a topic which he does not mention in his sermons. First, he criticizes many pastors who do not find difficulty in doing the pastor's work properly. They chose to be a pastor without considering the position seriously. They take their calling as a way to make money and to be successful.¹⁰⁶ Because of that people came to think that becoming a pastor was an easy way to make a living and not an important task. He also criticizes their laziness because even though they know that preaching is a hard job, they do it poorly. Furthermore, he condemns the evil of those who seek economic benefit by using the word of God while having no faith.¹⁰⁷ He deals with such an attitude of some preachers only in his lectures.

The different audiences of Calvin's teachings are the reason for the different interpretations appearing in these two genres. As mentioned before the intended audience of the sermons is the congregation while that of the lectures are the students at the Geneva Academy. As a result, the application depends upon the audience. In other words, in sermons targeting the congregation Calvin deals with points relevant to the congregation. In lectures he addresses the pastors and the theological students, he mainly deals with the attitude of preachers. This study has important implications for knowing Calvin's thought on preachers and congregations as well as the historical background of Geneva during Calvin's time.

7.8 Conclusion

It is no exaggeration to say that the preaching of God's word in Geneva during the 16th century was the core of a religious revolution, and played an incredibly important role in the Reformation.¹⁰⁸ In the Mass as practiced before the Reformation, the congregation could not understand what they heard in worship services since most had no idea what was going on in Latin. But afterwards, the authority of the word was with God and the congregation was made to know it.

¹⁰⁶ CO 38. 281-2 (COR II 6/1. 673; Jer. 17:16). "Hodie vix centesimus quisque secum reputat quam difficile sit ac laboriosum, fideliter defungi Pastoris officio. Ergo multi tanquam ad rem levem, et nullius ponderis feruntur."

¹⁰⁷ CO 38. 282 (COR II 6/1. 673; Jer. 17:16). "Alii, etiam si videant sibi fore multas et graves pugnas, tamen quia nati sunt ad contentionem ideo nihil formidant, sed opponunt ferreum pectus. Alii appetendo munus propheticum sunt mercenarii."

¹⁰⁸ Manetsch, *Calvin's Company*, 147.

Also, with authority and the Holy Spirit, preachers delivered the word to the sacred communities. Through the proclamation of the word, the divine doctrines were delivered and the Genevan church could be reformed. According to Calvin's sermons on Jeremiah, when God calls the congregation to come into His word the congregation just needs to obey Him.¹⁰⁹ By listening to the word of God, the people of God are bound to Him. So, Calvin notes the importance of listening and obeying the divine word in his exegesis of the book of Jeremiah. Furthermore, his sermons and lectures show how he applies biblical lessons and how doing so depends on the intended audience. In a sermon on Jer. 14:19-21, Calvin says that when the people of God possess the divine word, God rules us, and that God calls the church the kingdom of God because His name is called upon there. Thus, when the word is stolen, the kingdom of God is attacked.¹¹⁰ Through the word, God comes to His people, and communicates with them.¹¹¹ Without the proclamation of the word, the church cannot exist.¹¹² According to Selderhuis, Calvin sees the Reformation as a result of the power that God's word has. Through the Reformation, many people come to live under the Lordship of Christ. That is because the word of God enabled them to do so.¹¹³ The same view is to be found in Calvin's lectures and sermons on the book of Jeremiah. The proclamation and the hearing of the divine word are the most important at church. They are the clear signs of church. And, the people of God should not think that church can exist without the word of God.¹¹⁴ Therefore, the word is the foundation of church with the worship which will be dealt with in the next chapter.

¹⁰⁹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 118 (Sermon 17 on Jer. 17:11-14). "Apreons que comme Dieu s'est tousjours manifesté par sa parolle, maintenant qu'il s'est apparu à nous par Jesucrist, ... Quant il ne demande qu'à entrer par sa doctrine, que nous luy donnions ceste entrée là."

¹¹⁰ Calvin, *Sermons*, 3 (Sermon 1 on Jer. 14:19, 20b, 21a). "Voila pourquoy Dieu apelle l'Eglise le royaume des cieus: ..., mais c'est d'autant que Dieu regne sur nous et que nous le congnoissons nostre roy souverain. Quant donc sa parolle est ostée, voila le royaume de Dieu aboly. Et en cela nous voions quelle benediction c'est d'avoir la parolle de Dieu."

¹¹¹ der Kooi, *As in a mirror*, 63.

¹¹² Moehn, *Calvin's Sermons on Acts*, 179.

¹¹³ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 121.

¹¹⁴ Cf. CO 2. 771 (*Inst.* 4.2.4).

Chapter VIII. Worship: *The Foundation of the Church II*

8.1 Introduction

The Jerusalem Temple of ancient Israel might appear to be a typical visible ‘church.’ God calls the temple “this house, which bears my Name (Jer. 7:10, NIV).” Calvin considers the temple a place dedicated to God. God shows Himself to those who seek and worship Him in the temple.¹ Likewise, a physical and visible meeting of the congregation in the church is basically the place worshippers seek for and worship God. The religious reformation that Hezekiah carried out, Calvin says, was to revive true worship.² Later on, Israel started to sin again by damaging worship. In the introduction to his lecture on Jeremiah, Calvin described the situation in which worship and pure doctrine were distorted during a morally corrupt era in Israel.³ Likewise, according to Calvin, the history of church shows that the absence of true worship worsened Christian faith.⁴ In the directory of public worship of Calvin, worship includes the proclamation of the word, the hearing of the congregation, and the practice of the sacraments.⁵ Therefore, attending the worship service was important to the citizens of Geneva. Calvin asked them to attend the entire service and not leave early.⁶ According to Calvin, the sign of a true Christian is one who confesses faith, lives a godly life, and attends the sacraments. Through these practices, believers are recognized as the body of Christ and God as their Lord.⁷ Therefore, pious people show that they are Christians through attending worship services and sacraments as well as confessing their faith.

¹ CO 37. 678 (COR II 6/1. 280; Jer. 7:9-10). “Invocari enim nomen Dei super Templum, nihil aliud est quam Templum ei consecrari, ut illic colatur. Si vere colitur Deus, qui ipsum quaerunt, sentiunt etiam ipsum praesentem gratia et virtute.”

² CO 38. 211 (COR II 6/1. 582-3; Jer. 15:4). “Nam cum religio fuisset recte constituta Ezechiae tempore, et pius ille Rex non absque maximis laboribus et molestiis suas omnes vires convertisset ad restituendum Dei cultum, debuit Manasse patrem suum imitari.”

³ CO 37. 469 (COR II 6/1. 16; Praelectione). “In tanta licentia minime dubium est, quin multi homines turbulenti conati fuerint pervertere Dei cultum, et puram doctrinam: et quisque sibi fabricatus sit multas nugas.”

⁴ CO 37. 470 (COR II 6/1. 16; Praelectione). “Sed postquam Reges coeperunt desciscere a vero Dei cultu, nullum apud eos extitit Legis exempla. Tandem etiam Lex ipsa prorsus intercidit. Nec dubium est, quin hoc acciderit per tyrannidem Regis Manasse, qui crudeliter saevit tam in Sacerdotes quam in reliquos Dei servos.”

⁵ Manetsch, *Calvin’s Company of Pastors*, 152-3; Dieleman, *the Battle for the Sabbath*, 65-9.

⁶ Witvliet and Bierma, “Liturgy,” 409; Kingdon, *Reforming Geneva*, 45.

⁷ CO 2. 753 (*Inst.* 4.1.8). “... quo pro ecclesiae membris agnoscamus, qui et fidei confessione, et vitae exemplo, et sacramentorum participatione eundem nobiscum Deum ac Christum profitentur.”

To study Calvin's thought on worship in his exegesis of the book of Jeremiah, this chapter deals with why worship is required of Christians. Also, we will go over true worship and false in 8.2 and 8.3. Then, we will see Calvin's ideas of praise and prayer. In 8.5, the meaning of the Sabbath will be dealt with. Last, we will think about the relationship between worship and the Christian life, and clarify the meaning of worship in Calvin's ecclesiology.

8.2 The Necessity of Worship

Calvin began to formulate a new liturgy by mentioning the administration of the sacraments in his first edition of the *Institutes* of 1536.⁸ In 1537, he submitted the *Articles concerning the Organization of the Church and of Worship in Geneva* with other pastors to the city council.⁹ This tells us that from the start of his ministry Calvin tried to reform the worship services in Geneva and their liturgy. In May, 1536, the city of Geneva officially accepted the reformed faith. In other words, Calvin started his ministry in Geneva right after the citizens of Geneva accepted the reformed faith. So, he had to give instructions on proper worship to the Genevans who grew up in the Catholic Church in order to attend the newly reformed worship service without any confusion.¹⁰ Therefore, he first wrote the Articles about the worship service, and he had to do his best on carrying out the worship services as described in the Article, then encouraged the congregation to attend the new services. However, this could not be done in a day, a real challenge to the reformer. Moreover, he criticized the problems of the Catholic mass and emphasized the importance of right worship by pointing out the difference between Catholic and the Reformed.¹¹ There are many reasons that believers come to church. However, ultimately, they come to church to worship God. Therefore, seeing impious people in church must discourage the reformer. The proper education in worship and the practice of true worship, thus, seem to be the most important duty of the reformer.

⁸ CO 1. 139-140.

⁹ de Greef, *the Writings*, 126-7.

¹⁰ Maag, *Lifting Hearts to the Lord*, 4.

¹¹ The problems of the Catholic mass will be dealt with momentarily; Maag, *Lifting Hearts to the Lord*, 53-55. A short discussion on the differences between the Catholic mass and Protestant worship can be found in Calvin's letter to an unnamed Catholic priest of 1542.

One, then, wonders what right worship is. Before going into this, there is a question to answer. That is, why do believers need to worship? And why is a public worship service important? The answers to these questions can be found in Calvin's sermons. God wants to be worshiped by the whole world and by His people who become the temple of God in "Spirit and truth."¹² Moreover, this divine demand is the special blessing bestowed on His people.¹³ This is because anyone who does not belong to God cannot praise and worship Him. God requires His people to worship Him and does not ask anything else.¹⁴ This divine demand is the primary reason for His people to worship. This is also the reason why God created them.¹⁵ Second, not worshipping God is the cause of all evil. His people need to worship God. Although the sinful Israelites made Yahweh furious, He said that only one sin was the cause for all kinds of sinfulness. That is, that one worships other gods while deserting Yahweh.¹⁶ God gave His people the law and demanded worship Him on the Sabbath, putting every work aside. Keeping the Sabbath means God and His people share the same experience.¹⁷ In addition, worshipping God is His command. To follow His command is to obey the command. Conversely, not worshipping is a sin against God.¹⁸ Without this fundamental obedience, pious people cannot live a holy life. Third, the sins of His people are forgiven through worship. According to Calvin, our sins are forgiven by an atoning worship through Christ.¹⁹ The people of God become free from their sins through true worship in the presence of Christ. Therefore, if the worship service is corrupted, God cannot be glorified. And, people cannot be saved because they do not hear the word of God clearly.

¹² Calvin, *Sermons*, 85 (Sermon 12 on Jer. 16:14-19a). "Mais Dieu veult estre adoré par toutes les parties du monde et avoir son siege en noz ames et que noz corps soient son temple, et "qu'il soit adoré en esprit et verité" comme il a esté dict à la Samaritaine: ..."

¹³ Calvin, *Sermons*, 136-7 (Sermon 20 on Jer. 17:24-27). "Mais aujourd'hui que nous en avons la verité, il faut que Dieu soit honoré et loué entre nous, car voila les sacrifices qu'il nous demande. Voila donc une benediction singuliere que Dieu nous faict, quant il veult estre servy de nous."

¹⁴ CO 39. 110 (COR II 6/2. 1348; Jer. 35:12-13). "... cum Deus nihil aliud populo suo mandavit, nisi ut inter ipsos pure coleretur."

¹⁵ CO 2. 134 (*Inst.* 1.14.22). "...; ut tanta bonitatis ac beneficentiae suavitate illecti, ipsum toto pectore amare et colere studeamus."

¹⁶ CO 37. 489-90 (COR II 6/1. 43; Jer. 1:16). "Multis quidem modis provocaverant Judaei in se illius vindictam: sed hic apponitur species una, quoniam erat ille primus fons malorum, quod desciverant a Lege, et puro Dei cultu: ..."

¹⁷ CO 38. 287 (COR II 6/1. 680; Jer. 17:22). "Nam illa fuit quies, qua debuerant vere Deum colere, ut scilicet supersederent ab omnibus cupiditatibus carnis suae: ... Nihil enim magis est optabile, quam ut sit mutuus consensus inter nos et Deum."

¹⁸ CO 38. 260 (COR II 6/1. 646; Jer. 17:1). "... quoniam hoc nomine maxime sunt scelerati coram Deo, qui vitiaverint purum ejus cultum."

¹⁹ CO 37. 663 (COR II 6/1. 260; Jer. 6:20). "Neque enim alibi quaerenda est expiatio, quam in sanguine illius, ut dum Spiritus Sanctus animas nostras eo aspergit puri simus ab omni macula. Sed cum hoc tribuerent suis sacrificiis, hoc erat substituere victimam vel arietem in locum Christi, quemadmodum dictum est."

Brutal and illegal sins abound among people. This example can be found in the case of the King Manasseh.²⁰ Accordingly Calvin emphasizes the importance of worship while exegeting Lamentations 1:4. Since worship is a service to God who completes the eternal salvation of the soul, abandoning the worship service is inconceivable in terms of salvation.²¹ In the worship service, believers should confess that their salvation belongs to Him. Moreover, they have no choice but to worship God because their sins are forgiven through worship. Fourth, we can meet God and enter into relationship with Him through worship. The holy tent of the Old Testament was a special place for God to meet with His people.²² That is, this was the place where God and His people meet. In the proclamation of the word and the sacraments is God's presence.²³ Likewise, God has been with His people through the public worship service in the past. Last, as indicated by the Bible, God makes them aware that they are the body of Christ through public worship. In Calvin's letter to the French reformed congregation being persecuted by the Catholic Church in 1554, he argued that believers could worship and pray alone, but that it was more important for them to attend communal worship so that they could be encouraged and edified.²⁴ God calls His people to be one body, and guides them to live a good life by learning new lessons from the gospel through its preaching.²⁵ Therefore Calvin recommended that they should not have left the communal worship even though it was hard for them to worship together.

In sum, it can be said that God is delighted with worship. His people, therefore, ought to obey His command. Through worship, they could be freed from sin and have a relationship with God. Furthermore, they could know that they were one body in Christ.

8.3 False Worship

²⁰ CO 38. 212 (COR II 6/1. 583; Jer. 15:4). "... nemp̄ ut intelligant Judaei sanctam illam Urbem, qua gloriabantur, fuisse pridem cavernam latronum, et pollutum fuisse Templum Dei impiis superstitionibus, totam vero Urbem injustis illis et barbaris caedibus."

²¹ CO 39. 511 (COR II 7. 27; Lam. 1:4). "Quanto enim pretiosior est nobis Dei cultus, et quanto plaris censi meretur religio, in qua aeterna animarum salus consistit, eo etiam durius ac luctuosius est, videre ita dissipatam Ecclesiam, ut non colatur, neque invocetur amplius Deus.;" Zachman, *Image and Word*, 347-8.

²² CO 39. 541 (COR II 7. 125; Lam. 2:6). "... vel quia locus ille solenni ritu dicatus esset, ut Deus contraheret illic cum populo suo."

²³ Maag, *Lifting Hearts to the Lord*, 19.

²⁴ Maag, *Lifting Hearts to the Lord*, 57-8.

²⁵ McKee, ed., *John Calvin*, 20.

As discussed above, Calvin's Geneva was a city where the Catholic mass was practiced before the Reformation. Accordingly there were many people who were used to the previous tradition. Calvin had to teach correct worship in his sermons and lectures, encouraging the Genevans to worship in a reformed way. He harshly criticized their previous false worship practice and the corruption of the Catholic mass. In this section, we will examine that false worship.

First of all, Calvin warns of idol worship in the church. God said that the Israelites abandoned Him since He saw their corruption in worship, and their ceremonies were not as prescribed in the law.²⁶ Unless they actually followed what God had commanded and prescribed, their practices showed that they had not accepted God's will.²⁷ Worse than their false worship, the prophet knew that the Israelites made idols with their own hands, and worshipped them. The prophet warned them that idol makers would be ashamed since the idol was not alive.²⁸ Calvin knew that the contemporary Catholic Church worshipped in a way that did not come from the gospel or the law, but from man.²⁹ Moreover, as discussed in Chapter 4, the Catholic Church was full of idols and worshipped saints.³⁰ However, taking these things as inherited worship practices and traditions from their ancestors,³¹ they were not even aware of the sinfulness of these practices. Even though the worship of these idols had various aspects, there is but one root: the human desire to control their god.³² Men were not satisfied with worshipping one God together in church so they wanted to make their own god and serve it. Calvin emphasizes that worshipping the one God is enough for true faith.³³ Since the glory that Yahweh deserves goes to other idols in false worship, this worship eventually causes worshippers to

²⁶ CO 38. 323 (COR II 6/1. 727; Jer. 19:4). "Primo conqueritur. Deus se fuisse ab illis relictum, nempe quia mutaverant cultum qui praescriptus fuerat in ejus Lege."

²⁷ CO 38. 324 (COR II 6/1. 727; Jer. 19:4). "... quia scilicet non agnoscitur nisi dum obedienter recipitur quidquid praecipit ac jubet."

²⁸ CO 38. 79 (COR II 6/1. 412; Jer. 10:14). "... nam putat se Deum facere manu sua. Interea non mutat vel argenti vel auri materiam. Formam duntaxat adjungit: sed forma haec non continet vitam: ... Sed prius dixit eos qui conflant sculptile *pudifieri*, hoc est, deprehendi in sua stultitia: quemadmodum vocavit ipsos fatuos, aut brutos."

²⁹ CO 37. 691 (COR II 6/1. 295-6; Jer. 7: 21-22). "Deum enim aestimant ex proprio ingenio, et tamen omnes ceremoniae papales sunt commentitiae: nullum enim habent testimonium ex Lege aut Evangelio."

³⁰ Maag, *Lifting Hearts to the Lord*, 54-5.

³¹ CO 38. 324 (COR II 6/1. 728; Jer. 19:5). "Non illo primum die excogitatos fuisse cultus illos, quoniam a majoribus essent traditi."

³² CO 38. 112-3 (COR II 6/1. 455; Jer. 11:13). "Et hinc etiam colligimus eandem esse radicem apud omnes populos omnium superstitionum. Tametsi enim differunt in speciem, prodeunt tamen omnes ex hoc principio: quia quisque appetit habere Deum peculiarem."

³³ CO 38. 113 (COR II 6/1. 455; Jer. 11:13). "Ergo necesse est a nobis unum Deum pure coli, ..."

deprive Him of His right to receive glory and praise from His people.³⁴ Nevertheless, those who take part in false worship are not aware that they are worshipping idols. This is because they serve Yahweh and their fabricated god at the same time, therefore, they do not know that their mind is divided. For the Israelites, there was only one true temple and one true altar inside of it. So, if they obeyed God's commandments, they could worship the only true God. In Calvin's view if they were not ready to worship God sincerely in the temple, they should not have gone to it.³⁵ But, they did go and they produced all kinds of mixed worship in the temple while disguising themselves as pious people. The Israelites mixed the holiness of the temple with various foreign gods as well as their corruptions.³⁶ Calvin says of this mixed worship: "if we mix our worship of God with idols, everything is lost. This is like putting poison into good wine. In this case, good wine goes bad completely. Thus, it is when mixing our worship of God with idols."³⁷ What Calvin points out as the most serious aspect of this false worship is the worshippers' intentional sin. Such deliberate attitudes are the third characteristic of false worship. The Israelites knew that Yahweh was the only true God. However, they adored their fabricated idols more. Although God showed Himself to them fully, they believed that their idols would protect them and so willfully followed them. This intentionality was their most serious sin.³⁸ This deliberate sinfulness appeared in the papists. At that time, Calvin argued, even children knew that the papists worshipped idols.³⁹ However, they denied that they were idol worshippers. They argued that their worship was not idol worship but service (*dulia*).⁴⁰ However, Calvin clearly states that the mass in the Catholic Church was the same as the Israelites' false worship. In Calvin's view,

³⁴ CO 39. 361-2 (COR II 6/2. 1672; Jer. 49:13). "Itaque in Papatu foeda est et minime tolerabilis idololatria, quod jurant per sanctos mortuos. Hoc enim est Deum spoliare jure suo: ..."

³⁵ CO 38. 117 (COR II 6/1. 460-1; Jer. 11:15). "Non poterant ingredi Judaei Templum, nisi manerent quasi defixi in puro ejus cultu. Nam sicuti erat unicum Templum, et unicum altare, ita oportuit illis unicum esse Deum: deinde oportuit unicam esse regulam ipsius colendi."

³⁶ CO 38. 117 (COR II 6/1. 461; Jer. 11:15). "... ideo volunt misceri Templi sanctitatem cum turba deorum, et cum suis corruptelis et figmentis."

³⁷ Calvin, *Sermons*, 158 (Sermon 23 on Jer. 18:13-16). "..., mais si nous voulons mesler le service de Dieu avec les ydolles, tout est perdu. C'est comme si nous voulions meller le bon vin avec du poison, à savoir si le bon vin ne seroit point tout gasté? Ainsi en est il quant nous mellons noz superstitions avec le service de Dieu."

³⁸ CO 38. 248 (COR II 6/1. 629; Jer. 16:11-2). "Cum ergo illis satis superque testata esset Dei virtus, minime tolerabilis fuit illa ingratitude, quod *deos alienos secuti sint*, de quibus tantum audierant."

³⁹ CO 37. 523 (COR II 6/1. 85; Jer. 2:23). "Videmus, et pueri etiam intelligunt, ut in Papatu nullum genus superstitionis non grassetur: ..."

⁴⁰ CO 38. 248 (COR II 6/1. 630; Jer. 16:12-3). "..., et ita refutatur stultitia Papistarum, qui negant se esse idololatrias, quia tantum picturas et statuas adorant *dulia*, quemadmodum dicunt, servitute, si ita loqui liceret, et non *latria*."; However, Calvin does not accept this classification. CO 2. 337 (*Inst.* 2.11.11) and CO 2. 341 (*Inst.* 2.12.2); Zachman, *Image and Word*, 360.

they intentionally left God and followed fabricated idols. Fourth, Calvin states that false worship is worship without a pure heart or truth even though it has a form of worship. Calvin says that God takes a sincere heart seriously. In other words, a sincere heart and real piety in His worshippers makes God happy.⁴¹ Sometimes people ignored true faith and repentance, and offered God only empty symbols. As a result, true worship disappeared and the corruption of worship appeared.⁴² A theatrical worship service lacking heart and spirit was one major aspect of false worship. In sum, false worship is a result of sinfulness because the worshippers did not adhere to what God had commanded when they worshipped Him.⁴³

8.4 True Worship

What, then, is true worship? Calvin teaches us not only what false worship is but also true worship is in his lectures and sermons. First of all, according to him, true worship is ‘spiritual.’ The purpose of worship is that worshippers worship and praise God in spirit. This is enabled by the Holy Spirit being present in worship.⁴⁴ All things which happen in church are done not by the people themselves but by the people appointed by the Holy Spirit.⁴⁵ Likewise God, who sees people’s hearts, denies their worship because they are insincere. Their worship is hypocritical. The members of the Catholic Church built grand church buildings, decorated the inside of the churches with gold and silver, put in luxurious furniture, and made many offerings. Then, they thought they could enter heaven because of it.⁴⁶ They emphasized external ceremonies just like other hypocrites of the ancient church. However, these external luxuries were an insult to God.⁴⁷ God knows the heart of the worshipper. From the beginning, He only acknowledged spiritual worship, and still maintains His will

⁴¹ CO 38. 305 (COR II 6/1. 704; Jer. 18:14-5). “Deus autem, ut ante vidimus, cor ipsum, aut veritatem respicit. ..., quod scilicet sola interior pietas, quae conjuncta est cum cordis integritate, placeat Deo ...”

⁴² CO 37. 690 (COR II 6/1. 295; Jer. 7:22). “..., nempe quoniam conqueritur de polluto et violato Dei cultu: ratio est, quod Judaei obruderent ipsi Deo spectra pro rebus.”

⁴³ CO 39. 612 (COR II 7. 361; Lam. 4. 7-8). “Interea ostendit Propheta cultum legalem fuisse quodammodo damnatum ob populi vitia.”

⁴⁴ Milner, *Calvin's doctrine*, 159-160.

⁴⁵ Coertzen, *Church and Order*, 30-31.

⁴⁶ CO 37. 662 (COR II 6/1. 259; Jer. 6:20). “Et in Papatu id cernimus: si quis sumptuosum Templum extruat, deinde ornet auro et argento, et instruat etiam alia suppellectile, postea proventum statuat ad missas agendas, putat ille se tenere claves Regni coelorum, ut perrumpat etiam invito Deo.”

⁴⁷ CO 37. 663 (COR II 6/1. 260; Jer. 6:20). “... deinde quod omnes externi ritus sunt merae nugae et ludibria, imo profanatio nominis Dei: ...”

concerning it. Because God is spirit, He receives the worship of ‘true heart’ only.⁴⁸ So how is spiritual worship possible? First of all, when the Holy Spirit resides in worshippers they trust and depend on God. And, they seek for Him wholeheartedly. Thereby they can worship God with their whole heart.⁴⁹ This means that no one can worship God if they do not have true faith. This is the first condition for true and appropriate worship.⁵⁰ Second, Calvin argues that in order to have such spiritual worship, we need language. In other words, there should be words delivered via the Holy Spirit through the preacher. Unless words are proclaimed to believers, only hypocrisy and superstition remain.⁵¹ Therefore, when believers obey the word, they can truly worship God. If the papists acknowledge that no one can worship God in a right way unless they obey God’s word, Calvin argues, they will be saved from the abyss of errors.⁵² This proves how important the word of God is in the worship service. Third, we can worship God truly when we know that the object of worship is God. If belief is separated from the knowledge of the word, it interferes with true worship. Without the knowledge of the word, we shall not know God, who is the object of worship. As Jesus said “we worship what we know (John 4:22),” so that believers are able to know God correctly through the word.⁵³ Again, Calvin points out the idolatry of the papists. They thought that the images which they made were ‘books for the ignorant.’ About this, Calvin said that a correct understanding of God could not be formed through such figures and pictures.⁵⁴ When believers worship God alone and know that everything in this world exists by His power and will, they come to have a true knowledge of God.⁵⁵

⁴⁸ CO 37. 690 (COR II 6/1. 294; Jer. 7:22). “Scimus enim ab initio, Deum voluisse spiritualiter coli: neque enim hodie mutavit naturam. Ergo quemadmodum hodie non alium cultum probat, quam spiritualement, sicuti ipse est Spiritus: ita et sub Lege voluit sincero corde se coli.”

⁴⁹ CO 37. 692 (COR II 6/1. 297; Jer. 7:23-4). “Deinde scimus Deum ita ad nos prodire, ut velit fiduciam nostram in gratuita sua bonitate prorsus locari, ut velit nos totos pendere a paterna sua clementia, velit a nobis invocari, velit etiam sibi offerri sacrificium laudis.”

⁵⁰ CO 37. 692 (COR II 6/1. 297; Jer. 7:23-4). “... ubi scilicet abest fides, ubi abest invocatio, quae primatum tenent in vero et legitimo cultu.”

⁵¹ CO 37. 692 (COR II 6/1. 296; Jer. 7:22). “Nisi enim prae luceat nobis Deus verbo suo, nulla est pietas, sed mera simulatio et superstitio duntaxat: ...”

⁵² CO 37. 704 (COR II 6/1. 311; Jer. 7:31). “... interea non admittunt hoc principium, quod eriperet eos a tam profunda abyso, nempe quod parendum sit verbo Dei, si ipsum rite colere velimus.”

⁵³ CO 39. 251 (COR II 6/2. 1530-1; Jer. 44:3-4). “Sciamus ergo religionem, dum a scientia distrahitur, merum esse ludibrium Satanae. Ergo necesse est, ut certo statuam homines, quem Deum colant. Et Christus Joannis ita discernit legitimum Dei cultum a vanis idolis: Nos scimus, inquit, quid adoremus: loquitur de Judaeis. Dicit ergo Judaeos scire, nempe eos qui Deum colebant ex praescripto Legis: et dicit eos scire quid adorent.”

⁵⁴ CO 39. 457 (COR II 6/2. 1793-4; Jer. 51:18). “... nempe ferendas esse imagines, quia idiotarum libri sunt. ... Et certe quidquid nos abducit a cogitatione veri Dei merito censetur fallacia vel deceptio. Nunc, quis ex aspectu picturae, vel statuae Deum verum comprehendit?”

⁵⁵ CO 39. 457 (COR II 6/2. 1794; Jer. 51:18). “Nam haec est vera Dei cognitio, dum illum existimamus solum esse, dum tribuimus illi immensam essentiam, quae coelum et terram impleat, cum agnoscimus esse spiritualis naturae: cum

Through this knowledge, they get to know God, who is the object of true worship. And such knowledge of God is connected to knowledge of oneself, therefore, someone who has not contemplated on his or her weakness cannot seek God wholeheartedly. It can thus be concluded that unless one becomes humble, knowing his or her origin and end, he or she cannot worship God properly.⁵⁶ In other words, a humble man who knows his weakness gains the knowledge of God through the word, and thereby he comes to know Him correctly. And finally believers can worship God properly through the knowledge of God and of themselves as they are formed by the works of the Holy Spirit and the help of God's word.

8.5 Prayer and Praise

In the *Articles concerning the Organization of the Church and of Worship at Geneva (Articles concernant l'organisation de l'église et du culte à Genève, 1537)*, Calvin argues that it is useful to the church to have the Psalms sung in public praise.⁵⁷ According to him, the psalter can make the heart of worshippers focus on God, and lead them to sing to honor His name and praise His glory.⁵⁸ So, Calvin included the psalter and songs of praise in the organization of worship at the Genevan church.⁵⁹ According to Maag, Calvin's organization of worship at Geneva led from the ordinary worship service of the Catholic mass to the reformed worship service.⁶⁰ Calvin wanted to introduce the psalter in the beginning of his ministry in Geneva, but there was no psalter in French at that time. However, some years later when Calvin was exiled in Strasbourg he published the first French psalter.⁶¹ Calvin considered the psalter a form of prayer: the psalter and prayer were an important means for believers

scimus illum denique esse solum, proprie loquendo: coelum et terram et quidquid in ipsis continetur, subsistere in ejus virtute: ...”

⁵⁶ CO 38. 259 (COR II 6/1. 643-4; Jer. 16:21). “Non mirum igitur est, si mentibus sunt excaecati in quaerendo Deo, cum se ipsos non respiciant neque examinent. Hinc sequitur, non posse rite coli Deum, nisi ubi humiliati fuerint homines.”

⁵⁷ Calvin, “Articles concerning the Organization of the Church and of Worship at Geneva (1537),” in *Calvin: Theological Treatises*, 48.

⁵⁸ Calvin, “the Organization of the Church (1537),” 53.

⁵⁹ Manetsch, *Calvin's company of pastors*, 152-3; Milner, *Calvin's doctrine*, 157; Mckee, *Writing on Pastoral Piety*, 98-100.

⁶⁰ Maag, *Lifting Hearts to the Lord*, 73.

⁶¹ McKee, *Writing on Pastoral Piety*, 85. The published psalter included six of Calvin's own translations, with twelve metrical psalms by the French poet Clement Marot, and metrical versions of the Song of Simeon (Luke 2:29-32), the Apostles' Creed and the Decalogue. Also, Theodore de Bèze who was famous as a Latin poet before his conversion to Protestantism and was Calvin's eventual successor as leader of the Genevan church, translated the psalms into French.

to participate in the worship service.⁶² According to Zachman, Calvin had a very negative attitude about worshippers who keep their faith secret, refusing to confess it. Calvin thought that those who express their faith through words and action are the true worshippers.⁶³ In this respect, according to Calvin, when worshippers praise and pray every day they practice their piety.⁶⁴

Calvin emphasizes the knowledge of God while discussing the practice of piety. Prayer is impossible unless the knowledge of God has enlightened believers. When God shines the light of knowledge in them, they know how to approach Him.⁶⁵ On the basis of the covenant between God and Israel, and the Church, believers can pray to God and have faith that He listens to their prayers.⁶⁶ In his exegesis of Lamentations 3:44, Calvin argues: “God is ready to listen to His people’s prayers, and able to help them.”⁶⁷ However, the prayer of the Israelites did not usually reach God. This is because their prayer was not proper, so that God closed the way He had opened for them.⁶⁸ Such was Calvin’s argument, that teaches us that God demands certain behaviours and attitudes from them. Considering Calvin’s view, God demands faith and humility from those who pray. Prayers can reach God through faith while those who pray humbly can obey and submit to God.⁶⁹ Calvin says that prayer with faith is the most important prayer to God.⁷⁰ Furthermore, he recommends that the Genevan congregation should pray with a humble attitude, like the tax collector (Luke 18:13),⁷¹ with a sincere heart⁷² as Jesus said. With this attitude, prayer to God should be the confession of the

⁶² Kingdon, *Reforming Geneva*, 41-2; Mckee, *Writing on Pastoral Piety*, 85

⁶³ Zachman, *Image and Word*, 352; CO 37. 108 (Isa. 44:5).

⁶⁴ CO 38. 651 (COR II 6/2. 1141-2; Jer. 31:7). “... et ita praetermittunt officium illud pietatis, in quo praecipue debebant se exercere. Propheta igitur hic admonet sic laudandum esse Deum ut tamen simul precentur fideles.”

⁶⁵ CO 38. 96 (COR II 6/1. 434; Jer. 10:25). “... ac proinde ubi nulla est Dei cognitio, nulla etiam est ratio precandi. Sed ubi Deus semel nobis affulsit, tunc via nobis aperta est ad ipsum invocandum.”

⁶⁶ CO 38. 184 (COR II 6/1. 548; Jer. 14:8). “Jure ergo foederis nunc Deum appellat Propheta, ut nomen suum glorificet. Non potuit haec precatio communis esse profanis gentibus.”; CO 39. 566 (COR II 7. 207; Lam. 3:8). “... significat non posse ab aeterna sua essentia et divinitate illud separari, quin scilicet propensus sit ad preces exaudiendas.”

⁶⁷ CO 39. 595 (COR II 7. 303; Lam. 3:44). “Deus ergo semper ad suos exaudiendos est propensus: deinde satis etiam valida potentia instructus est ad opem ferendam: ...”

⁶⁸ CO 39. 595 (COR II 7. 303; Lam. 3:44). “Quid ergo hoc sibi vult, *nubem fuisse interpositam, ne oratio ad ipsum penetraret?* nempe quia nec rite precabantur Judaei, et sibi omnes aditus praecluserant, ne Deus ipsos admitteret.”

⁶⁹ CO 39. 120 (COR II 7. 1362; Jer. 36:7). “Nam in precibus duo necessaria sunt, fides et humilitas: fide assurgimus ad Deum, humilitate autem prosternimur.”; Spijker, *Bij Calvin*, 160-161.

⁷⁰ CO 48. 187. “Necesse enim est, ut fides nobis in adeundo Deo praecluceat: imo, ut sit precatationis mater.”; Linde, *De Leer van den Heiligen Geest*, 162.

⁷¹ CO 37. 685 (COR II 6/1. 288; Jer. 7:16). “... atque ita designat humilitatem, ubi supplices accedunt, neque audent oculos sursum attollere: quemadmodum de publicano loquitur Christus.”; CO 2. 631 (*Inst.* 3.20.7). “Displiceat igitur sibi in suis malis quisquis se ad orandum comparat; et (quod sine poenitentia fieri non potest) induat mendici personam et affectum.”

⁷² CO 38. 188 (COR II 6/1. 553; Jer. 14:12). “Quisquis ergo Deum puro corde invocet, ...”

believers' heart and soul.⁷³ They also learn that God is always good through these prayers. Even though God does not answer their prayers right away, He takes care of them.⁷⁴ As discussed earlier, Calvin regarded congregational hymns as a form of prayer. Calvin desired that those who praise, should praise God with a humble attitude and sincerity. Their praise expresses their faith, and is a verbal expression of communal thankfulness to God.⁷⁵

Likewise, 'prayer and praise' was a confession of congregational faith and an expression of thankfulness. Through these, members of the church could actively participate in the worship service since this was an external expression of the piety and internal faith of believers.

8.6 The Meaning of the Sabbath and Worship

Calvin's sermons and lectures on Jeremiah discuss the Sabbath.⁷⁶ Both interpret Jeremiah 17:19-27.⁷⁷ They are somewhat different due to the time and place that the interpretations took place. However, in terms of the meaning of the Sabbath, the two interpretations are the same. First of all, these two interpretations emphasize the importance of the Sabbath. According to Calvin, those who do not keep the Sabbath are not the children of God nor the members of the church of God.⁷⁸ The Sabbath differentiates the people of God externally from the secular world. If one cannot keep the Sabbath, this proves his or her disbelief. Therefore, he or she cannot claim that he or she is chosen.⁷⁹ For the Israelites, breaking the Sabbath was like invalidating all the Commandments.⁸⁰ Keeping the

⁷³ Hesselink, "Calvijn over het gebed," 101.

⁷⁴ CO 39. 145 (COR II 6/2. 1394; Jer. 37:8). "... fideles qui Deum sincere et ex animo quaerent, semper reperient illum propitium etiamsi non statim ipsos exaudiat: vel saltem si re ipsa non ostendat sibi curae esse ipsorum salutem."

⁷⁵ Zachman, *Image and Word*, 352-4.

⁷⁶ Dieleman, *The Battle for the Sabbath*, 47. According to Dieleman, Calvin says that while Christians still observe the Lord's Day they do not in order to cling to the "shadow rite" but to experience the rest provided by Jesus' resurrection." CO 2. 291 (*Inst.* 2.8.34). "Nam quum verae illius quietis, quam vetus sabbatum adumbrabat, in resurrectione Domini finis sit ac complementum, ipso die, qui umbris finem attulit, admonentur Christiani ne umbratili caeremoniae inhaereant. Neque sic tamen septenarium numerum moror, ut eius servituti ecclesiam astringam. Neque enim ecclesias damnvero, quae alios conventibus suis solennes dies habeant, modo a superstitione absint. Quod erit, si ad solam observationem disciplinae et ordinis bene compositi referantur."; Gaffin, *Calvin and the Sabbath*, 159-161; Cf. Dieleman, *The Battle for the Sabbath*, 40. Dieleman says "when speaking about the fourth commandment, Calvin continues to use the word "Sabbath," *sabbatum*. He does, however, frequently use the phrase "the Lord's Day," *diem dominicum*. ... Nonetheless, overall, Calvin uses the terms quite interchangeably and, for the most part, indiscriminately."

⁷⁷ Calvin preached on the Sabbath twice: July 27 and August 5 in 1549. And, he dealt with the Sabbath in his 68th and 69th lectures on Jeremiah from 1560 to 1562.

⁷⁸ Calvin, *Sermons*, 128 (Sermon 19 on Jer. 17:17-23). "Voila pourquoy le jour du repos estoit commandé, car en le violant c'estoit rejeter sa grace, pour dire: "Nous ne voulons plus estre des siens ne de son Eglise."

⁷⁹ CO 38. 285 (COR II 6/1. 677; Jer. 17:19-20). "Cum ergo nulla sit apud vos Sabbathi sanctitas etiam externa, quid jam tergiversando proficitis? quandoquidem convicta tenetur vestra impietas."

⁸⁰ CO 38. 285 (COR II 6/1. 677; Jer. 17:19-20). "Nam perinde erat ac si Judaei vellent triumphum agere adversus Deum, quod Lex ejus nullo apud illos esset in pretio."

Sabbath was fundamental and an important law. Thus, breaking the Sabbath was an insult to God.⁸¹ Keeping the Sabbath itself was important and meaningful. Second, those two interpretations focus on the fact that God wants us to keep the Sabbath day holy. The purpose of keeping the Sabbath holy was to make the day the sign of sanctification. As God gave His people the Sabbath, He wanted them to know that He sanctifies them.⁸² For this sanctification, God separates His people from the secular world and unites with them.⁸³ This is the ‘sanctification’ the Sabbath requires.⁸⁴ His people can be sanctified through uniting with God by being separated from the secular world. They become holy when God guards them from the control of evil emotions and guides them through the will of the Holy Spirit.⁸⁵ In other words, they can keep the Sabbath holy when they try not to hinder God from doing His work in their lives.⁸⁶ On the Sabbath the Israelites had to control their desire, be careful about what they did, and rest completely in the presence of God. God taught them about everlasting rest, which they would enjoy later through keeping the Sabbath.⁸⁷ God also wanted them to leave aside all the corporeal works by entering into His rest.⁸⁸ In addition, He wanted them to meditate on God’s work. The main activity on the Sabbath for His people is to think about God and His works, and to worship Him.⁸⁹ Calvin criticized those who did not come to the church unless they were forced.

⁸¹ CO 38. 286 (COR II 6/1. 678; Jer. 17:21). “Verum est quantum ad rem ipsam: sed in ipso externo ritu nihil erat negotii. Ergo duplex apparuit populi impietas, quia contempserit singularem Dei gratiam, cujus testimonium erat dies septimus: deinde quia gravatus est otium colere die illo, et in re tam facili non dubitavit quasi Deo insultare, ...”

⁸² CO 38. 287 (COR II 6/1. 679-680; Jer. 17:22). “Utroque loco admonet cur praeceperit Judaeis feriari die septimo, nempe ut hoc esset illis symbolum sanctificationis. Ego, inquit, Sabbathata mea vobis dedi, ut sciretis me esse Deum vestrum qui vos sanctifico.”

⁸³ Calvin, *Sermons*, 128 (Sermon 19 on Jer. 17:17-23). “Car, comme j’ay dict, Dieu nous separe des aultres peuples quant il nous sanctiffie, non pas qu’il nous tire par les jambes, mais c’est qu’il nous joint à luy.”

⁸⁴ Dieleman, *the Battle for the Sabbath*, 72-73; Calvin, *Sermons*, 128 (Sermon 19 on Jer. 17:17-23). “Voicy donc la sanctification qui a esté signiffiée par le jour du repos, ...”

⁸⁵ Calvin, *Sermons*, 128-9 (Sermon 19 on Jer. 17:17-23). “La premiere, c’est que noz affections meschantes ne dominant plus; et puis, que au lieu que nous desirions, maintenant il face que son Esprit desire en nous et nous conduyse là où nous debvons aller.”

⁸⁶ Calvin, *Sermons*, 129 (Sermon 19 on Jer. 17:17-23). “Et pourtant il nous a commandé de sanctifier ce jour du repos, ce qui se fait quant l’homme se mortiffie et qu’il tache de faire que Dieu ne soit point emesché de faire ses oeuvres en nous, ...”

⁸⁷ Gaffin, *Calvin and the Sabbath*, 142; Calvin, *Sermons*, 129 (Sermon 19 on Jer. 17:17-23). “... et Dieu en ce jour nous a voulu signifier le repos eternal, ...”

⁸⁸ CO 38. 287 (COR II 6/1. 680; Jer. 17:22). “Tenemus ergo nunc fuisse hunc scopum propositum veteri populo, ut scirent quiescendum esse ab omnibus carnis operibus.”

⁸⁹ CO 38. 287 (COR II 6/1. 681; Jer. 17:22). “Nec dubium est quin Deus septimum diem elegerit, ut homines studia sua omnia conferrent ad considerationem operum ejus. Quidquid sit, videmus fuisse ex praecipuis capitibus cultus Dei septimum illum diem.”; Balke, *Calvijn en de Bijbel*, 132.

He also emphasized the purpose of the Sabbath as being that God's people come to the church in order to worship God instead of occupying themselves with work.⁹⁰

Despite the similarities there are also somewhat different points in the stipulations of the Sabbath appearing in Calvin's sermons and lectures. He emphasizes the members' attendance in the Sunday worship more in his sermons than lectures. According to Calvin, taking rest on Sundays is to show the freedom that Jesus has given to His people.⁹¹ Thus, Calvin argues that those who do not participate in Sunday worship or the sacraments imply that Jesus is meaningless to them, and criticizes the fact that they ignore the truth.⁹² Calvin hoped that the church members of Geneva would stop their work on Sundays, listen to God's word, and experience eternal rest in Christ. On the contrary, in his lectures at the Geneva Academy he did not pay much attention to recommending Sunday worship service attendance. This is because the audience in his lectures in 1561 were mostly prospective ministers or pastors. So, he interpreted the book of Jeremiah based on the context of Judean life rather than recommending attendance in Sunday worship. In his lecture on Jeremiah 17:25, Calvin explains that Jeremiah suggested the continuation of the Davidic kingdom were the Sabbath kept well.⁹³ Here, Calvin connects the Sabbath to the eternal kingdom. In other words, he emphasizes that the kingdom and Jerusalem will be safe eternally if the Israelites keep the Sabbath and worship God sincerely.⁹⁴ Israelites, during Jeremiah's era, were on the brink of ruin as their temple and nation collapsed. Calvin's interpretation of the Sabbath took their situation and stance into consideration. By keeping the Sabbath, the people of God realize that they are the people of God. By stopping their work and worshipping God, they become sanctified. Furthermore, they hope for the everlasting kingdom and rest by looking to Christ during worship. All of these are possible only through worship on the Sabbath.

⁹⁰ Calvin, *Sermons*, 133-4 (Sermon 20 on Jer. 17:24-27). "..., mais il y en a de tant nonchailans que jamais ne viendroient au temple sinon qu'ilz y fussent contrainctz. ... Voila donc à quoy est ordonné ce jour du repos, afin que n'estans point occupez ès oeuvres manuelles nous venions au temple."

⁹¹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 130 (Sermon 19 on Jer. 17:17-23). "Pourquoy est ce donc que on a maintenant le dimanche pour le jour du repos? C'est pour monstrier la liberté qui nous est acquise par Jesuscrist."

⁹² Calvin, *Sermons*, 131 (Sermon 19 on Jer. 17:17-23). "Mais ce pendant ceux qui ne viennent point au sermon ny à la cene monstrent bien que Jesuscrist ne leur est rien, et voila que le mespris du signe monstre le mespris de la verité."

⁹³ CO 38. 290 (COR II 6/1. 683; Jer. 17:24). "Haec ratio est cur nunc singularis beneficii loco illis proponat Jeremias aeternum fore Regnum Davidis inter ipsos, si observent diem Sabbathi: ..."

⁹⁴ CO 38. 291 (COR II 6/1. 684; Jer. 17:25). "Nunc ergo Jeremias promittit quod erat quodammodo incredibile, Urbem fore salvam, si vere et pie colant Deum, idque testentur observatione Sabbathi."; Dieleman, *the Battle for the Sabbath*, 64-5.

Studying Calvin's interpretation of the meaning of the Sabbath in the two genres described previously lets us know that he considered keeping the Sabbath to be important. He wanted the people of God to rest on that day, and to meditate on God and God's everlasting people, while leaving aside other things. It appears that, for Calvin, the Sabbath is the day for worshipping God, and for only that.

8.7 Worship and the Christian life

The true worship of God is to worship Him spiritually. While taking a rest on the Sabbath, the people of God should worship God sincerely. Therefore, Calvin puts emphasis on the meaning of sound worship in his interpretation of Jeremiah. By pointing out the importance of true worship, he criticizes the Israelites who considered external ceremony enough to satisfy God.⁹⁵ The papists during Calvin's era also thought that their elaborate worship service could satisfy God no matter how obscene their life was.⁹⁶ However, by objecting to their thought, Calvin argues: "God desires obedience more than sacrifices. The burnt offering is a part of obedience."⁹⁷ He thought that merely attending the worship service does not make the people of God holy if they do not obey the word of God. Calvin talks about worship reforming the worshippers' life. If their life and confession do not match, their external worship does not mean anything to God.⁹⁸ This was the most important issue to Calvin. Calvin argues that the people of God should worship the right way and keep God's commandments. Therefore, despicably fabricated worship was an abomination.⁹⁹ Calvin repeatedly points out the importance of believers' piety. Unless they are pious, their worship cannot be sound. Likewise, God considers the obedience of the believers in their life the continuation of true worship. Calvin also says in his sermons on Jeremiah that the believers should listen to the word of God

⁹⁵ CO 37. 676 (COR II 6/1. 278; Jer. 7:8). "Certum enim est, Deo improbe fuisse mentitos, cum ejus judicio satisfacere vellent frigidis ceremoniis."

⁹⁶ CO 37. 691 (COR II 6/1. 296; Jer. 7:21-22). "Nam ubi Papistae defuncti sunt suis nugis, ubi monachi et sacrifici suis clamoribus replerunt templa, ubi se exercuerunt in illis puerilibus ineptiis: deinde ubi se oblectarunt sua musica et suffitu, putant Deo satisfactum esse, quamvis tota eorum vita referta sit multis spurcitiis et foeditatibus."

⁹⁷ CO 37. 692 (COR II 6/1. 296; Jer. 7: 21-22). "Opponit enim Deus obedientiam sacrificiis: atqui sacrificia erant pars obedientiae."

⁹⁸ CO 37. 672 (COR II 6/1. 272; Jer. 7:1-4). "Propheta hic demonstrat longe diversam esse rationem colendi Dei, nempe ut vitam suam mutant in melius: ... Deus enim pro nihilo ducit hunc externum cultum, nisi praecedat interior veritas: hoc est, nisi vitae integritas respondeat professioni."

⁹⁹ CO 49. 235 (Rom. 12:1). "Quod si tum demum rite colitur Deus ubi ad eius praescriptum facta omnia nostra exigimus, facessant omnes commentitii cultus, quos ipse merito abominatur, quando pluris illi obedientia est quam victimae."

carefully and let the word grow in their life so that they can serve God through their life.¹⁰⁰ And, they should examine their life in the light of the word and actualize divine teachings.¹⁰¹ The people of God should do what God tells them to do. However, if He tells them to do something, they should remember that He gives them the ability to do it.¹⁰² So, proper dedication towards God is shown when the people of God have a sound life through the power He gives. Calvin explains that the believers should live a holy life on the Lord's Day as well as on ordinary days.¹⁰³ In other words, the true and holy worshipper maintains holiness in his or her life throughout the week. However, Calvin thinks that no Christian can achieve perfect worship. What matters is whether they continue to strive to live to obtain Christian maturity, even though their daily life is not perfect. In this world, they cannot be holy in every moment of life, but they can strive to live a holy life. Thus, those who give their pure heart to God and become holier and more righteous are on the way to the right Christian living.¹⁰⁴ Through sound worship, such people can live the life in which God delights. In conclusion, Christians who reform their life with the word are true worshippers. God calls His people to church in order to instill in them a holy life, and because of that the church has an important role in nurturing them.¹⁰⁵

8.8 Conclusion

This chapter relates Calvin's view of what the people of God are to do at church, and why they should be there. They should worship God, experience His presence and become holy through worship. In the Old Testament, they should have offered sacrifice at the temple. But, now they come to Christ and give Him thanks and praise for salvation. Such worship can become an integral part of the church because the participation of believers in worship shows their true identity as Christians. So, worshipping Christ on the Lord's Day is truly important for the members of the church. In this chapter

¹⁰⁰ Calvin, *Sermons*, 71 (Sermon 10 on Jer. 16:8-12). "... car quant nous venons icy pour estre enseignez, [...], veu que la parole de Dieu est bonne semence. Prions le, qu'il nous cultive en sorte que ceste semence rende son fruit, et que nous taschions en toute nostre vie de le servir."

¹⁰¹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 148 (Sermon 22 on Jer. 18:11-14). "Quant la parole de Dieu est preschée, il fault que je face là ung examen de ma vie et que je me mire en la doctrine de Dieu."

¹⁰² Calvin, *Sermons*, 150 (Sermon 22 on Jer. 18:11-14). "Car après que Dieu nous a montré ce que nous avons à faire, il ne fault point que nous disions: "Je ne puis aller jusques là", car Dieu a prononcé que ce sera. Or, après qu'il nous a admonestez, il nous donne la puissance de ce faire."

¹⁰³ McKee, ed., *John Calvin*, 249.

¹⁰⁴ CO 2. 505 (*Inst.* 3.6.5). "... ac si diceretur spirituale esse recte vivendi principium, ubi interior animi affectus sine fictione ad sanctitatem et iustitiam colendam Deo addicitur."

¹⁰⁵ Leith, *John Calvin's Doctrine*, 183.

we have found that different audiences and situations may affect Calvin's application in his writings. In fact, Calvin could clarify things to his congregation through sermons because he could write practical applications and descriptions of life in his sermons. Calvin wants his congregation to be holy not only in the worship service but also in their life. Such practical application is a feature of Calvin's ecclesiology, as is also shown in his exegesis.

Chapter IX. Unholiness: *The Fall of the Church I*

9.1 Introduction

When God adopted the Israelites, He wanted them to live as His people. In other words, they were chosen by God as a prototype of humanity; to show humanity how it should be sinless, holy and undefiled in their lives.¹ There is a verse in the Old Testament about the divine desire for the Israelites – ‘you (Israel) shall be holy for your God is holy’ (Lev. 19:2). This never means, however, that their holiness is an essential condition for being loved by God. Rather, it emphasizes that ungodly and iniquitous people could not come near to and fellowship with God, who is always holy.² This requirement definitely has been given not only to the Israelites, but also to the church, which is also known as His people. That the church is an assembly or congregation called to be God’s people implies the conversion of their identity inwardly as well as outwardly. Even though church members attend worship services, this does not mean that they are the children of God. Every church member needs to be converted so that they could be called the children of God. What Calvin argues in his exposition may imply that being a member of the church does not mean to become the children of God automatically. Although the church on earth was known as the gathering of God’s people, it is no secret that each church has some impious members in it. This impiety can be seen as “the fall of the church,” because God wanted His church to be holy once He created it.

This chapter deals with the impiety of the church in Calvin’s exegesis of the book of Jeremiah, although the theme “the fall of the church” is discussed both in this chapter and the next.³ To this end, we first investigate the visible church and the invisible, and then examine the corrupt situation of the visible church. Subsequently, by clarifying the cause of its unholiness, we will discover the holiness of the church that Calvin desired.

¹ CO 37. 636 (COR II 6/1. 227; Jer. 5:26). “Nam hac lege populum illum Deus sibi adoptaverat, ut regnaret in eo sanctimonia et puritas vitae.”

² CO 2. 503-4 (*Inst.* 3.6.2). “... sed quoniam ad eius gloriam magnopere pertinet, non esse illi consortium cum iniquitate et immunditia.”

³ In the next chapter, we will discuss ‘repentance’, which is the way to piety from impiety.

9.2 *De Ecclesia Invisibili*

The church was initiated by God. The chosen people have initiated different forms of congregational life in various regions while trying to follow God's command as the true people of God. Although it is not easy to see that all churches on earth are a universal church by judging them through their appearance, they are definitely 'one' congregation. Every church is one community whose head is Christ, which is formed by believers in union with Him.⁴ According to Calvin, however, the church is divided into two kinds – the visible church that we can see on earth, and the invisible. It is the latter that regards Christ as its head, and it is called "the universal church." Calvin's thoughts on the universal church as described in the *Institutes* of 1559 is also seen in his lectures on Jeremiah. God planted the members of the Genevan church in Christ when accepting them as His own church. Calvin sees the church as a *corpus mixtum*. This means that even though every member of the visible church does not, in fact, belong to the invisible church (*De ecclesia invisibili*) the Genevan church was definitely grafted onto Christ.⁵ Through union with Christ, likewise, those chosen by God would be engrafted onto the body of Christ, becoming part of the invisible church. Calvin never overlooked this significant aspect of the church: whatever belongs to its head has to be taken in all seriousness in all parts of the body.⁶ What Christ, the head of the church, possesses belongs in common to everyone who makes up the church.

This characteristic is important, in particular, when dealing with the righteousness of the church. God made His own son righteous, so surely His son is righteous. Therefore, it is not surprising to say that the righteousness of the son is imputed - not imparted - to the church as His body. In this way, the church has become righteous. The righteousness of God is given to Christ; He also becomes the righteousness of the church. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to all pious

⁴ CO 2. 747 (*Inst.* 4.1.2). "Ideo catholica dicitur, seu universalis, quia non duas aut tres invenire liceat quin discernatur Christus: quod fieri non potest. Quin sic electi Dei omnes in Christo sunt connexi, ut quemadmodum ab uno capite pendent, ita in unum velut corpus coalescant, ea inter se compage cohaerentes qua eiusdem corporis membra; ..."; "Christ is living in his members and therefore there is *one* church; therefore, the church remains until the end of this world." Selderhuis, "Church on Stage," 55.

⁵ CO 39. 46 (COR II 6/2. 1267; Jer. 32:41). "Dicimur autem inseri in Christum et plantari, cum Deus in Ecclesiam suam nos adoptat: [...] Deus plantat nos in terra sancta, dum inserit in corpus Christi."

⁶ CO 39. 68 (COR II 6/2. 1295; Jer. 33:16). "... nempe quidquid proprium et capiti commune fit omnibus membris."

believers in every church.⁷ In other words, the people of God are righteous because the righteousness of Christ is imputed to them, not because they are righteous in and of themselves. It is clear, then, that the righteousness of Christ is for the benefit of those who are united to Christ, not for Himself. Since the righteousness of Christ is communicable, His church becomes righteous.⁸ Therefore, the church, the community of Christian believers, is called to be a group of those endowed with God's righteousness. Becoming a member of the true church also means to be righteous.⁹ In addition, God's righteousness cannot be found in any other, except in Christ. Calvin argued, on that account, that those who desire to be righteous should seek Christ.¹⁰ This argument, however, does not mean that believers possess Christ's righteousness because they seek Him out. God proclaims them to be righteous due to their union with Christ by faith; they could only be declared to be righteous through accepting His declaration of righteousness.¹¹ That is to say, those who became a member of the true church through union with Christ are certainly not able to do everything perfectly, but they are rather simply righteous in the sight of God. Nonetheless, they should still try to become like Christ because they are a part of Christ's body. Because of their union with Christ, as a result, believers become righteous as well as holy. For them, becoming a member of Christ's body is strong motivation to live in holiness. The righteous member of the church should pay particular attention to avoid flaws and defects in their life.¹² Calvin argues, likewise, that both justification and sanctification are the product of the chosen people's union with Christ by faith.¹³ We shall consider the justification and sanctification of God's people in the following section.

9.3 Justification and Sanctification

⁷ CO 39. 68-69 (COR II 6/2. 1295-6; Jer. 33:16). "Cum ergo contulerit Pater Filio suo justitiam nostra causa, non mirum est, si ad nos transfertur quod penes ipsum residet. ... Nam hoc est singulare Christo, ut sit Deus justitia nostra. Sed quia hanc justitiam percipimus cum admittit nos in societatem omnium bonorum, quibus ornatus et ditatus fuit a Patre, hinc fit, ut hoc etiam ad totam Ecclesiam pertineat, nempe quod Deus est justitia ipsius."; McGrath, *Reformation Thought*, 125-6.

⁸ CO 38. 413 (COR II 6/1. 842-3; Jer. 23:6). "Sed Christi justitia aliam habet rationem. Est igitur nostra, quia Christus non sibi justus est, vel in se, sed justitiam accepit, quam communicet nobiscum."

⁹ Billings, *Union with Christ*, 27.

¹⁰ CO 38. 413 (COR II 6/1. 843; Jer. 23:6). "Si ergo cupimus Deum habere justitiam nostram, Christus nobis quaerendus est, quia hoc non nisi in ipso completur."

¹¹ CO 2. 598 (*Inst.* 3.17.10). "... sed quum in iustitiae studium magis incumbant quam iustitiam ipsam impleant, qualemcunque hanc iustitiam fidei iustificationi cedere par est, unde habet id quod est."

¹² Kim, *The identity and the life*, 129; CO 2.503 (*Inst.* 3.6.3). "Ex quo nos suo corpori inseruit, sollicito cavendum ne nobis, qui sumus eius membra, maculam aut labem ullam aspergamus (Ioann. 15:3; Eph. 5:23)."

¹³ McGrath, *Reformation Thought*, 131.

In his sermons, Calvin often criticized the unrighteousness of the Genevan people. Since they were as unrighteous as the ancient Jews, they should suffer the same punishment that God had inflicted on the ancient Jews.¹⁴ For God, this unrighteousness is extremely abominable. There has to be wrath and vengeance from God wherever sin is committed.¹⁵ In the Genevan church, Calvin emphasizes the fact that God judges, and will judge their unrighteousness. Nevertheless, they neither repented nor reformed their lives. This is the chief cause for Calvin reproving them.¹⁶ Calvin instructed them to live a holy life, because those who declare themselves to be righteous and became a part of the body of Christ should live according to God's word. This is the fundamental point of sanctification.¹⁷ In his teaching, consequently, justification is closely connected to sanctification. Both of them are theologically distinct, but are not to be separated. God would redeem those who are illuminated by the Holy Spirit. He makes righteous those who are redeemed. He makes holy those He makes righteous.¹⁸ Calvin also explains in his lectures that God chose them - Calvin and his audience - as His sons and forgave their sins. He was sympathetic with their infirmities; that is to say, they were accepted to be righteous by God even though they were not. Then He governed them by the Holy Spirit.¹⁹ Thus, through pious living they need to demonstrate the fact that they are the true children of God. God selected the Israelites as His people so long as they live piously and purify themselves.²⁰ He never wants to be mocked because of their impious behavior. On the other hand, He did not want them to take pride in themselves and do evil in their arrogance just because they are God's chosen people.²¹ That is the reason why God required them to be holy. Jeremiah also expected

¹⁴ Calvin, *Sermons*, 15 (Sermon 3 on Jer. 15:1-6). "Voyant donc que nous leur ressemblons en toute iniquité, voyant aussy que Dieu leur avoit faict telle grace comme à nous, il fault regarder qu'il aura occasion de nous pugnir de mesme pugnition."

¹⁵ CO 2. 533 (*Inst.* 3.11.2). "..., siquidem ut Deo abominabilis est iniquitas, ita nec peccator in eius oculis potest invenire gratiam, quatenus est peccator et quamdiu talis censetur. Proinde ubicunque peccatum est, illic etiam se profert ira et ultio Dei."

¹⁶ Calvin, *Sermons*, 59 (Sermon 9 on Jer. 16:1-7). "En cela nous voyons nostre dureté, car on ne voit point d'amendement en nostre vie nonobstant les menaces de Dieu."

¹⁷ Fuchs, "Calvin's Ethics," 151.

¹⁸ CO 2. 586 (*Inst.* 3.16.1). "Sunt enim perpetuo et individuo nexu coniuncta haec beneficia, ut quos sapientia sua illuminat, eos redimat; quos redimit, iustificet; quos iustificat sanctificet."; Dantas, "Calvin, the Theologian of the Holy Spirit," 139-140.

¹⁹ CO 39. 44 (COR II 6/2. 1265; Jer. 32:40). "..., nempe quod Deus, ubi nos semel adoptavit in filios, nobis ignoscit, et dat veniam nostris infirmitatibus: deinde Spiritu suo nos gubernat:"

²⁰ "The separation of the children of God from the world is the beginning of their sanctification by the Spirit." Zachman, *Image and Word*, 408.

²¹ CO 2. 594 (*Inst.* 3.17.5). "Siquidem ut in omnibus misericordiae suae pactis integritatem ac sanctimoniam vitae vicissim a servis suis Deus stipulatur, ne ludibrio sit sua bonitas, neve quis inani ob eam exultatione turgidus, benedicat animae suae, ambulans interim in pravitate cordis sui:"

the Israelites to make their lives holy by following God’s commandments, and then to reveal the evidence of true repentance.²² The believers’ pious life, therefore, is not what makes them righteous, but the evidence demonstrating their righteousness. According to Calvin, significantly, to be holy means to be separated from others²³ – that is to say, it means to live piously before God; to obey God’s word, following His commandments; and eventually, to praise God’s glory because they are different from unbelievers.²⁴

It is impossible, however, for human beings to live this pious life in their human capacity and power. Calvin indicates that believers’ lives would be led by the Holy Spirit, and every good thing – from beginning to end – has been done in His grace.²⁵ The Holy Spirit continues to take care of them because corrupt and depraved men are not able to make themselves holy without the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Even if someone lives a pious life for a period of time, he will certainly still be far from God, and live impiously unless he is united with the Holy God. As a result, believers absolutely need the help to live a pious life because there is no earthly perseverance sufficient to help us abide constantly in the holiness of God.²⁶ On the contrary, the Catholic Church at that time did not acknowledge that the piety of believers required the help of the Spirit from start to finish. They also thought that God’s grace would not lead their lives, but simply assist them in living a holy life. According to the Catholic Church, then, the sanctification process of believers could be completed by the works of human merit and the assistance of the Holy Spirit.²⁷ Criticizing their understanding, Calvin emphasizes the differences between the Catholic Church and his Genevan church.²⁸ In addition, he asserts, the imperfection of believers requires the continuous help of the Holy Spirit. If

²² CO 37. 675 (COR II 6/1. 276; Jer. 7:7). “Videmus ergo quid sibi velit Propheta. Revocat Judaeos ad observationem Legis, ut inde possit fieri rectum iudicium de ipsorum poenitentia.”

²³ CO 38. 288 (COR II 6/1. 681; Jer. 17:22). “... nam sanctificatio tantundem valet ac separatio.”

²⁴ CO 2. 570 (*Inst.* 3.14.9). “... hoc est consecramur Domino in veram vitae puritatem, cordibus nostris in legis obsequium formatis. Ut haec sit praecipua nostra voluntas, voluntati eius servire, ac eius duntaxat gloriam modis omnibus provehere.”

²⁵ CO 39. 43 (COR II 6/2. 1264; Jer. 32:40). “Hinc ergo sequitur, totum vitae cursum dirigi a Spiritu Dei, ita ut non minus finis quam principium bonorum operum debeat ascribi ejus gratiae.”

²⁶ CO 39. 41 (COR II 6/2. 1261; Jer. 32: 39). “Hinc apparet, non modo principium bonorum operum proficisci a Spiritu ejus, sed etiam usque ad finem ipsum pergere, quia alioqui nulla esset in nobis constantia in recto proposito.”

²⁷ Cf. CO 2. 584 (*Inst.* 3.15.7) “Ac principalem quidem causam in gratia esse non negant; sed eo tamen contendunt non excludi liberum arbitrium, per quod sit omne meritum.”

²⁸ CO 39. 40 (COR II 6/2. 1260; Jer. 32: 39). “... sed interea fingunt operari Spiritum Sanctum in nobis dimidia ex parte: et ideo gratia Spiritus vocatur ab ipsis auxilium, vocatur cooperatio. Videmus ergo qua in re inter nos et Papistas conveniat.”

they rely on their own merit they would be far from God, and then commit sacrilege.²⁹ Without being righteous beforehand, people could never be holy no matter what they did to obey the Mosaic Law.³⁰ The reason is obvious: they could not avoid being condemned before God unless God had covered their sins.³¹ Sanctification is wholly the work of the Holy Spirit.³² In other words, they could be converted only when He made them regenerate through the Holy Spirit. Through conversion they become capable of piety, and then able to live piously and in a sanctified manner.³³

Finally, in sum, these two graces given to the believers by union with Christ should be kept distinct, but must not be separated. Both are closely linked to each other. In addition, these graces bring about the conversion of the believers' status – from unrighteousness to righteousness, and from impious living to pious. God proclaimed to the Jews through the prophet Jeremiah that they should convert from their previous state of life to a holy one. In other words, sanctification is the process of a life changing from impiety to piety. On that account, Calvin points out that people's imperfect lives before justification are central to his interpretation of Jeremiah, as will be discussed in the next section.

9.4 The Corrupt State of Man

The believers who came to be righteous, Calvin said, could falter and be shaken when they saw that the influence of God's truth had faded away. Jeremiah also suffered severely when the word of God was mocked by the Jew, complaining that he wanted to give up his calling.³⁴ People, even when they suffer as God permits due to their wrongdoings, do not repent of their sins, but return to sin

²⁹ CO 39. 43 (COR II 6/2. 1264; Jer. 32:40). "Ergo quidquid meriti homines sibi arrogant, Deo auferunt, et hoc modo sunt sacrilegi."

³⁰ CO 2. 569 (*Inst.* 3.14.7). "... at Dominus reclamatur, nullam inde acquiri sanctificationem nisi corde prius bene purgato."

³¹ CO 39. 56 (COR II 6/2. 1280; Jer. 33:8). "Sumus igitur semper maledicti coram Deo, donec sepe liat nostra peccata."

³² Billings, "Union with Christ," 53.

³³ CO 39. 644 (COR II 7. 465; Lam. 5:21). "Est conversio interior, ubi Deus nos regenerat Spiritu suo, conversio etiam respectu nostri dicitur esse affectus pietatis, ubi postquam ab ipso fuimus alienati redimus in viam, et ad sanam mentem."

³⁴ CO 38. 345 (COR II 6/1. 754; Jer. 20:8-9). "Cum igitur videmus non esse talem effectum doctrinae, qualis optandus esset, necesse est eos qui alioqui firmi sunt, tandem vel concuti, vel labascere. Ideo hic locus magis notandus est, cum fatetur Jeremias se fuisse consternatum, quia videbat sermonem Dei esse ludibrio, et ita voluerit e cursu vocationis suae desistere."

just like a dog returns to its vomit if they have no concern for their wickedness.³⁵ Calvin says that men are the opponents of God who continue to be far from Him in committing sin³⁶ and they become ever more wicked eventually even denying God.³⁷

However, the corrupt human being, quite clearly, exists only because of the one God.³⁸ It is impossible, that is, to think of human beings apart from God. Even though the relationship between them is not good due to man's corrupt state, man always maintains a relationship with God, and he/she has been described as existing only in God.³⁹ God created man in His own image. Adam was without any stain, according to Calvin, when he was created.⁴⁰ He was, then, righteous and free from every evil. Yet God gave Adam a vulnerable nature, and he who had a free will fell immediately. What's more, he brought his descendants into the same downfall with him.⁴¹ Describing the wicked state of the Jews, Calvin explains that Adam's descendants depart wholly from their nature and become wild beasts from time to time.⁴² They become more evil than their nature at birth. As a result they could not repent, having hardened themselves in committing sins. That wickedness was fixed firmly in their hearts, and became their second nature.⁴³ In other words, they became incrementally incurable.⁴⁴ This doctrine is not treated with kid gloves by Calvin because it is clear in the Bible that human nature is completely corrupt.⁴⁵ The Catholic Church, however, does not accept the fact of humanity's incurable corruption and claims, further, that man has the power to assist in his salvation

³⁵ CO 37. 506 (COR II 6/1. 63; Jer. 2:9). "Caeterum simul atque data est aliqua relaxatio, excutiant jugum, et immemores scelerum suorum iterum ad vomitum redeunt tanquam canes."

³⁶ Calvin, *Sermons*, 109 (Sermon 16 on Jer. 17:9-11). "Car, comme j'ay dit, en nostre naturel nous sommes vrayz ennemyz de Dieu, voullons nous plus grant mal que rebellion et malice."

³⁷ Calvin, *Sermons*, 42 (Sermon 6 on Jer. 15:12-13, 15-17). "... c'est asscavoir que les hommes ont ceste semence en eulx de se mocquer de Dieu, non pas qu'ilz le facent du premier coup, mais petit à petit nous y venons."

³⁸ CO 2. 31 (*Inst.* 1.1.1). "... imo ne id quidem ipsum quod sumus, aliud esse quam in uno Deo subsistentiam."

³⁹ CO 2. 32 (*Inst.* 1.1.2) "Rursum, hominem in puram sui notitiam nunquam pervenire constat, nisi prius Dei faciem sit contemplatus, atque ex illius intuitu ad se ipsum inspiciendum descendat."; Serderhuis, *The Psalms*, 72-3.

⁴⁰ CO 39. 44 (COR II 6/2. 1265; Jer. 32:40). "Scimus Adam caruisse omni labe, quia formatus fuit ad imaginem Dei."; Vliet, "As a Son to his Father," 116.

⁴¹ CO 39. 44 (COR II 6/2. 1265; Jer. 32:40). "... tametsi enim ipsum creavit justum et innoxium, et sine ulla macula, tamen dedit naturam flexibilem, et ideo statim lapsus est Adam cum suo libero arbitrio. Ad quid igitur valuit liberum arbitrium? nempe ut protinus homo caderet, et nos secum ageret praecipites eadem ruina."

⁴² CO 38. 29 (COR II 6/1. 349; Jer. 9:4). "... sequitur homines prorsus degenerasse a natura, et conversos esse in feras bestias, ubi talis regnat astorgia. ... dum ostendunt nihil amplius reliquum esse humanitatis,"

⁴³ CO 38. 172 (COR II 6/1. 532; Jer. 13:23). "Jeremias ergo hic non respicit quae sit hominum natura, vel quid afferant ex utero: sed invehitur adversus judaeos, qui contraxerant talem habitum ex longo peccandi usu. Quoniam enim obdurerant ad male agendum, dicit non posse respiscere, et ita haerere, vel infixam esse malitiam in ipsorum cordibus: ..."

⁴⁴ CO 38. 172 (COR II 6/1. 532; Jer. 13:23). "... denique ut sint prorsus incurabiles: ..."; Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 82.

⁴⁵ Calvin, *Sermons*, 110 (Sermon 16 on Jer. 17:9-11). "Dieu s'efforce de nous monstrier que nostre nature est toute corrupue. Quant l'Escripture est playne de ceste doctrine, il faut dire que c'est chose neccessaire de savoir quant Dieu ne la passe point ligierement."

despite his corrupt state. So Calvin criticizes this contention. According to him, it is also more beneficial for man to admit that he/she has nothing within but wickedness or evil.⁴⁶

In addition, God planted a religious seed (*religionis semen*) in the human heart to make men look for Him, guided by natural instinct.⁴⁷ God, thus, does not permit them to blame Him for their wickedness. In particular, the Jews could not make an excuse for their evil because they were taught that God had been their heavenly father and had entered into a good relationship with their ancestors and themselves.⁴⁸ The law was given to all Israelites, without any distinction. That is, God intended His law to be for the whole people without exception. So no one could excuse their fault or wickedness by claiming that they had not been taught the knowledge of God.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, those corruptions prevailed not only in common people, but also believers. Then the corrupt eventually came to a state of hopelessness.⁵⁰ Even though their original gift could be still seen in the imperceptible image of God in them.⁵¹ Thus believers could not but fall away from the grace of God due to their weakness if God's grace did not preserve them.⁵² In other words, they could escape their miserable state as long as God reforms their heart through the Holy Spirit, and they live properly,⁵³ for God sustains them so that they not be defeated or overwhelmed by sin.⁵⁴ The whole course of their life is directed by the Spirit of God.

⁴⁶ Calvin, *Sermons*, 109-110 (Sermon 16 on Jer. 17:9-11). "Et, combien qu'il y ait grande infirmité en eux, que ce n'est pas à dire qu'ilz n'aient quelque vertu pour ayder à leur salut. ... Ainsi arestons nous à ceste doctrine et congnoissons que nous aurons bien profité quant nous scaurons que nous n'avons rien que mal en nous."; Vliet, *Children of God*, 121-122.

⁴⁷ CO 2. 36 (*Inst.* 1.3.1). "Et qui in aliis vitae partibus minimum videntur a belluis differre, quoddam tamen perpetuo religionis semen retinent."; CO 2. 38 (*Inst.* 1.4.1) "Sicut autem omnibus inditum esse divinitus religionis semen experientia testatur, ita vix centesimus quisque reperitur qui conceptum in suo corde foveat, nullus autem in quo maturescat: ..."; Huijgen, "Das 'Semen religionis' und die 'pietas' in Calvins Theologie," 41-57; Schreiner, *The Theater of His Glory*, 65-72.

⁴⁸ CO 37. 517 (COR II 6/1. 78; Jer. 2:19). "... sed cum sensissent Deum sibi esse Patrem, et cum tam liberaliter ipsos tractasset, cum dignatus fuisset foedus suum cum illis percutere, fuit inexcusabilis eorum malitia."

⁴⁹ CO 37. 612 (COR II 6/1. 195; Jer. 5:4). "... interea non extenuat culpam, si qui vellent inscitiam obtendere, quia non fuerunt edocti in scholis. Nam, ut dictum fuit, sine exceptione Legem suam Deus prodesse voluit toti populo."

⁵⁰ CO 38. 279 (COR II 6/1. 670; Jer. 17:15). "Videmus in summa hic Prophetam ostendere, ventum esse usque ad extremum desperationis."

⁵¹ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 79; CO 2. 199 (*Inst.* 2.2.15). "... talibus exemplis dicamus quot naturae humanae bona Dominus reliquerit, postquam vero bono spoliata est."; To study the remnant of God's Image after the Fall according to Reformed theologians between the 16th and the 17th centuries, including Calvin, see Luca Baschera, "Total Depravity? The Consequences of Original Sin in John Calvin and Later Reformed Theology," 37-58.

⁵² CO 39. 41 (COR II 6/2. 1261; Jer. 32:39). "Neque enim satis esset corda nostra semel formata esse in obsequium ejus, nisi nos retineret in officio. Singulis enim momentis, quae nostra est levitas, excideremus ab ejus gratia. Ergo opus est continuatione."

⁵³ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 85; CO 38. 463 (COR II 6/1. 905; Jer. 24:7). "... donec ipsum Deus e misera illa servitute extrahat."

⁵⁴ CO 39. 44 (COR II 6/2. 1265; Jer. 32:40). "... tamen longe excellit nostra conditio, quia Deus nos instruit virtute Spiritus sui inter omnia certamina, ut nunquam tamen vincamur vel obruamur."

These facts show that the most significant thing in life is how men maintain their relationship with God no matter how corrupt they were or how miserably they live in that miserable condition, and how faithful they will become through Jesus. This means that the corrupt and weak person can be aware of their true state and position only in their relationship with God.

9.5 Three Types of Corruption in the Visible Church

As discussed earlier, the faithful have corrupt natures just like the unfaithful. And they live as members of the current church just as they are. Consequently, the unhealthy and corrupt also appear in the Church. Calvin examines four types of men with regards to justification.

Let us, indeed, make a fourfold classification of it. For men are either (1) endowed with no knowledge of God and immersed in idolatry, or (2) initiated into the sacraments, yet by impurity of life denying God in their actions while they confess Him with their lips, they belong to Christ only in name; or (3) they are hypocrites who conceal with empty pretenses their wickedness of heart, or (4) regenerated by God's Spirit, they make true holiness their concern.⁵⁵

In this section, the corruption of the church will be examined by looking into how Calvin described only the formerly mentioned three types of people as found in his exegesis of Jeremiah. The fourth type will not be discussed because they do not corrupt the church, but are the true believers.

The first type of people corrupt the visible church as well as their own life by worshipping idols. First of all, Calvin called the papists idolaters. Not satisfied with God alone, they lived according to their own devices, and piled up a vast multitude of alien gods. They cried to God and at the same time to a great number of their own gods.⁵⁶ In the same way, the Israelites followed their idols – mainly, the sun and moon, the stars, and the planets – not by a sudden impulse, but they sincerely devoting themselves to their gods. They also kneeled down to them. This practice was

⁵⁵ CO 2. 564 (*Inst.* 3.14.1). “Quadruplicem vero faciamus gradum. Homines enim aut nulla Dei agnitione praediti in idololatria demersi sunt; aut sacramentis initiati vitae impuritate Deum, quem ore confitentur, factis abnegantes titulo tenus sunt Christi; aut hypocritae sunt, qui cordis nequitiam inanibus fucis tegunt; aut spiritu Dei regenerati veram sanctimoniam meditantur.” Cf. Calvin, *Institutes I*, ed. McNeill, 768; Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 73. According to Calvin's commentary on Psalm 32:2, Selderhuis says, there are in fact only three types of people: believers, hypocrites and those who openly despise God.

⁵⁶ CO 38. 111 (COR II 6/1. 453; Jer. 11:12). “Invocant ergo Deum, sed postea non contenti uno ipso, feruntur ad sua figmenta, et accumulunt sibi, quemadmodum dixi, ingentem turbam deorum.”

evidence of their reverence.⁵⁷ In addition, the prophet described the impiety of the Israelites – they looked for unknown gods, and tried to set up false ways of worship, rather than being obedient to the only true God and following His law. These descriptions reveal the ungratefulness of the people.⁵⁸ It represents the fact that they turned back and departed from God according to their own will, the very thing they intended to do.⁵⁹ According to Calvin, another reason for their idolatry is their pride in the notion that they could discern right from wrong without God’s word.⁶⁰ Additionally, if they glorify other gods than God, it is a sufficient proof of idolatry. So Calvin mentions ‘offering incense’ as an example to explain their idolatry. Offering incense was evidence of worship. As they offered incense to their idols, it robbed the true God of His own praise and adorned idols with the rights of God.⁶¹ Their lack of the knowledge of God made them worship idols, not being able to distinguish what He wanted and what He did not want from men. The faithful ought to have sufficient knowledge of God because of their faith to be able to distinguish the knowledge of God from that which is nothing but the delusion and ridicule of Satan.⁶²

Second, Calvin reproaches superficial attenders in the worship of the Genevan church. They are the second type of people who belong to God only in name. They attend worship in order to listen to a sermon, but they do not apply it to their daily life. Some of them do not even have any desire to listen to sermons. So, their thoughts and interests wandered to other places although their body remained in the church.⁶³ They have attended worship out of obligation, but have never devoted

⁵⁷ CO 38. 3 (COR II 6/1. 317; Jer. 8:2). “Postea extremo loco ponit, *quod se prostraverint coram ipsis*. Hoc refertur ad servitutum. Idem enim est dare hoc signum reverentiae, ubi homines se prosternunt coram idolis, atque si servirent.”

⁵⁸ CO 38. 3 (COR II 6/1. 317; Jer. 8:2). “... ut scilicet palam fieret turpis illa populi ingratitude, quod maluisset sibi adsciscere deos sibi incognitos, et erigere perversos et fictitios cultus, quam praestare Deo vero obsequium et acquiescere in ejus Lege, ...”

⁵⁹ CO 39. 250 (COR II 6/2. 1529; Jer. 44:3). “Ergo simul atque sibi fabricant homines cultus novos, perinde est ac si retro cursum flecterent, vel sponte errarent, ...”

⁶⁰ Calvin, *Sermons*, 54 (Sermon 8 on Jer. 15:19-21). “Or ceste sagesse quelle est elle? c’est celle qui est cause de toute l’ydolatrie, car les hommes pensent scavoir ce qu’il faut faire. ... Dont procede l’ydolatrie de la papaulté? c’est de la sagesse des hommes. Car ilz presument qu’ilz scauront bien discerner entre le bien et le mal sans la reigle de Dieu.”

⁶¹ CO 39. 250 (COR II 6/2. 1529-30; Jer. 44:3). “Nam si alio transferant quod proprium est Deo, et quod ipse sibi vindicat, satis superque convicta est eorum idololatria: ... Cum ergo offerrent suffitum idolis, hoc fuit verum Deum spoliare suo honore, et eligere novos deos, et illos ornare jure unius Dei.”

⁶² CO 39. 251 (COR II 6/2. 1530; Jer. 44:3-4). “Sciamus ergo religionem, dum a scientia distrahitur, merum esse ludibrium Satanae. Ergo necesse est, ut certo statuatur homines, quem Deum colant.”

⁶³ Calvin, *Sermons*, 117 (Sermon 17 on Jer. 17:11-14). “Tant s’en faut que nous nous applicquions à rememorer la doctrine après que nous l’avons ouye, que les uns n’en veullent point avoir les aureilles rompues, et encores quant nous serons icy pour la devoir oyr, noz espritz sont ailleurs et faisons des chasteaulx en Espagne.”

themselves to God. Their practice of worship, therefore, is meaningless to God.⁶⁴ Unless they strive to reform their life their worship is of no use. God has instructed them in the right way to live.⁶⁵

However, they just attend worship shamelessly without obeying God in their lives. Calvin repeatedly cites Lam. 4:8, “God was in no way pleased with the external worship of the Jews, while they were audaciously violating the whole law.”⁶⁶

Third, the corruption of the church reveals itself through the presence of hypocrites. They are definitely aware of their deceit, wickedness, and impiety so they seek to fulfill their obligation to God only by attending external ceremonies in order to conceal their real life.⁶⁷ The hypocrites demonstrate hypocritical behavior because they never want their real self to be exposed. The second type of people might not pretend to be pious. But the third type tries to behave like an authentic believer in order to hide their true self. Hence, the prophet commands the Jews to take off their hidden sins, and shake off their wickedness like thorns and briars in a field which has been long left without being cultivated.⁶⁸ They, nonetheless, still come to the temple vainly,⁶⁹ and offer sacrifices insincerely, and still try to conceal their real life with foolish boastings. If they really want to be God’s disciples, they must bear good fruits in their daily life.⁷⁰ Perhaps the external confession of the hypocrites seems to surpass that of the faithful in their zeal, as they are loudly boastful.⁷¹ However, their hypocritical behaviors are effective in making worse their sins and wickedness. According to Calvin, though, God never punishes the hypocrite immediately, for He gives them freedom to commit more sin. They are incapable, though, of recognizing their own evil; rather they boast that they are safe, for they regard

⁶⁴ CO 37. 674 (COR II 6/1. 275; Jer. 7:5-7). “Summa est, sacrificia coram Deo nullius momenti vel pretii esse, nisi qui offerunt simul etiam se totos consecrant Deo puro corde.”

⁶⁵ CO 37. 612-3 (COR II 6/1. 195-6; Jer. 5:4-5). “Nam Deus cum regulam vivendi nobis praescribit, perinde est ac si viam nobis monstraret. ... quoniam hoc est Legis officium, revocare nos ab errore, et deducere ad finem nobis propositum:”

⁶⁶ CO 39. 613 (COR II 7. 363; Lam. 4:8). “... Deum minime oblectatum esse externo illo cultu, cum Judaei totam legem audacter violarent.”

⁶⁷ CO 37. 576 (COR II 6/1. 150; Jer. 4:3). “... reprehendit enim hypocrisin in Israelitis, quoniam vellent defungi erga Deum externis duntaxat ceremoniis, cum tamen corda essent implicita et fraudibus et omni genere impietatis ac malitiae.”

⁶⁸ CO 37. 577 (COR II 6/1. 151; Jer. 4:3). “Jubet igitur penitus excutere vitia, quae latent, quemadmodum si evellerent spinas et sentes ex agro, qui diu caruerit cultura et labore.”

⁶⁹ CO 37. 675-6 (COR II 6/1. 277; Jer. 7:7). “... interea putatis me esse vobis placatum, ubi in Templum venitis cum inanibus pompis: sed sacrificia vestra polluitis impuris manibus.”

⁷⁰ CO 38. 10 (COR II 6/1. 325; Jer. 8:8). “Ergo ex eorum vita refellit Jeremias stolidam illam jactantiam, quod scilicet nullum signum darent suae sapientiae. Nam necesse est, ut qui se volunt probare discipulos Dei, proferant aliquos fructus in vita sua.”

⁷¹ CO 38. 595 (COR II 6/2. 1071; Jer. 29:13). “Sed quoniam hypocritae satis sunt clamosi, et videntur sanctos ipsos superare zeli ardore, si tantum spectetur externa professio, ...”

themselves as the people of God.⁷² However, hypocrites cannot become the children of God until they repent of their wickedness sincerely. It is worth noting that there is a difference between true believers and hypocrites. For God calls all men to repentance, but it is, in particular, adhered to by the faithful.⁷³

In sum, the corruption that is found in the church is caused by unbelievers' ungrateful attitudes, their ignorance of who God is, and the discordance between faith and life.

9.6 *Corpus Mixtum*

God wanted His people to be holy just like Himself. But they cannot become holy in a single night. Men gradually become holy throughout their life. This means that the righteous person cannot avoid having some remnants of wickedness in their life.⁷⁴ To say it pointedly, the church is not a place where only the justified or the faithful gather. The church is imperfect and has shortcomings regarding genuine piety in spite of its desire for holiness.

Nevertheless, in Calvin's time, some people, the so-called the Anabaptists, claimed that a church without sin and defect could be a reality on earth.⁷⁵ Every Church member, they thought, could become justified and sanctified completely in this world. Against them, Calvin argued that their vision was quite idealistic and improbable, and had originated in religious arrogance.⁷⁶ They also repudiated the daily duty of learning the meaning of the Scriptures, and despised those who had a passion for learning within the church. And yet of themselves, these arrogant souls boasted that the doctrine of the Law was the foundation (Alphabet) of their life.⁷⁷ Pointing out these contradictions, Calvin emphasized that those not able to accept the concept that – the church would remain a mixed body of the faithful and unfaithful until the heavenly judge separated the former from the latter – are the Anabaptists.⁷⁸ As Calvin also notes from Jer. 15:16, many hypocrites are mixed with the people of

⁷² CO 38. 402 (COR II 6/1. 828-9; Jer. 23:1-3). "Impunitas enim magis illos impellit ad peccandi licentiam. Hinc fit, ut jactent se fore salvos: quia sint populus Dei."

⁷³ CO 38. 670 (COR II 6/2. 1167; Jer. 31:18). "Deus quidem homines ad resipiscentiam poenis vocat, ita ut reprobi inexcusabiles reddantur, dum obstinant animos, nec proficiunt sub ferula. Sed peculiaris est usus poenarum erga fideles, ..."

⁷⁴ Leith, *John Calvin's Doctrine of the Christian life*, 96.

⁷⁵ Selderhuis, "Church on Stage," 51-52.

⁷⁶ Balke, *Calvin en de Doperse Radikalen*, 254-7.

⁷⁷ CO 38. 518 (COR II 6/1. 974; Jer. 26:4-6). "... ut nostro tempore fuerint multi fanatici inter Anabaptistas, qui spernerent omnem doctrinam. Jactabant enim hoc esse alphabetum: deinde somniabant fieri injuriam Spiritui Sancto, cum homines ita attentis essent literae."

⁷⁸ Balke, "Calvin and the Anabaptists," 151; Balke, *Calvin en de Doperse Radikalen*, 258-9.

God even in a true and well-ordered church.⁷⁹ As good wine would be poison after being mixed with poison, worship attended by the unfaithful and the faithful could not help but be corrupted.⁸⁰ In this way, the pure truth of God is often defiled with lots of vain delusion and glosses. So the faithful should separate the impurities from the church just like the chaff is separated from the wheat.⁸¹ It is, therefore, the duty of the true members of church, for the unfaithful could not know what to avoid and what to follow in their confused state. Although true church members have tried to discern the true from the false, it is impossible to do this perfectly in this world. Thus, the church is comprised of not only the faithful, but also the unfaithful. It then is called a *corpus mixtum* (the mixed body).⁸² God, however, preserves His true children in His church in a wonderful way even though the church has been defiled by the unfaithful.⁸³ As a consequence, if there are still some faithful believers in the church, albeit a very small number, the name “the people of God” remains theirs.⁸⁴

In his comments, Calvin explains the features of the mixed church as follows. First, there coexist true prophets and false in the mixed church community. The Prophet Jeremiah described the false prophets in Jerusalem as those who wished to appear more holy and more perfect than others, and who sought to be deemed God’s sincere ministers, while they were actually the worst in fact.⁸⁵ They were foolish as well as deliberately impious, having liberty in all kinds of wrongdoing, and doing every kind of iniquity.⁸⁶ Calvin told his students that those who want to proclaim God’s word faithfully and to make their life holy are to contend with the arrogant people in the Catholic Church

⁷⁹ CO 38. 228 (COR II 6/1. 604; Jer. 15:16). “Tamen multi permixti sunt hypocritae Dei electis: ita etiam in vera Ecclesia et bene composita invocatur Dei nomen super reprobos.”

⁸⁰ Calvin, *Sermons*, 158 (Sermon 23 on Jer. 18:13-16). “C’est comme si nous voulions mêler le bon vin avec du poison, à savoir si le bon vin ne seroit point tout gasté? Ainsi en est il quant nous mêlons noz superstitions avec le service de Dieu.”

⁸¹ CO 38. 444 (COR II 6/1. 880; Jer. 23:28). “Sic etiam in Templo saepe permixtum erit triticum paleae, dum pura Dei veritas inquinatur multis commentis, et pravis figmentis: ... Quod si negligimus, et putamus hanc esse justam excusationem spernendi verbi Dei, quoniam ex opposito Satan ingerit suas fallacias, pereamus igitur in illa nostra ignavia, quemadmodum si quis non dignetur triticum seligere et conficere sibi inde panem.”

⁸² Augustine, *City of God*, 831. Calvin’s thought on ‘*corpus mixtum*’ comes from Augustine’s book, *City of God*, XVIII. 49. “In this situation, many reprobates are mingled in the Church with the good, and both sorts are collected as it were in the dragnet of the gospel.”

⁸³ CO 38. 206 (COR II 6/1. 576-7; Jer. 15:1). “... sed tamen mirabiliter servavit reliquias, et quidem occulto modo.”

⁸⁴ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 232-3.

⁸⁵ CO 38. 422 (COR II 6/1. 854; Jer. 23:13). “Sic autem comparat ut eos pronuntiet longe deteriores esse, qui volebant censeri fideles Dei Ministri.”

⁸⁶ CO 38. 422 (COR II 6/1. 854; Jer. 23:13). “... quoniam non fuerint tantum insipidi, sed consulto everterint omnem pietatem, et permiserint licentiam omnium scelerum, ita ut quasi vexillum gestarent ad probandam omnem speciem nequitiae.”

who boast themselves to be bishops, priests of Christ, and the successors of the apostles. Moreover, those same papists are hostile to the Genevan church.⁸⁷

The second type is the Nicodemites in the mixed body.⁸⁸ While serving his church and teaching believers, Calvin wanted them to reform their faith and life wholly. From this perspective he did not think it enough if they escaped only inwardly from the Catholic Church. Interior faith should always be demonstrated with an external confession of faith.⁸⁹ The Nicodemites, however, of his day thought it sufficient to not deny God in their hearts. So they attended services in the Catholic Church and lived under the papacy while hiding their real faith. Being frightened of the Catholic Church, they also pretended to deny their true faith or to openly express their discontent with the errors of the Catholic Church.⁹⁰ Calvin extremely opposed the Nicodemites' attitudes, for he could not tolerate idolatry. True believers should devote themselves faithfully not only with their heart, but also with their body. Their body belongs to God just like their hearts do. It is unacceptable, thus, that those who confess the true faith should attend the worship services of the Catholic Church.⁹¹ Calvin asserts that there is no true religion if there is no true confession of faith. In other words, the believers should have their heart in agreement with their tongue.⁹² In addition, all believers are not required to preach God's word everywhere, according to Calvin, but it is commanded to all without exception to make a right answer in cases where the glory of God is insulted by His enemies, and confess their faith openly where something against the true God happens.⁹³ Consequently, the true faith sometimes appears clearly through external confession. Calvin's desire that believers should worship God correctly is revealed in his antipathy toward the Nicodemites.⁹⁴ Considering only the context of

⁸⁷ CO 38. 425 (COR II 6/1. 857; Jer. 23:16). "... , hodie ne miremur, si prohi Doctores, et qui cupiunt asserere veram et sinceram pietatem, cogantur insurgere adversus titularios istos, qui sub larvis Pastorum et Praesulum et Episcoporum delitescunt, ut fucum faciant miseris et rudibus."

⁸⁸ Moehn, *Calvin's Sermons on Acts*, 126-7.

⁸⁹ Veen, "Calvin and His Opponents," 156-7.

⁹⁰ CO 38. 74 (COR II 6/1. 407; Jer. 10:11). "Quid ergo dicent Nicodemitae, qui hodie sibi blanditias faciunt? quia satis esse putant si non abnegent Deum ex animo, sed metu perterriti vel simulent se abnegare, vel palam ostendant se suffragari erroribus?"

⁹¹ Balsarak, *Establishing the Remnant Church*, 56-7; Moehn, *Calvin's Sermons on Acts*, 128-130.

⁹² CO 38. 74 (COR II 6/1. 407; Jer. 10:11). "In summa, videmus nullam esse pietatem in cordibus hominum, nisi accedat confessio: oportet enim mutuum esse consensum inter cor et linguam."

⁹³ CO 38. 75 (COR II 6/1. 407; Jer. 10:11). "... sed hoc tamen omnibus sine exceptione mandari, ut detestentur idola, si videant gloriam Dei probrose traduci ab hostibus. Nam vult Propheta eos opponere hanc responsionem contumeliis eorum qui tunc occasione sibi data poterant petulanter insurgere contra verum Deum."

⁹⁴ Wright, "Why was Calvin," 90.

Geneva, the Nicodemites could not regard themselves as a part of the church because they mainly took part in the worship of the Catholic Church, not in those of Calvin's church. The attitude of those who seek external benefits while hiding their true faith reflects on all members of the Genevan congregation. They do not want to follow the true faith the way Jesus wishes it to be followed.⁹⁵

9.7 The Holiness of the Church

Thanks to the fact that those who become righteous are always in the process of becoming holy throughout their life, believers should think about how to be holy in the church. It is certain that God has been the conserver of His church throughout history. The covenant that he made with His chosen people never fails.⁹⁶ He also promised to purify the church, no matter how corrupt it is,⁹⁷ and He would cleanse His church from its polluted condition. In other words, it is not man's work to build up the church or to keep it pure, so as to be preserved, but that is only of the work of God.⁹⁸ However, this does not mean that believers could do nothing else in the church than simply rely on God. They rather should be aware of their wickedness and incapacity, and then call ceaselessly on God for help. Otherwise they would suffer because of their own weakness.⁹⁹ In this sense, Calvin encouraged the faithful in the Genevan church - who were in the same boat with the corrupt and impious Jews - to pray for being forgiveness of their sins and abiding in the word of God for transition from unfaithfulness to faithfulness which depends solely on God.¹⁰⁰ The church can also be taught that the true wisdom is to obey God and to surrender oneself to Him.¹⁰¹ Believers should be obedient to God in humility.¹⁰² His deliverance is only promised to the faithful who should be so humble that they

⁹⁵ Balserak, *Establishing the Remnant Church*, 58.

⁹⁶ CO 38. 404 (COR II 6/1. 831-2; Jer. 23:3). "Deus ergo semper fuit custos Ecclesiae suae: et ita nunquam intercidit ejus gratuita adoptio, qua elegerat genus Abrahae."

⁹⁷ CO 38. 440 (COR II 6/1. 876; Jer. 23:26). "... , nempe se purgaturum Ecclesiam suam talibus inquinamentis."

⁹⁸ CO 38. 277 (COR II 6/1. 668; Jer. 17:14). "... , Non esse in hominis arbitrio stare vel se tueri incolumem ut salvus sit, sed esse singulare Dei beneficium."

⁹⁹ CO 38. 277 (COR II 6/1. 667; Jer. 17:14). "... , dum ubique se ingerunt scandala, tunc majore studio et ardore invocandum esse Deum. Nam quisque nostrum satis sibi conscius est propriae infirmitatis: etiam si pugnandum non esset, tamen levitas nostra non patitur nos integros stare."

¹⁰⁰ Calvin, *Sermons*, 111 (Sermon 16 on Jer. 17:9-11). "... assavoir qu'il n'y a que malice en nous et que c'est à Dieu à la convertir. Venons à luy le priant qu'il luy plaise de dompter ceste rebellion, que au lieu que nous avons des cueurs de pierre il les convertisse en cueurs de chair, à savoir qu'ilz soient flexibles à sa parolle."

¹⁰¹ CO 38. 593 (COR II 6/2. 1068; Jer. 29:11). "Docet igitur hanc esse veram sapientiam, nos Deo subijcere et permittere:"

¹⁰² Calvin, *Sermons*, 142 (Sermon 21 on Jer. 18:1-10). "En cela il nous faut aprendre que ce n'est point à nous de choisir comment nous devons estre enseignez de Dieu ne de quelle façon, mais de trouver bon tout ce qu'il nous dict, ... Aprenons donc d'obeyr simplement."

patiently submit to God and not disregard His paternal teaching.¹⁰³ The faithful should repent and maintain their life in holiness, not in order to appear pious but to be truly repentant.¹⁰⁴ Nonetheless, they can never reach their goal of holiness in this world no matter how hard they try. That is to say, the holiness of the church is still incomplete in every respect. Calvin asserts that the church is holy only in the sense that it is daily advancing even though it is not yet perfect.¹⁰⁵ The church thus makes progress from day to day and it is still on the way to holiness.

But a question arises: what does Calvin think about the good works of believers? Examining his thought, it is quickly apparent that their good works do not make them righteous, but the righteous cannot help doing what is good for others. Calvin says that the communal relationship in the church is held together by two bonds: a common faith in common sound doctrine, and brotherly love.¹⁰⁶ In this respect, loving their neighbors is an important part of the church's holiness. Selderhuis explains that the measure of whether the neighbor is served or injured is, in Calvin's view, the most important standard of ethical behaviour since the command to look after one's neighbor is rooted in man's being created in the image of God.¹⁰⁷ The good works of the faithful, for him, mean to take care of one's neighbors or to benefit them. However, Calvin would denounce any idea which declared that good works are worthwhile merely because they contribute to the social welfare. Rather, good works are valuable fundamentally because they belong to the glory of God.¹⁰⁸ That is to say, good works are no longer meritorious in themselves, but they reveal the honor of God through the doing of them. Discussing how it is to make believers good and to have their judgments be righteous between themselves and their neighbors without favor or hatred, Calvin mentions that the main example in service to others is to deal fairly with strangers as well as orphans and widows. During Calvin's day

¹⁰³ CO 38. 616 (COR II 6/2. 1098; Jer. 30:8). "Sed tenendum est quod ante diximus, nempe liberationem promitti fidelibus, qui se patienter et placidis animis subjecerint Deo, et non recusaverint paternam ejus castigationem."

¹⁰⁴ CO 39. 592 (COR II 7. 295; Lam. 3:41). "Nunc ergo tenemus consilium Prophetarum: ostendit, eos qui ex animo respiciunt non debere prodire coram Deo, ac si non essent rei apud ejus tribunal, sed potius debere anxios esse et supplices, ut veniam obtineant."

¹⁰⁵ CO 2. 760 (*Inst.* 4.1.17). "Unde sequitur nondum peractam esse eius sanctitatem. Sic ergo sancta est ecclesia ut quotidie proficiat, nondum perfecta sit; ..."

¹⁰⁶ CO 2. 771 (*Inst.* 4.2.5). "Haec porro duobus vinculis continetur, sanae doctrinae consensione et fraterna caritate."

¹⁰⁷ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 200.

¹⁰⁸ Leith, *John Calvin's Doctrine*, 105-6.

they lacked protection and were victimized.¹⁰⁹ When it comes to judgment and justice, Calvin says, by justice people are to understand equity, so that they have their own rights; and by judgment is to be understood the execution of punishment. To do justice and judgment is to defend the weak and the innocent with, when necessary, an armed hand.¹¹⁰ To treat them with kindness and consideration, moreover, is often commanded in the Scriptures. Such an attitude towards others is not limited to orphans, widows and strangers.¹¹¹ When things are in such disorder or impiety that injustice is seen in God's church, according to Calvin, those who glorify the name of God become like robbers.¹¹² The believers, therefore, should make their lives sanctified by treating all others with consideration and kindness, and this would result in the praise and the glory of God. In practice Calvin implemented an official system to deal with the socially disadvantaged generously and considerately. Through, for instance, the General Hospital in Geneva and the deacon's ministry he provided aid to the poor, to cure the sick, to accommodate travelers, and, later, to assist foreign refugees.¹¹³ It is crucial evidence that these practical services and good deeds towards weak neighbors are a type of holiness that the church should display to this world.

In this section Calvin encourages believers to obey God, to follow sound doctrine according to the word of God, and to make themselves pious in their daily life and within the church. It is also an important way to serve others, in particular, to treat the weak with consideration and maintaining their pious praise of God.

9.8 Conclusion

Calvin saw corrupt and impious Israelites in the book of Jeremiah even though God chose and loved them. He also knew that the church is imperfect. So he compared the impiety of the Israelites to

¹⁰⁹ CO 37. 675 (COR II 6/1. 276; Jer. 7:6). "Quod attinet *ad peregrinos, et pupillos, et viduas*, haec loquendi ratio frequenter occurrit: quia subsidiis fere omnibus carent tam peregrini quam pupilli et viduae, et obnoxii sunt multorum injuriis, quasi essent expositi in praedam: ..."

¹¹⁰ CO 38. 372 (COR II 6/1. 790; Jer. 22:3). "..., sub justitiae nomine intelligi debet aequitas, ut cuique jus suum reddatur: sub nomine autem judicii severitas in poenis exigendis."

¹¹¹ CO 38. 373 (COR II 6/1. 791; Jer. 22:3). "Neque enim Deus eximere vult a noxa solos pupillos et peregrinos et viduas: ..."

¹¹² CO 38. 374 (COR II 6/1. 791; Jer. 22:3). "..., cum videmus in ipsa Dei Ecclesia res ita permixtas et confusas ut qui gloriantur Dei nomine, sint quasi latronibus similes, ne propterea alienemur a vera pietate."

¹¹³ Lee, "Calvin's Ministry in Geneva," 214-5; To understand more on this, see Jeannine E. Olson, *Calvin and Social Welfare: Deacons and the Bourse Francaise* (Selingsgrove, Penn.: Susquehanna University Press, 1989) and Elsie A. McKee, *John Calvin on the Diaconate and Liturgical Almsgiving* (Genève: Libr. Droz, 1984).

that of the visible church because the members of it are corrupt and their lives are impious. There are believers and unbelievers in the church, although we cannot ourselves distinguish who the true believers are and who the false. Hypocrites in the Church still struggle to hide their practical unbelief. Those who do not know how to live as Christians and who exhibit inconsistency between their life and faith still belong to the church. The church on earth, therefore, cannot declare themselves to be genuinely holy. So, the church needs the Holy Spirit. Only through Him can one be holy. Those who are adopted as the children of God are forgiven, and all their infirmities are pardoned. That is, God adopts them as His people, forgives them, pardons their sins and governs them.¹¹⁴ In discussing sanctification in Jeremiah, Calvin still stresses the action of God more than that of man. As a result sanctification is not the action of man already justified, but the work of God, as justification is God's deed.¹¹⁵ God still wants to fellowship with His people through their being sanctified. Although they are not holy perfectly in this world, they will be able to be and communicate with God, because He regards them as holy when they zealously aspire to be holy and perfectly pure. In this sense alone can the church's holiness be understood.¹¹⁶ The aim of the church's sanctification in this world is not a believers' perfect life, but the meeting between God and His people. In other words, the church is the dwelling place of God, where God is always enthroned and where He enters into relationship with His people. The people can receive power for piety repeatedly by meeting with Him. In this way they can experience progress in sanctification.

¹¹⁴ CO 39. 44 (COR II 6/2. 1265; Jer. 32:40). "... , nempe quod Deus, ubi nos semel adoptavit in filios, nobis ignoscit, et dat veniam nostris infirmitatibus: deinde Spiritu suo nos gubernat: ..."

¹¹⁵ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 210.

¹¹⁶ CO 2. 760 (*Inst.* 4.1.17). "... sed quia toto studio ad sanctimoniam et solidam puritatem adspirant, mundities illis quam nondum plene consequuti sunt, Dei benignitate tribuitur."

Chapter X. Repentance: *The Fall of the Church II*

10. 1 Introduction

God wants His people to be holy, but any church on earth has never been holy perfectly. It always suffers some kind of impiety. In the last chapter, we discussed the impiety of the church, and this chapter deals with repentance - the way in which the church is to be recovered and renewed – in Calvin’s exegesis of the book of Jeremiah. As we know, repentance means recovery. To put it differently, repentance does not mean to create a new sinless person, but to renew a person who has been broken by sin.¹ Calvin says that repentance is conferred on a person by Christ and is attained by him/her through faith.² Repentance not only follows faith, but also is born out of faith. Faith leads people to look for Christ in order to unite with Him. It is crucial to seek Christ, for Christ is the only mediator between God and men, and men can be forgiven through His death.³ Only a person who is united with Christ through faith, can repent of his/her sins. People admit, through repentance, their previous state of being far from God. They became aware of their sinful state, and accepted their miserable corrupted circumstances. Those who do not know what repentance is, according to Zachman, do not understand what the confession of sin means, because they do not understand what sin is, what divine grace is, and what the wrath of God is.⁴ Thus, only God’s people properly understand the meaning of repentance. This understanding helps them to examine their spiritual state, for repentance itself displays how those who repent lived in the past, how they live today, and what kind of religious state they desire to reach in the future.

This chapter deals with how and why the corrupted church can be restored and maintained while looking into the influence of the church members’ repentance. To do this, we discuss what repentance is, why believers need repentance, and what the relationship between faith and repentance is in Calvin’s exposition of the book of Jeremiah. Subsequently, we examine the fruits of repentance,

¹ Leith, *John Calvin’s Doctrine*, 71.

² CO 2. 434 (*Inst.* 3.3.1). “Iam quum utrumque nobis conferat Christus, et utrumque fide consequamur, vitae scilicet novitatem et reconciliationem gratuitam, ...”

³ Zachman, “Communio cum Christo,” 370.

⁴ Zachman, *Image and Word*, 370.

the role of prayer as a way of repentance, and then with what a communal understanding of repentance looks like.

10.2 What is Repentance?

Acting as if God's command "You shall be holy, for I am holy" was nonsense, God's people, as described in the book of Jeremiah, were severely corrupt. And they did not even attempt to be pious. In fact, God tries to correct the Israelites' wrongdoings in various ways, but His efforts were often not successful.⁵ He, in addition, wanted to correct them through inflicting suffering, but every attempt became so vain that they were not changed. Thus, asking his congregation "Where is repentance?", Calvin taught his students to keep in mind that God demanded them to sincerely repent when they were in difficulties.⁶

Calvin states that repentance, as should be well known, contains two parts: first, sinners become displeased with themselves due to their wickedness, and second, they desire to reform their whole lives according to the rule of God's goodness.⁷ These two are already included in the *Institutes* of 1559. Calvin explains those two parts as 'the mortification of our flesh and of the old man' and 'the vivification of the Spirit.'⁸ What is first necessary for repentance is that the sinner feels guilt. As long as they feel secure in their sins it is impossible for them to repent.⁹ In other words, true repentance requires sinners to feel ashamed, and to be displeased with themselves. Moreover, they should be full of fear concerning the result of their sins.¹⁰ The prophet Jeremiah shows that God cannot be satisfied with the Israelites unless they turn to Him with their whole heart. This means that the beginning of

⁵ Calvin, *Sermons*, 22 (Sermon 4 on Jer. 15:6b-10). "Car Dieu allegue en combien de sortes il a voullu corriger les Juifz et toutesfoys ilz ne se sont point amendez."

⁶ Calvin, *Sermons*, 23 (Sermon 4 on Jer. 15:6b-10). "Or donc que chacun regarde bien quant nous serons affligez ou en general ou en particulier, que Dieu ne demande que à nous convertir."

⁷ CO 38. 531 (COR II 6/1. 991; Jer. 26:19). "Poenitentia autem, ut satis notum esse debet, continet in se duas partes, nempe ut sibi displiceat peccator in suis vitiis, et postquam sese abdicavit pravis omnibus carnis cupiditatibus, ut cupiat formare totam suam vitam, et ejus actiones ad regulam justitiae Dei."; Beeke, "Calvin on Piety," 141; Spijker, *Bij Calvin in de Leer*, 123.

⁸ CO 2. 437 (*Inst.* 3.3.5). "... quae carnis nostrae veterisque hominis mortificatione et spiritus vivificatione constat."; Pitkin, "Redefining Repentance," 279. "Obviously Melancthon's 1521 *Loci* is a source for the designation of mortification and vivification as the two parts of repentance." According to her research, Calvin's view of the two parts of repentance - mortification and vivification - was influenced from Melancthon; Kolb and Trueman, *Between Wittenberg and Geneva*, 144. Both are based on the union between believers and Christ; Cf. Speelman, *Melancthon and Calvin*, 135-6.

⁹ CO 38. 6-7 (COR II 6/1. 321-2; Jer. 8:6). "... postea ostendit hoc primo requiri ad poenitentiam, ut peccator se ipsum ad rationem vocet: quia ubi securi desidemus in malis nostris, non potest fieri ut nos unquam poeniteat."

¹⁰ CO 38. 7 (COR II 6/1. 322-3; Jer. 8:6).

true repentance is located in their inward feelings.¹¹ Calvin condemns the Israelites who did not devote themselves with all their heart to God while pretending a great show of repentance – as hypocrites.¹² Unlike hypocrites, those who regret their wickedness sincerely prepare for repentance and confess their sins even though they acknowledge that they should receive punishment from God. They will also have to endure and then patiently submit to God’s judgment.¹³ So the prophet said that these two things were needed at the same time – confession of sin and patience. Those who repent have to submit to God’s judgment and to comply with His chastisement, knowing that He chastises them as their father. This is the real character and nature of repentance.¹⁴ In addition, they have to obey God reverentially. The fear of God leads them to submit humbly to His will.¹⁵ That is, whoever accepts God’s sovereignty cannot do other than comply fully with His word. Calvin states that reverence means true conversion.¹⁶ If they repent from the heart and fear God, they will try to follow God’s commands and will change their whole life.¹⁷ Calvin explains it as the vivification of the Spirit. Calvin’s doctrine of repentance contains the rule for good life; this requires denial of oneself, the mortification of the flesh, and meditation and desire for the heavenly life.¹⁸ On the basis of these statements, Calvin indicates that repentance is conversion to God for the whole of life in every area of human existence.¹⁹ Thus, repentance is formed not in a moment, but throughout the whole of life.

One should remember that repentance is not possible through the human will. It is only possible by the Holy Spirit that God’s people confess their sins and return to God voluntarily.

Repentance is the work of the Holy Spirit.²⁰ God intended, through Israel’s history, to remind the

¹¹ CO 37. 586 (COR II 6/1. 162; Jer. 4:14). “Significat ergo initium verae poenitentiae esse in affectu cordis.”

¹² CO 37. 574 (COR II 6/1. 147; Jer. 4:1). “Nam hoc praecipue vitium damnare voluit Jeremias, quod Israel, cum prae se ferret aliquam speciem pietatis, tamen vacillabat, neque poterat toto animo se Deo addicere, sed erat ambiguus consilii.”

¹³ CO 38. 84 (COR II 6/1. 419, 420; Jer. 10:19). “Haec enim optima est ad poenitentiam praeparatio, ubi peccator agnoscit se jure plecti: deinde ubi etiam libenter jugum recipit. ... Propheta igitur duo haec simul conjungit, nempe confessionem culpae, deinde tolerantiam, ...”

¹⁴ CO 38. 92 (COR II 6/1. 429; Jer. 10:24). “Haec enim vera est ratio et natura poenitentiae, ubi subijcimus nos iudicio Dei, et patimur aequo animo ejus castigationem, modo sit paterna.”

¹⁵ Speelman, *Melanchthon and Calvin*, 136. On the fear of God, Melanchthon distinguishes between ‘servile fear’ (*timor servilis*), which only shudders at judgment but does not believe in forgiveness, and ‘filial fear’ (*timor filialis*), in which the fear of God and faith in forgiveness go hand in hand.

¹⁶ CO 38. 531 (COR II 6/1. 991; Jer. 26:19). “Nam per Dei timorem hic designatur vera conversio.”

¹⁷ CO 38. 532 (COR II 6/1. 992; Jer. 26:19). “Nam poenitentia est conversio totius vitae et quasi renovatio: ...”

¹⁸ CO 48. 463 (Act. 20:21). “Ergo poenitentiae doctrina pie vivendi regulam continet, nostri abnegationem, carnis nostrae mortificationem vitaeque coelestis meditationem exigit.”

¹⁹ Leith, *John Calvin’s doctrine*, 68; Speelman, *Melanchthon and Calvin*, 55.

²⁰ CO 38. 671 (COR II 6/2. 1168; Jer. 31:18). “Nam sub nomine populi primum fatetur utilem fuisse poenam, quae divinitus fuerat inflictata: deinde adjungit hoc non factum esse hominum virtute, quia sponte redierint ad sanam mentem, sed

Jews of their sins, as this was done so that they would repent.²¹ Often people seem to perform repentance in appearance, but God knows their hearts and He is not the assistant in repentance, but the author of it.²² In other words, they cannot really turn to God until God drives them to look to Him.²³ Nevertheless, the papists argue that men can return to God through free will.²⁴ Calvin repeatedly emphasizes the fact that people could never become conscious of their sins until they turn by the secret works and help of the Holy Spirit.²⁵ Only the people of God who have the Spirit, therefore, can return to God by the help of the Spirit. By repentance believers are distinguished from the ungodly, and repentance becomes the mark of the true children of God in the true church.²⁶

10.3 The Necessity of Repentance

As discussed before, repentance is not the work of men, but of the Holy Spirit. Its cause comes from God. Calvin finds the most important cause of repentance in God. That is, divine mercy. For Calvin, repentance depends on God's grace and mercy.²⁷ God is not merciful if He does not have good will. Therefore, God Himself is the cause of men repenting. No other reasons can be found other than divine grace and mercy for repentance.²⁸ Repentance is God's special grace,²⁹ and His mercy and grace are the first cause of repentance.

If so, the following question might be appropriate. Is it necessary for men to confess their sins if repentance is an act of the Holy Spirit based on the mercy of God? To this question, the answer is yes. The reason for this is that God wants His people to be aware of their sins and to confess them.

Deum Spiritu suo flexisse eorum corda, ut non obdurescerent ad poenas, neque contumaciter resisterent, ut plerumque fieri solet. Hinc ergo colligimus poenitentiam esse Spiritus Sancti opus.”

²¹ CO 38. 415 (COR II 6/1. 845; Jer. 23:8). “... primo voluit Deus admonitos esse Judaeos de suis peccatis, ut haec cognitio esset ipsis transitus, vel praeparatio ad resipiscentiam.”

²² CO 38. 463 (COR II 6/1. 905; Jer. 24:7). “... Deus hic non vocatur adjutor poenitentiae sed autor.”

²³ CO 38. 466 (COR II 6/1. 908; Jer. 24:7). “Nos quidem non convertimur, nisi conversi, nec sponte, vel propria industria nos convertimus, sed hoc est opus Spiritus Sancti.”

²⁴ Calvin said that this point is the greatest dispute with the Catholic Church of his day. CO 38. 673 (COR II 6/2. 1170; Jer. 31:19). “Ergo hinc colligimus quam caeci fuerint Papistae, qui dum loquuntur de poenitentia existimant hominem proprio arbitrio redire ad Deum, et hac de re maximum est nobis hodie certamen.”

²⁵ CO 38. 673 (COR II 6/2. 1170; Jer. 31:19). “... quia scilicet nunquam sibi displicuerit populus, etiamsi graves poenas Deus sumpserit de illius peccatis, donec conversus fuit non suo arbitrio, sed arcana operatione et instinctu Spiritus Sancti.”

²⁶ CO 39. 531 (COR II 7. 88-91; Lam. 1:20).

²⁷ CO 38. 464 (COR II 6/1. 907; Jer. 24:7). “... sed conjunctio non facit ut poenitentia causa sit veniae, ut jam dictum fuit: imo docet satis aperte hic locus, ex gratia Dei et mera misericordia pendere ipsam poenitentiam.”

²⁸ CO 38. 465 (COR II 6/1. 907; Jer. 24:7). “certe non possumus causam aliam reperire quam gratuitam Dei misericordiam.”

²⁹ CO 38. 462 (COR II 6/1. 904; Jer. 24:7). “... poenitentiam singulare esse Dei donum.”

Calvin emphasizes to his audience that God desires them to sincerely repent.³⁰ God demanded of His people nothing but repentance, and wanted them to be reconciled with Him. He wanted to show them His kindness without remembering their sins.³¹ He, accordingly, desires their true and sincere repentance. In addition, God, as judge, will not forgive them until they sincerely repent. In particular, it is impossible that God should forgive those who despise all instruction even though they have received warning of the punishment of their sins.³² However, the ancient church never repented of their sins despite repeated warnings. God had to teach them to repent, sending His prophets again and again. The prophet Jeremiah, one of His prophets, told the Israelites to repent at length as God commanded him to do.³³

One of the more important teachings on repentance, according to Calvin, is the relationship between repentance and suffering. Jeremiah reminds us that when evil things happen to the people of God this does not happen by chance (Jer. 42:10). According to Calvin, this should lead them to repent.³⁴ They might finally acknowledge themselves to be guilty of all their sins and deserving of all of the sufferings God allowed on account of them.³⁵ Also, God does not carry out judgment as soon as He witnesses their wickedness, but sends them hardship. That is to say God spares them, not because He did not observe their wicked deeds, but because He wishes to give them time to repent.³⁶ Calvin encourages them not to make light of God's patience when He bears with them for a long period of time, and to repent in due course.³⁷ It is also due to His fatherly love that God waits for His children to repent of their wickedness. However, the corrupt confessed their sin insincerely merely to avoid

³⁰ Calvin, *Sermons*, 23 (Sermon 4 on Jer. 15:6b-10). "A quoy est ce que Dieu pretend? C'est que nous soyons reduictz à repentance."

³¹ CO 38. 474 (COR II 6/1. 919; Jer. 25:5). "Certe aequissima haec erat Dei postulatio, cum a Judaeis nihil aliud impetrare vellet quam ut resipiscerent. Accessit etiam promissio: non tantum hortatus est ipsos Deus ad poenitentiam, sed voluit ipsis reconciliari, et deleta scelerum omnium memoria prosequi suam erga ipsos beneficentiam."

³² CO 37. 618 (COR II 6/1. 203; Jer. 5:9). "Ubi igitur est vera conversio, illic Deus non indulget sceleribus: sed ubi tanta est in peccatis obstinatio, ut qui monentur contemnant omnem doctrinam, certe fieri non potest, ..."

³³ CO 37. 649 (COR II 6/1. 242; Jer. 6:8). "Ergo Propheta hic breviter ostendit quo consilio hactenus tam graviter minatus fuerit Judaeis, nempe ut resipiscant tandem:"

³⁴ CO 39. 226 (COR II 6/2. 1500; Jer. 42:10). "Interea admonet Jeremias, quidquid accidit malorum, hoc debere acceptum referri Dei judicio, non autem adversae fortunae. Videmus ergo his verbis populum ad poenitentiam adduci, ..."

³⁵ CO 39. 543 (COR II 7. 131; Lam. 2:7). "Semper enim memoria repetendum est quod jam aliquoties dixi, nempe circumstantias istas notari a Propheta, ut tandem sentiret populus se esse reum omnium scelerum, quae alioqui libenter imputassent Chaldaeis."

³⁶ CO 38. 508 (COR II 6/1. 962; Jer. 25:34). "Subaudienda est enim antithesis, quod Deus illis pepercerit, non quod clausos habuerit oculos, vel non animadverterit ipsorum scelera: sed quoniam voluerit dare spatium resipiscendi:"

³⁷ CO 39. 374 (COR II 6/2. 1687; Jer. 49:22). "... hoc diligenter notandum est, ut discamus ubi Deus nos tolerat, non habere ludibrio ejus patientiam, sed mature resipiscere, ne scilicet ubi coeperit surgere in judicium, prorsus non consumat."

God's punishment, making a wrong use of His fatherly mercy. Then they think that they have done enough. It is clear that their repentance is far from sincere, so the prophet urged them to repent sincerely.³⁸

Repentance is necessary, first of all, for the people of God, not for God, because they can thereby prevent God's wrath beforehand.³⁹ And they can be also reconciled to Him through forgiveness.⁴⁰ On the side of God, moreover, their repentance is related to the honor of God. Since God is the Judge of the world, judgment and punishment belong to His essence.⁴¹ Thus it is impossible that God should forgive those who never repent; if He forgives them, He would eventually disclaim His own honor as Judge, which can never be.⁴² Where there is a true conversion of His people, God can show His mercy and forgiveness without doing away with His honor. The repentance of the people of God is closely connected to the glory of God. Calvin preached from Jer. 14:19-21 that God would not be held in honor until the audience confesses their sins, but whenever they persist in claims of innocence, they actually deprive Him of praise, which belongs only to Him.⁴³ It hence appears that they were unworthy of pardon unless they repented, no matter how much God might have been inclined to provide them with mercy and forgiveness. They also could not claim the promise which God had made between their forefathers and Himself, because that requires the repentance of sinners.⁴⁴ The people of God, after all, need to repent for their own wellbeing, as well as for the honor of God.

³⁸ CO 38. 626 (COR II 6/2. 1110; Jer. 30:13). "Postremo, si tantum uno verbo confessi fuerint se peccasse, existimant se esse satis superque defunctos. Ergo urgendi sunt ad meditationem et studium penitentiae."

³⁹ CO 39. 551 (COR II 7. 157; Lam. 2:14). "Conversa igitur fuisset captivitas populi, si in tempore resipuisset, nam occurrimus irae Dei per poenitentiam. Si nos judicemus, inquit Paulus, non judicemur a Deo."

⁴⁰ CO 38. 374 (COR II 6/1. 793; Jer. 22:4). "... nempe si ex animo Judaei resipuissent, fuisse adhuc locum misericordiae. Promittit enim illis, Deum fore placabilem, si studeant se reconciliare: et allicit eos ad poenitentiam blandis verbis."

⁴¹ CO 37. 618 (COR II 6/1. 202; Jer. 5:9). "Nam si Deus est iudex mundi, non potest magis abnegare suum iudicium, quam propriam essentiam. Cum igitur haec sint inseparabilia, majestas Dei et officium iudicis, ..."

⁴² CO 37. 618 (COR II 6/1. 203; Jer. 5:9). "... ut Deus hic ignoscat, alioqui renuntiaret suae gloriae: quod fieri non potest."

⁴³ Calvin, *Sermons*, 6 (Sermon 1 on Jer. 14:19, 20b, 21a). "Par cecy nous voions que les hommes ne peuvent glorifier Dieu jusques à ce que nous nous soions recongneuz coupables (Saint Paul au 3e des Romains), qu'il faut venir pour rendre compte devant Dieu: voila Dieu qui est exalté; mais quant nous voulons aleguer nostre inoscence: voila luy ravir ce qui luy appartient."

⁴⁴ CO 38. 260 (COR II 6/1. 645; Jer. 17:1). "Hinc ergo apparet, fuisse prorsus venia indignos, ut nullo modo jam essent capaces misericordiae: quamvis maxime vellet Deus ipsos recipere in gratiam: quoniam sua obstinatione cluserant viam salutis, nec poterant admittere promissiones, quae requirunt poenitentiam in peccatoribus."

However, repentance is not achieved in an instant. People never repent thoroughly until they realize their need of the continual aid of God. Hence, they have to be renewed from day to day and renounce their wickedness by degrees. It is not in just one day that sinners can take off the old man.⁴⁵ They must practice repentance throughout their lives, and learn that this battle will end only when they die.⁴⁶ According to Calvin, God has continued to urge them to repent, but these urgings have not been well received.⁴⁷ Nonetheless, the church of God eventually triumphs, though it is a very small number who repent – because we know that the greater part of humanity has been rejected-, and God maintains His true people after returning from Babylon to Israel.⁴⁸ This proves that the church on earth continues only through the remnant. As a result, the true repentance of the people of God is important and necessary for maintaining the church.

10.4 Faith and Repentance

The statement that even believers have to repent every day throughout their life teaches how deeply our sin and wickedness are engraved on our mind, body, and life. Quoting Jeremiah's words, Calvin asserts that human iniquity may not disappear easily because it is said to be written adamantly or with an iron pen. But he also said that God ultimately would reveal iniquity even though people try to cover it up.⁴⁹ Everyone, including the people of God, desires their sins to be forgiven, but they do not care about how to do it. God criticizes because they want to forget their wickedness, and have their sins forgiven without repenting of them.⁵⁰ Therefore repentance is needed for everyone, in

⁴⁵ CO 38. 671 (COR II 6/2. 1168; Jer. 31:18). "Primum responderi posset nunquam ita resipiscere homines quin opus habeant continuo Dei auxilio. Nam renovamur de die in diem, et paulatim renuntiamus cupiditatibus carnis nostrae: neque uno die exuimus veterem hominem."

⁴⁶ Beeke, "Calvin on Piety," 141; CO 2. 436 (*Inst.* 3.3.2). "Tales scilicet fructus profert spiritus ille vertiginis, ut poenitentiam, quae in totam vitam proroganda est homini christiano, paucis dieculis terminet.;" CO 2. 440 (*Inst.* 3.3.9). "... quo se tota vita exercent in poenitentia: sciantque huic militiae nullum nisi in morte esse finem."

⁴⁷ CO 37. 696 (COR II 6/1. 302; Jer. 7:26). "... , quod scilicet Deus nunquam fuerat fatigatus, ipsi autem conflixerint quasi ex professo cum ejus bonitate, cum tam comiter eos hortari non desineret ad poenitentiam."

⁴⁸ CO 39. 47 (COR II 6/2. 1269; Jer. 32:42). "Quoniam ergo aliqua pars populi residua fuit, ne penitus intercederet Ecclesia, sic completa fuit haec promissio, quia nunquam amplecti possumus promissiones misericordiae, nisi poenitentia et agnitio culpae nostrae praecedat, ..."

⁴⁹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 95 (Sermon 14 on Jer. 17:1-4). "Car ce pendant il dict que nostre peché est engravé avec la pointe du diamant, et que, combien que nous l'ayons caché pour ung temps, toutesfoys Dieu le scaura bien découvrir à la fin."

⁵⁰ Calvin, *Sermons*, 94 (Sermon 14 on Jer. 17:1-4). "Nous demandons bien que la memoire de noz pechez soit effacée, mais nous ne tenons point le moyen. [...] Et cependant nous voulons que Dieu oblie noz faultes, combien que nous n'en ayons nulle repentance!"

particular, for believers. Calvin also thought that faith and repentance are the two essentials of piety.⁵¹ Whenever wicked errors occupy one's mind, there is no faith. As a result they could not recognize punishment, nor acknowledge God's blessings, nor have any concern for their sin.⁵² Thus, the two essentials are needed for the faithful to be pious. It is often the case that Calvin mentions "faith and repentance" side by side just as if they were one word in his lectures on Jeremiah. In his exposition of Jer. 7:22, in which the prophet criticizes the Israelites who did not worship properly, Calvin explains that they neglected 'faith and repentance.' At that time they focused only on external rites, and overlooked the meaning of those rites.⁵³ He also points out, in Jer. 8:19, that they hold to the promise, but they have 'no faith nor repentance' when the Jewish people believed that the hypocrites should be safe and secure under the protection of God, based on the promise.⁵⁴ In addition, through describing the hypocritical attitudes of the Israelites who were not circumcised in heart, Calvin criticizes the church in Geneva, saying that such a circumcision is like a baptism without 'repentance and faith' (Jer. 9:26).⁵⁵ Calvin thinks that circumcision or baptism is a sign of both 'repentance and faith.'⁵⁶ Further, Calvin reveals that the Israelites, who had 'neither faith nor repentance,' boasted in the Temple, which they see as their perpetual place of security (Jer. 26:9).⁵⁷ In this way Calvin often mentions the two essentials of piety, 'faith and repentance' at the same time, and says that both come from teaching truth: "[...]: for how is it that those alienated from God return, confess their sins, and change their character, minds, and purpose? It is the fruit of truth; [...] yet God shows that the use and fruit of His truth is to return men to himself."⁵⁸

⁵¹ CO 38. 61 (COR II 6/1. 390; Jer. 10:2). "Ergo Propheta, ut revocet ipsos tam ad poenitentiam quam ad fidem, quae sunt duo pietatis membra, ..."

⁵² CO 38. 61 (COR II 6/1. 389; Jer. 10:2). "... quoniam nulla erit fides: deinde nulla erit agnitio poenarum, nulla agnitio beneficiorum Dei, et nullum studium precandi, si animos nostros semel occupaverit diabolicus ille error, ..."

⁵³ CO 37. 690 (COR II 6/1. 294; Jer. 7:22). "Nam cum sedulo operam sacrificiis impenderent judaei, negligebant quod erat praecipuum, nempe et fidem et poenitentiam."

⁵⁴ CO 38. 22 (COR II 6/1. 340; Jer. 8:19). "Quare? arripiunt promissiones, sed sine fide et poenitentia: ..."

⁵⁵ CO 38. 56 (COR II 6/1. 383; Jer. 9:26). "... quemadmodum hodie si gloriemur solo Baptismo, interea simus vacui poenitentia et fide, ridicula erit nostra jactantia."

⁵⁶ CO 38. 56 (COR II 6/1. 383; Jer. 9:26). "... denique erat signum et poenitentiae et fidei."

⁵⁷ CO 38. 521 (COR II 6/1. 979; Jer. 26:9). "Judaei autem sine fide et poenitentia jactabant quod dictum erat de Templo: ..."

⁵⁸ CO 38. 515 (COR II 6/1. 971; Jer. 26:3). "Ex contextu discamus, proficisci a doctrina non minus poenitentiam quam fidem. Unde ergo fit ut qui alienati fuerant a Deo sese recipiant, et agnitis suis peccatis mutent ingenium, mentem, animos? nempe hic est fructus doctrinae: ... tamen Dominus ostendit hunc esse doctrinae suae usum et fructum, ut scilicet homines convertat, ..."

Clarifying the relationship between faith and repentance, Calvin asserts that the Bible, whenever it speaks of repentance, mentions faith simultaneously. Both are actually distinct, yet not contrary, and never to be separated.⁵⁹ They need to be united together, so anyone who tears the one from the other can entirely lose both.⁶⁰ His thought that faith guides the guilty to return to the grace of God⁶¹ seems to have the same meaning as his statement in the *Institutes* of 1559: “Repentance not only constantly follows faith, but it is also born of faith.”⁶² Men cannot be called to repent by themselves, until God calls them. In other words, they can acknowledge their wickedness and God’s judgment when God leads them to see it. A sinful man needs to be sensitive to the wrath of God so that s/he will fear the judgment of God.⁶³ So, such fear includes faith in God.⁶⁴ For it is certain that miserable men can repent rightly and appropriately when they believe that God would be merciful to them whenever they turn to Him. In other words, a sinner can never be led to repent sincerely, unless he trusts divine mercy.⁶⁵ When they are convinced that God is ready to give them pardon, they can be encouraged to repent. This makes it clear that faith in God cannot be separated from repentance. To explain this, Calvin also quotes Psalm 130:4 “But with you there is forgiveness, that you may be feared.”⁶⁶ When men are awakened by a sense of the judgment of God, they can be humbled with shame and fear. Such a state takes place only in faith. This faith has an important role to raise up one’s heart that was discouraged with fear, and to confess, resulting in forgiveness.⁶⁷ This also proves

⁵⁹ Speelman, *Melanchthon and Calvin*, 235.

⁶⁰ CO 38. 532 (COR II 6/1. 992; Jer. 26:19). “Ideo Scriptura quoties de poenitentia loquitur, simul adjungit fidem. Sunt quidem res distinctae, sed tamen non diversae, nec separari debent, ut quidam parum considerate faciunt. ... Sed tamen, ut notanda est distinctio inter poenitentiam et fidem, ita cohaerent inter se, ut qui alteram ab altera divellit, prorsus neutram relinquat.”; CO 39. 591 (COR II 7. 293; Lam. 3:41). “... nec possunt separari poenitentia et fides.”; Spijker, *Bij Calvin*, 121.

⁶¹ CO 38. 532 (COR II 6/1. 992; Jer. 26:19). “... fides autem reos confugere docet ad Dei misericordiam.”

⁶² CO 2. 434 (*Inst.* 3.3.1). “Poenitentiam vero non modo fidem continuo subsequi, sed ex ea nasci, extra controversiam esse debet.”; Spijker, *Bij Calvin*, 126; Kolb and Trueman, *Between Wittenberg and Geneva*, 140-141; Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 168; Calvin said that when we refer the origin of repentance to faith, we do not think of some space of time during which it brings it to birth; but we mean to show that a man cannot apply himself to repentance without knowing himself to belong to God. CO 2. 435 (*Inst.* 3.3.2). “Neque tamen, quum resipiscentiae originem ad fidem referimus, spatium aliquod temporis somniamus quo ipsam parturiant; sed ostendere volumus, non posse hominem poenitentiae serio studere nisi se Dei esse noverit.”; Speelman, *Melanchthon and Calvin*, 142-3.

⁶³ CO 38. 515 (COR II 6/1. 971-2; Jer. 26:3). “Neque enim potest timeri Deus, nisi sentiat peccator ipsum sibi fore propitium. Quamdiu enim concipimus iram Dei, horremus ejus judicium: ...”

⁶⁴ CO 39. 45 (COR II 6/2. 1266; Jer. 32:40). “... quanquam, ut ante dictum fuit, Scriptura ubi de timore Dei loquitur saepe fidem conjungit.”; Cf. Speelman, *Melanchthon and Calvin*, 135-6.

⁶⁵ CO 38. 516 (COR II 6/1. 972; Jer. 26:3). “... quod scilicet poenitentia non possit recte doceri, nec cum fructu, nisi ubi hoc additum fuerit, Deum scilicet fore placabilem miseris hominibus, ubi ad ipsum conversi fuerint.”

⁶⁶ CO 39. 117 (COR II 6/2. 1359; Jer. 36:3). “Sed repetendum est, quia pauci intelligunt non posse fidem separari a poenitentia: atqui nunquam adduci poterit peccator ut vere ad Deum convertatur, nisi concepta spe veniae, quia caput hoc est praecipuum, quemadmodum dicitur in Psalmo (130, 4): Apud te est misericordia, ut timearis.”

⁶⁷ CO 32. 335 (Ps. 130:4). “Sed non sufficeret talis displicentia, nisi simul accedat fides, quae deiectos timore animos ad petendam veniam erigat.”

the relationship between both. However, Calvin here points out the error of the Catholic Church. According to him, they make long sermons on repentance, but they hardly preach any account of faith even though they argue that even repentance without faith can cause a restoration from death to life.⁶⁸ It is impossible for men to repent rightly without faith. To mourn in tribulation due to their wickedness and to lament their miserable state are common to both the faithful and the unfaithful, but the former differs greatly from the latter. The former, the people of God, become humbled under God's judgment and power, and confess that they deserve to suffer from punishment; and further they cannot give up the hope of salvation in faith, pleading for His mercy.⁶⁹ Therefore, according to Calvin, repentance and faith are the signs that distinguish the true believer from the unbeliever.⁷⁰

10.5 *Poenitentiae fructus*

As discussed, repentance is the work of God. But, God wants His people to confess their sins on their own and to repent in order to change their life. The sinful state of men is incurable and impossible better.⁷¹ On top of that, they are slothful in begging for God's mercy. Forgiving their laziness, God has repeatedly called them to repent. Such divine guidance continues to happen in the church.⁷² In this way, the people of God have enjoyed his benefits which they can obtain by repentance. These are called the fruits of repentance (*Poenitentiae fructus*) according to Calvin.

There are four features of repentance. First, when the people of God repent, they can prevent catastrophes caused by their sins.⁷³ Hoping to see the Israelites saved from exile in Babylon, the prophet proclaimed the will of God, that His people would see the error of their ways. Because God is the Judge, He cannot help punishing sinners who never repent.⁷⁴ Nevertheless, He gives them the

⁶⁸ CO 39. 592 (COR II 7. 293; Lam. 3:41). "Et videmus in papatu, dum longi sermones habentur de poenitentia, vix nomen fidei unquam venire in rationem, quasi poenitentia sine fide esset restitutio a morte in vitam."

⁶⁹ CO 39. 531 (COR II 7. 89, 91; Lam. 1:20). "Commune est omnibus gemere et lugere in rebus adversis, et deflere etiam suas aerumnas. Sed longe differunt filii Dei ab impiis, quia humiliant se sub forti ejus manu, et fatentur se meritis dare poenas: deinde non abjiciunt spem salutis, sed implorant ejus misericordiam."

⁷⁰ CO 39. 531 (COR II 7. 89; Lam. 1:20). "Nam his duabus notis discernitur Ecclesia ab incredulis, nempe poenitentia et fide."

⁷¹ CO 38. 172 (COR II 6/1. 532; Jer. 13:23). "... denique ut sint prorsus incurabiles: ..."

⁷² CO 37. 561 (COR II 6/1. 131; Jer. 3:14). "... non mirum igitur est, si ignoscens nostrae tarditati, secundo, et tertio nos ad resipiscentiam invitat: quod etiam in Ecclesia semper experimur."

⁷³ Calvin, *Sermons*, 146 (Sermon 21 on Jer. 18:1-10). "... mais c'est pour nous retirer à repentance, à fin de prévenir ceste calamité qui devoit tomber sur noz testes. Voila l'intention du prophete."

⁷⁴ CO 37. 618 (COR II 6/1. 202; Jer. 5:9). "Nam si Deus est judex mundi, non potest magis abnegare suum judicium, quam propriam essentiam."

hope of pardon, if they repent⁷⁵ and forgives them like a father. It should be noticed, however, that their repentance is not the motive for God's forgiveness. God does not forgive them for any merit in them, but He does it through covering their sins.⁷⁶ In other words, reconciliation between God and men does not depend on their repentance, but on the mercy of God. God embraces His children with His gratuitous mercy (*sua gratuita misericordia*). Thereby they escape the punishment of God.

The second benefit of repentance is restoration of relationship with God. The relationship between God and the Israelites has been compared to the marital relationship. But that relationship has been broken since Israel was not faithful and followed idols. Nevertheless, God declares Himself to be their husband again, provided the Israelites really repent.⁷⁷ Their repentance is to bring reconciliation with God, and if so, He is ready to bestow on them all kinds of blessings.⁷⁸ Thus, they might expect good things from God as soon as they repent.⁷⁹ God might use all necessary means to restore them from ruin to life and salvation.⁸⁰ It is clear that there is no way for them to be saved except they be reconciled to God through repentance.⁸¹ However, the Catholic Church has misunderstood this interpretation. It claims that repentance is the cause of salvation based on the passage "That you may be saved, wash the heart from wickedness." By emphasizing the freewill of men, the papists argued that sins are to be forgiven and punishments are not to be carried out thanks to the good works of men. According to Calvin, though, their thought is both ridiculous and frivolous.⁸² He opposes their claim that sins are forgiven by human merit. The prophet declares that the kingdom

⁷⁵ CO 37. 578 (COR II 6/1. 153; Jer. 4:4). "... sed si resipiscant, simul etiam proponit illis spem veniae, quia nondum furor Dei egressus fuerat."

⁷⁶ CO 39. 120 (COR II 6/2. 1362; Jer. 36:7). "Neque enim Deus ignoscit nobis, quemadmodum dictum fuit, ullo nostro merito, sed quia dignatur sepelire nostra peccata."; CO 39. 56 (COR II 6/2. 1280; Jer. 33:8). "Sumus igitur semper maledicti coram Deo, donec sepe liat nostra peccata:"

⁷⁷ CO 37. 561 (COR II 6/1. 132; Jer. 3:14). "... ne terror impediatur, quominus resipiscant, Deus hic pronuntiat se illis fore maritum, et se nondum oblitum esse illius conjunctionis, qua ipsos semel dignatus fuerat."

⁷⁸ CO 38. 299 (COR II 6/1. 696; Jer. 18:10). "Amplificat igitur Dei clementiam cum dicit non tantum peccatis hominum ignoscere, ut poenam remittat, sed etiam se paratum esse ad omnia beneficia largienda, si homines ad reconciliationem se offerant."

⁷⁹ CO 38. 299 (COR II 6/1. 696; Jer. 18:10). "... nempe simul atque resipiscunt homines, posse tuto et intrepide sperare omnia a Deo, quia ad clementiam propensus est: ..."

⁸⁰ CO 38. 301 (COR II 6/1. 698; Jer. 18:11-2). "... Deum expertum esse omnia, ut populum illum ab interitu in vitam, et salutem reduceret: ..."

⁸¹ CO 37. 586 (COR II 6/1. 162; Jer. 4:14). "... ostendit nullum esse remedium, nisi reconcilientur Judaei Deo: ..."

⁸² CO 37. 586-7 (COR II 6/1. 162; Jer. 4:14). "Caeterum, inscite ratiocinantur qui volunt poenitentiam esse causam salutis, quia dicitur, Ut salva sis, lava a malitia cor tuum. Et Papistae arripiunt tales locos ut stabiliant liberum arbitrium, et ostendant satisfactionibus nostris aboleri peccata, et poenam redimi. Hoc est nimis frigidum et nugatorium."

would be restored again ‘by the Lord, God,’ if the king, his servants and the whole people repented.⁸³ It is certain that both repentance and salvation are the work of God. Nevertheless, men should repent, for God requires it. The repentance of believers, on top of that, would bring them not only restoration, but also the hope of eternal life and salvation.⁸⁴ In short, repentance is the way to recover and take the relationship with God from earth to heaven.

Third, repentance leads believers to live piously. Calvin said that the prophet called the Israelites to the duty of obeying the law, which they could thereby give veritable evidence of their repentance.⁸⁵ They might make their ways good through repentance and try to observe the word of God on their own, for true believers acknowledge their wickedness when they repent. In other words, they have already experienced the renewal of mind and heart through the illumination of the Holy Spirit.⁸⁶ In fact, their life must change, turning from wickedness to goodness.⁸⁷ So, Calvin interprets repentance in terms of the reconstruction of the image of God. The grace of repentance does not create a new human being, but restores in them the image of God that was defaced, disfigured, and obliterated by Adam’s sin.⁸⁸ Through grace, the people of God can achieve sanctification. Moreover, Calvin teaches, the people of God cannot expect to enjoy the benefits that God bestows when they repent unless they persevere in faith and in reverence.⁸⁹ The believers who already repented should show their holiness and piety through the Christian life. This is the fruit of repentance.

Last, God continues to secure His church through the people who repent. It is evident that the preservation of the church on earth is also related to repentance. God restored the captives that they might dwell again in the land of the covenant, by repentance, changing inwardly, and reforming their hearts. Through His work, they could not only return to their own land, but could also become a true

⁸³ CO 38. 375 (COR II 6/1. 794; Jer. 22:5). “Heri exposuimus sententiam illam Prophetarum, Regnum scilicet rursus restituendum a Domino, si Rex et ejus Consilarii totusque populus resipiscerent.”

⁸⁴ CO 38. 464 (COR II 6/1. 906; Jer. 24:7). “Denique videmus hic promitti a Deo non restitutionem exigui temporis, sed simul adjungi spem aeternae vitae et salutis: ...”

⁸⁵ CO 37. 675 (COR II 6/1. 276; Jer. 7:7). “Revocat Judaeos ad observationem Legis, ut inde possit fieri rectum judicium de ipsorum poenitentia. Probate, inquit, vos resipuisse ex animo: ostendit rationem probandi, nempe si Legem Dei observent.”

⁸⁶ CO 38. 673 (COR II 6/2. 1170; Jer. 31:19). “Quid enim est conversio, de qua nunc loquitur Propheta? Renovatio mentis et cordis.”

⁸⁷ CO 38. 532 (COR II 6/1. 992; Jer. 26:19). “Nam poenitentia est conversio totius vitae et quasi renovatio: ...”

⁸⁸ Leith, *John Calvin’s doctrine*, 70-71; Zachman, “Communio cum Christo,” 369.

⁸⁹ CO 38. 300 (COR II 6/1. 696; Jer. 18:10). “Hic est igitur genuinus sensus, non posse aliter nos frui Dei beneficiis, quibus ornati sumus, nisi perseveremus in fide, et in timore ejus.”

church.⁹⁰ In this way, God has reformed and maintained the church by means of the repentance of His people, for they could not only fully receive all the blessings of God, but could also worship Him in sincerity and truth in the Spirit.⁹¹ However, God allowed the church to be kept by the chosen true people, who were aware of their wickedness and already repented and not the false Christians in its ranks. His church has survived in spite of having very few true members. Further, His promise has also been fulfilled by them.⁹² The people of God, therefore, who want the church to be maintained properly should repent sincerely and should convert to God throughout their life.

10.6 The Role of Prayer in Repentance

According to Calvin's interpretation of Lam. 5:16, when confessing our sin, we begin to know that we are sinners. Knowledge of our sin discourages pride and suppresses complaints within us. Therefore, if believers are in trouble due to their sin, they first should think about divine judgment and confess their sin.⁹³ Calvin argues that the most important thing in prayer is to ask for forgiveness. This is because, according to Selderhuis, asking for forgiveness opens the way to God's help.⁹⁴ Confession of sin is significant for the sinners who repent. At this time they should pray to God, who is the only object of their prayer. The Catholic Church in Calvin's era did not receive divine grace because they worshiped both God and other gods like the Israelites.⁹⁵ They did not know their genuine object of prayer.

Nevertheless, prayer without faith and repentance is not worthy of God.⁹⁶ Also, believers cannot pray properly without the guidance and teaching of the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit

⁹⁰ CO 38. 462 (COR II 6/1. 904; Jer. 24:7). "... sed intus mutabit ac corriget corda, ut non tantum redituri sint in patriam Judaei, sed futuri sint vera Ecclesia, cum ante jactassent inane nomen."

⁹¹ CO 38. 462 (COR II 6/1. 904; Jer. 24:7). "... quod populus respiscet, ut non tantum ad satietatem percipiat quidquid potest expetere bonorum, sed sincere colat Deum."

⁹² CO 39. 47 (COR II 6/2. 1269; Jer. 32:42). "Quoniam ergo aliqua pars populi residua fuit, ne penitus intercideret Ecclesia, sic completa fuit haec promissio, quia nunquam amplecti possumus promissiones misericordiae, nisi poenitentia et agnitio culpae nostrae praecedat, ..."

⁹³ CO 39. 640 (COR II 7. 453; Lam. 5:16). "Nam agnitio scelerum nostrorum domabit omnem superbiam, deinde compescet etiam obstreperas illas querimonias, ... Ergo mala nostra deducant nos ad reputandum Dei iudicium, et peccata nostra agnoscenda, ..."

⁹⁴ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 222.

⁹⁵ CO 38. 111 (COR II 6/1. 454; Jer. 11:12). "... et hoc fore satis clarum, quoniam simul accersent sibi varia idola, sed nihil fore auxiliium, neque in vero Deo, neque in ipsorum idolis."

⁹⁶ CO 38. 111-2 (COR II 6/1. 454; Jer. 11:12). "Quare? indigni enim erunt quos Deus exaudiat, quia ipsum non rite invocabunt, hoc est, sine fide et poenitentia: ..."

guides and teaches them how to pray.⁹⁷ Calvin argues that believers need divine mercy when they pray.⁹⁸ He also states that they cannot pray sincerely and genuinely without faith.⁹⁹ Moreover, in order to make His people pray without hesitancy in every moment of their life, Calvin states, God gives them punishment and hope.¹⁰⁰ Hence, when the Holy Spirit leads them to confess their sin, believers should not make excuses for their wrongdoing in order not to be punished. In fact, Calvin says that the most wicked person is one who denies being sinful.¹⁰¹ Calvin clearly emphasizes the true confession of sin in his sermon: “when we are in troubles which come from God, we should become humble before God, should accept the legitimacy of God’s punishment, and never put our blame on others.”¹⁰² The confession of sin is the beginning of prayer. And, God forgives sinners who confess their sin sincerely.¹⁰³ Calvin emphasizes the fact that God is always open to our prayers. The fact that God listens to prayer cannot be separated from His eternal essence and divinity.¹⁰⁴ This is because God does not ignore people when they cry out in tribulation. However, there are some occasions when our prayer does not reach God because, Calvin teaches, we tend to pray according to our will and judgment.¹⁰⁵

Regarding the fasting which leads to a confession of sin, Calvin says that the Israelites fast during their calamities and this shows their humility. He finds their fasting positive because it leads them to pray to God. Such fasting serves the divine purpose to make repentance practiced by His

⁹⁷ CO 38. 595 (COR II 6/2. 1070; Jer. 29:12). “... et certe poenitentiae fructus est oratio, quae nascitur ex fide. Poenitentia autem est donum Dei. Jam non possumus rite et pure invocare Deum, nisi Spiritu Sancto duce et magistro. Ille enim est qui non tantum verba dictat, sed etiam gemitus format in cordibus nostris.”

⁹⁸ CO 39. 592 (COR II 7. 293; Lam. 3:41). “Porro gustus misericordiae Dei aperit nobis januam ad precandum.”

⁹⁹ CO 39. 520 (COR II 7. 55; Lam. 1:9). “Neque enim concipi potest vera et seria precatio sine fiducia.”

¹⁰⁰ CO 39. 521 (COR II 7. 57; Lam. 1:9). “... nempe dum humiliantur homines, et illis proponitur justa sua damnatio, deinde animantur ad bene sperandum, et porrigitur etiam illis manus, ut Deum invocent, nec dubitent in extremis suis malis ab ipso auxilium non modo sperare, sed etiam flagitare.”

¹⁰¹ CO 39. 593 (COR II 7. 297; Lam. 3:42). “Jam ostendit minime extenuandam esse culpam, ut vera sit et plena confessio. ... Nam pudet etiam improbissimos negare se peccatores: ...”

¹⁰² Calvin, *Sermons*, 5 (Sermon 1 on Jer. 14:19, 20b, 21a). “Au reste, quant Dieu nous afflige, aprenons de nous humilier en telle sorte que nous congnoissons qu’il est juste en nous pugnissant, et que nous ne rejections point la faulte sur les autres, mais congnoissons que nous sommes tous coupables, voyre jusques au plus innocent.”

¹⁰³ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 270.

¹⁰⁴ CO 39. 566 (COR II 7. 207; Lam. 3:8). “... cum Deus epitheton sibi illud vindicat, quod exaudiat preces, significat non posse ab aeterna sua essentia et divinitate illud separari, quin scilicet propensus sit ad preces exaudiendas.”; Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 225.

¹⁰⁵ CO 39. 566 (COR II 7. 209; Lam. 3:8). “Deus enim nunquam respuit suos, neque surdus est ad ipsorum vota et gemitus: sed loquuntur saepe fideles ex carnis sensu. Quoniam ergo orando non videbat Propheta se quidquam consequi, ideo dicit *prohibitae fuisse preces suas*, vel clausas, vel januam sibi fuisse obstructam, ita ut preces ejus ad Deum non pervenirent.”

people.¹⁰⁶ The Israelites acknowledge their sin and wickedness while asking God for His forgiveness in sackcloth and ashes. Also, this shows that they have no hope unless God forgives them.¹⁰⁷ However, the papists have a different opinion of fasting. They argue that they could save themselves by fasting. So, they consider fasting as “satisfaction.”¹⁰⁸ Against their argument, Calvin stresses that it is more important for believers to return to God, than to make fancy confessions of faith.¹⁰⁹ Calvin concludes that fasting itself is not meaningful, but it becomes valid when it is the evidence of repentance, being added to prayer.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, Calvin finds the lifting up of hands the same as prayer.¹¹¹ Lifting up the hands implies the believers’ self-denial whenever they call out to God. In this case, this external practice is meaningful.¹¹² Nevertheless, regarding such practices, Calvin states that such ceremony is not necessary in prayer, citing, “Rend your hearts and not your garments” (Joel 2:13). It is useless when people lift up their hands in order to show their piety to other people, but it is useful when they lift up their hands sincerely before God. Therefore, Calvin encourages his audience to lift up both their hands and hearts to God.¹¹³ In conclusion, Calvin stresses the balance of external practice and internal affection towards God, which results in proper prayer.¹¹⁴

We can also find Calvin’s thought on the role of prayer in terms of repentance through the preface to his exegesis of Lamentations. According to Calvin, Jeremiah wrote Lamentations in order

¹⁰⁶ CO 39. 122 (COR II 6/2. 1364; Jer. 36:9). “Scimus autem cum aliquid calamitatis instaret, solitos fuisse confugere ad hoc remedium, non quod jejunium per se Deo placando sufficiat, sed quia signum est humilitatis: deinde homines melius comparat ad precandum. Nec temere obrepsit hic ritus, sed Deus voluit ita populum suum assuefacere ad poenitentiam.”

¹⁰⁷ CO 39. 122 (COR II 6/2. 1365; Jer. 36:9). “... in illo squalore petebant a Deo veniam, primum ut agnoscerent suam foeditatem in istis externis symbolis, deinde ut coram Deo et Angelis profiterentur se dignos esse morte, et nihil spei esse residuum, nisi Deus illis ignosceret.”

¹⁰⁸ CO 39. 122 (COR II 6/2. 1365; Jer. 36:9). “Postea adjungit *indictum fuisse jejunium coram Jehovah*, non quod opus esset meritorium, vel quod inde speranda esset expiatio, quemadmodum Papistae suis jejuniis existimant sua peccata redimere, et ideo vocant satisfactiones: ...”

¹⁰⁹ CO 38. 595 (COR II 6/2. 1070-1; Jer. 29:13).

¹¹⁰ CO 39. 122-123 (COR II 6/2. 1365; Jer. 36:10). “Unde etiam colligimus jejunium per se nullius fuisse momenti, sed testimonium fuisse poenitentiae, et ideo coniunctum cum precibus: ...”

¹¹¹ CO 39. 558 (COR II 7. 181, 183; Lam. 2:19). “Elevatio igitur manuum hoc loco, et aliis tantundem valet atque precatio.”

¹¹² CO 39. 559 (COR II 7. 185; Lam. 2:19). “Ergo levatio manuum etiam huc tendit, ut renuntiemus nobis, et exeamus quasi extra nos quoties invocandus est Deus. Haec breviter dicta sint de usu caeremoniae.”

¹¹³ CO 39. 592 (COR II 7. 295; Lam. 3:41). “Sed quia preces si prodeant ex serio affectu, excitant manus, ideo Propheta noster retinet illam caeremoniam, quae utilis est. Sed interea docet non debere omitti quod est praecipuum, nempe *ut corda ad Deum tollantur. Tollamus ergo una cum manibus corda nostra ad Deum*, inquit: ...”

¹¹⁴ CO 39. 592 (COR II 7. 295; Lam. 3:41). “Haec igitur vera est ratio precandi, ubi interior affectus conjunctus est cum externo gestu.”

to show the Israelites the reality of hope when they seek God with faith and repentance.¹¹⁵ Calvin says that the prophet emphasized four things.

When, therefore, he understood that his teaching would not be without good fruit, he was thus induced to speak of the judgments of God; second, to exhort the people to repentance; third, to encourage them to hope; and last, to open the door of prayer to God, so that the people in their extremities might venture to flee to God's mercy; which could not have been done without faith.¹¹⁶

From this, we learn that we should pray to God sincerely, with hope and faith, when we repent.

10.7 Repentance and the Congregation

In his exposition of Jer. 29:13, Calvin asserts that there is nothing but one way for believers to seek grace: prayer. This doctrine should be taught in every church because God is merciful to those who take refuge in God.¹¹⁷ Calvin teaches that when the people of God call out to God in troubles He will respond to their calling. He maintains that this doctrine is also useful to the church, and should be applied to all believers.¹¹⁸ Of Calvin's arguments, that concerning returning to God is essential to individuals as well as churches. This is because when a person returns to God he becomes a good example to other believers. Since a church is one body in which every member is organically connected, if one member commits sin, every member is in danger of committing sin. This means that no one in the church can claim to be innocent.¹¹⁹ Therefore, when one commits a sin, other members ought to recommend that they repent. In Lam. 1:11, the prophet laments seeing Jerusalem destroyed.

¹¹⁵ CO 39. 506 (COR II 7. 7; Lam. Prae.). "Voluit enim ostendere, quamvis nihil in terra appareret praeter vastitatem, et exciso Templo posset videri etiam eversum Dei foedus, et ita intercidisse omnes spes salutis, adhuc tamen spem esse residuam, si Deum populus sincera poenitentia et fide quaereret: ..."

¹¹⁶ CO 39. 506 (COR II 7. 7; Lam. Prae.). "Cum ergo intelligeret fructuosam fore suam doctrinam, ita adductus fuit, ut non desineret de iudiciis Dei primum disserere, et deinde hortari populum ad poenitentiam, tertio animare ad spem, et postremo etiam aperire janua[m] invocationi Dei, ut populus in rebus extremis tamen auderet ad Dei misericordiam confugere: quod fieri non potest sine fiducia."; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 5, 300.

¹¹⁷ CO 38. 595 (COR II 6/2. 1071; Jer. 29:13). "Qua[n]quam autem Israelitas alloquitur, debet extendi haec doctrina ad totam Ecclesiam, sicuti passim Deus testatur se exorabilem fore omnibus qui ad ipsum confugiunt."

¹¹⁸ CO 38. 596 (COR II 6/2. 1071; Jer. 29:13). "Haec autem tota doctrina ut nuper attigi, accommodari debet in usum Ecclesiae. Promissio enim haec extenditur ad omnes pios, quod ubi in suis miseriis Deum invocaverint, ipsos exaudiet."

¹¹⁹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 5 (Sermon 1 on Jer. 14:19, 20b, 21a). "Voire mais, quant nous habitons ensemble, nous voila comme un corps. Ainsi donc, si la plupart s'abandonne à tout vice, d'autant que nous sommes membres du corps, il faut que nous congnoissions que nous sommes tous coupables. Vray est que tous ne le sont pas esgallement: ... mais pourtant qu'il est membre du corps, il ne se peult faire qu'il ne soit coupable."

His lament intends to make the faithful humble, give them hope, and open the door to prayer.¹²⁰

Jeremiah saw God's people in a miserable state, lamented over the calamities of Judah, and sought for divine mercy.¹²¹ Calvin stresses that, like Jeremiah, God's worshippers should not be discouraged from praying to God when evil is everywhere.¹²² Meanwhile, Calvin urges them to pray for each other and to know that God listens to them even if they are few.¹²³ In sum, Calvin wants the believers to pray for each other or for their communities. Nonetheless, they did not obey God, nor repent with their whole heart.¹²⁴ However, God promised that He would forgive His people if they heed the hope of forgiveness and return to God.¹²⁵ This promise is valid for all Israelites. But, the prophet knew, Calvin says, that the true people of God were few among the Israelites. Yet, the prophet taught the Israelites how to pray for "their descendants" because he knew that there was no other way in terms of forgiveness except confessing their sin.¹²⁶ Such an interpretation leads us to think that God wants not only individual repentance but also the renewal of the Israelites as a community.

10.8 Conclusion

In Calvin's theology, repentance is not a one-time event. Through repentance, people turn from committing sin and live a life inclined towards God. People must continue to repent throughout their life.¹²⁷ Therefore a church is not a static community but a dynamic one, moving gradually towards the state of holiness. On the topic of repentance, Calvin already shared his thought in his

¹²⁰ CO 39. 522 (COR II 7. 63; Lam. 1:11). "... fuisse dictatas, quae fideles humiliarent, et simul erigerent ad bonam spem, et aperirent etiam januam precibus."

¹²¹ CO 39. 522 (COR II 7. 63; Lam. 1:11). "... ubi Ecclesia nihil aliud Deo proponit, quo flectatur ad misericordiam, nisi suas miserias. Non ergo profert in medium sua obsequia, sed tantum deplorat suas miserias, ut ita sibi favorem apud Deum conciliet."

¹²² Calvin, *Sermons*, 4 (Sermon 1 on Jer. 14:19, 20b, 21a). "En premier lieu nous avons à noter que encores que la perversité regne quasi par tout, que ceux qui ont la craincte de Dieu se doibvent recueillir et ne point perdre courage qu'ilz ne prient Dieu."

¹²³ Calvin, *Sermons*, 5 (Sermon 1 on Jer. 14:19, 20b, 21a). "... voyre quelque petit nombre qu'il y ait, si faut il que nous <nous> incitions à prier, et en le faisant, nous sentirons que Dieu nous aura exaulcez, quant nous pensions qu'il nous eust du tout oublyez."

¹²⁴ Calvin, *Sermons*, 22 (Sermon 4 on Jer. 15:6b-10). "J'ay quasy renversé tout le monde et nature pour les attirer à penitence. Or bien quant j'ay faict tout cela: asscavoir s'il y a eu quelque obeyssance? Nenny! Car ilz ne se sont point destournez de leur voye."

¹²⁵ CO 39. 117 (COR II 6/2. 1359; Jer. 36:3). "... hoc est illud *audire*, cujus meminit, nempe ubi serio tanguntur homines ita ut sibi displiceant in suis vitiis, et ex animo cupiant se Deo addicere. Adjungit promissionem quia sine spe veniae minime sperandum est ut homines resipiscant, quemadmodum saepius dictum fuit."

¹²⁶ CO 38. 199 (COR II 6/1. 567; Jer. 14:20). "Deinde posteris etiam dictat veram precandi regulam, ut in exilio sciant hoc sibi unum superesse, nempo ut fateantur peccata sua, nec aliter impetraturos veniam."

¹²⁷ Kolb and Trueman, *Between Wittenberg and Geneva*, 141.

Institutes (1559) 3.3.1-25. Furthermore, one can find his arguments on repentance in his exposition of the book of Jeremiah. This chapter has shown that Calvin describes the relationship between repentance and community through the context of the Israelites. God has established and maintained His church through His people who repent. Thus, the divine calling to repentance is the primary reason for the church to exist. The will of God, which leads sinners to repent, shows His desire to gather His people and to be with them in the church. However, there is no perfect church in terms of its holiness in this world. This shows, again, that church is a mixed community. Calvin's sermons and lectures on the book of Jeremiah illustrate the reality of the church as a mixed community. This suggests that believers can be in fellowship with God and see themselves as members of His church through repentance. In conclusion, repentance makes Christians redefine who they are in relationship with God.¹²⁸

¹²⁸ Calvin does not deal with the relationship between public order and the confession of wrongdoings which Genevan citizens committed in their social life, because he focuses on their repentance to God, not to neighbors. Studies related to these cases are connected to the consistory in Geneva. See Jeffrey R. Watt, "Reconciliation and the Confession of Sins: The Evidence from the Consistory in Calvin's Geneva," and Pitkin, "Redefining Repentance." Cf. also chapter 8 of Speelman's book, *Melancthon and Calvin on Confession and Communion*.

Chapter XI. Church Offices: *The Preservation of the Church I*

11.1 Introduction

In 1536, Calvin started to work as a bible teacher in Geneva. In September, he began to lecture in the Saint-Pierre church, and from the spring of the following year he began to serve as a pastor in Geneva.¹ He did not receive theological education at an academic institution, nor did he take a ministerial qualification examination. But, he still became an official pastor in Geneva. Calvin did not remain in Geneva in order to become a pastor nor did he have any plans to work there as a pastor. Nonetheless, such circumstances did not bring difficulties to Geneva. According to Selderhuis, a divine calling was the most important factor for Calvin becoming a pastor at the church there.² After he was exiled from Geneva in 1538, he reconsidered his calling when he received a letter from his old friend, Louis du Tillet. They had shared ideals, but du Tillet returned to the Catholic Church. In his letter, he denounced Calvin thusly: “I distrust that you (Calvin) have received your vocation from God. You had been called only by people.”³ In his response Calvin said that he had a calling from God, just like Jonah when he was sent to Nineveh. So, Calvin held his ministerial office in Geneva. Through this exchange of the letters, Calvin suffered.⁴ It is not clear whether this experience affected his ministry in Geneva later on. Yet, it is noteworthy that when he came back to Geneva from Strasbourg, Calvin first suggested the implementation of a ‘church order.’⁵ In addition, he developed his understanding of an internal and external calling in the *Institutes* of 1543.⁶ He did not overlook the necessity of church offices that God had given in order to establish the church. All Christians live as the servants of Christ, but there are some church office holders who are specially called by God.⁷ God

¹ Gordon, *Calvin*, 71; McGrath, *John Calvin*, 96.

² Selderhuis, *John Calvin*, 66-67.

³ Gordon, *Calvin*, 92-94; Selderhuis, *John Calvin*, 67; Manetsch, *Calvin's Company of Pastors*, 78-79; Harms, *In God's Custody*, 141; Letter on 7 September 1538: OC 10b. 242-4.

⁴ Gordon, *Calvin*, 94-95; McGrath, *John Calvin*, 100.

⁵ de Greef, *The writings*, 144.

⁶ Manetsch, *Calvin's Company of Pastors*, 80.

⁷ Wallace, *Calvin, Geneva and the Reformation*, 139; CO 2. 781 (*Inst.* 4.3 4).

actively uses some people as His instruments, and establishes His church through them.⁸ Calvin's thought on church offices is found throughout his exposition on the book of Jeremiah.

This chapter looks into what a well-organized church is according to Calvin (11.2), and then deals with Calvin's views of church office holders through the duty of the prophet Jeremiah (11.3) in the book of Jeremiah. Also, we discuss the importance of church offices (11.4) and, in particular, the features of the pastorate compared to other church offices (11.5). And finally, the misunderstanding of the Catholic Church about church offices will be dealt with (11.6).

11.2 Church Order and Church Offices

After he returned to Geneva in 1541, Calvin pushed his thoughts on how to lead the church, via his Church Order. According to Backus, Calvin tried to realize the form of the early church, and this effort may appear to have practical elements borrowed from reforming churches which were in line with other contemporary reformers.⁹ The church is a mixture of the faithful and the hypocrites, so worship could be contaminated by impious worshippers. To preserve the church from this contamination, it needs laws, institutions and discipline.¹⁰ Nevertheless, Calvin asserts that the one who preserves and maintains the church is ultimately God. In his sermon on Jer. 14:19-15:1, Calvin preached that God has marvelous means to preserve His church since this is His responsibility. Thus, rather than inventing their own means to maintain the church, the faithful must have faith that God preserves it as He always has.¹¹ Calvin also teaches, in his lecture on Jer. 31:22, that God protects and preserves His church in a creative way beyond men's understanding.¹² In other words, God has preserved the church in His own way and plan, and will preserve it forever. To do this, God has given

⁸ McKee, "Calvin and His Colleagues," 13-14; McKee explains the system of church offices with a hermeneutical method in her book, *Elders and Plural Ministry*.

⁹ Backus, "These Holy Men:," 44-47.

¹⁰ Gordon, *Calvin*, 125.

¹¹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 3 (Sermon 1 on Jer. 14:19, 20b, 21a). "Tout ainsi que son office est de la garder, aussi il a des moyens du tout miraculeux. Ainsi donc quant à la preservation de l'Eglise, il ne faut point imaginer les moyens à nostre fantaisye, mais estre certains qu'il la gardera."

¹² CO 38. 680 (COR II 6/2. 1178-9; Jer. 31:22). "Deus enim mirabiliter excitat mortuos, mirabiliter etiam conservat et tuetur Ecclesiam suam, mirabiliter succurrit ejus miseris. Ergo quoties Scriptura verba nobis facit de statu Ecclesiae, conscendere oportet supra mundum, et supra sensus omnes nostros, et apprehendere miraculum quod nobis absconditum est."

offices in His church. Calvin also highlights not only the church offices but also the church order that God has established.¹³

Regarding the good order of the church, Calvin wrote in the *Institutes* of 1559 “to make us aware, then, that an immeasurable treasure is given us in earthen vessels (II Cor. 4:7), God Himself appears in our midst, and, as the Author of this order, would have men recognize Him as present in His institution.”¹⁴ In other words, Calvin stresses that the good order of the church is set by God, not by men. According to Calvin, the church is maintained by the divine will within the divine order. Thus, one can call God the God of order, not of chaos. In this perspective, the church is subordinated to the divine will, which is unequivocally revealed in the divine word. Without this law and order, the church would come undone.¹⁵ In particular, God makes rules for the church office holders¹⁶ because their roles are important for leading churches decently and in an orderly fashion. Calvin asserts that the destruction of Judah came about because of the irresponsibility of its religious and political leaders.¹⁷ This proves how important, for Calvin, the role of church office holders is. For Calvin, church order and the duty of church office holders are the most necessary element in leading the church properly.¹⁸ As a result, reforming the church means that they maintain right order with prudence through teaching the word of God.¹⁹

11.3 Church Office Holders as God’s Instruments

¹³ CO 39. 617 (COR II 7. 375; Lam. 4:13). “Ubi audimus nomen Ecclesiae et Pastorum, reverenter quidem excipere nos decet tam ipsum munus, quam ordinem qui a Deo profectus est: ...”

¹⁴ CO 2. 750 (*Inst.* 4.1.5). “Ergo ut sciamus ex vasis testaceis nobis proferri inaestimabilem thesaurum, Deus ipse in medium prodit, et quatenus huius ordinis autor est, vult se praesentem in sua institutione agnosci.” Cf. Calvin, *Institutes II*, ed. McNeill, 1017; Calvin also argues that the expression “*All things decently and in order* (I Cor. 14:40),” is a precept with which we should consider when we regulate everything related to external polity - including rites and ceremonies in the worship of God. In this passage, Calvin makes clear that church order is not the edict of a Pope, or human traditions, but godly regulations, which came from the mouth of Christ. CO 49. 535-6 (I Cor. 14:40). “... imo regula est ad quam omnia, quae ad externam politiam spectant, exigere convenit. Quoniam sparsim disseruerat de ritibus, omnia hic colligere voluit in brevem summam: nempe ut decorum servetur, et vitetur confusio. ... Hic ergo locus rite expensus discrimen ostendet inter tyrannica papae edicta, quae conscientias premunt dira servitute, et pias ecclesiae leges, quibus disciplina et ordo continetur.”

¹⁵ McKee, *Elders and the Plural Ministry*, 32.

¹⁶ CO 38. 280 (COR. II 6/1.671; Jer. 17:16). “Hic autem praescribit Jeremias Legem omnibus Prophetis et Doctoribus, ...”

¹⁷ CO 37. 563 (COR. II 6/1 134; Jer. 3:15). “Dicit igitur hanc fuisse causam interitus populi, quia interciderat apud ipsos doctrina, et Pastores vel fuerant canes muti, vel fuerant latrones.”

¹⁸ Balke, *Calvijn en de Doperse Radikalen*, 160.

¹⁹ Wallace, *Calvin, Geneva and the Reformation*, 134; Harms, *In God’s Custody*, 136.

If church office holders play an important role in maintaining the church, it is necessary to know who they are. The only way to become office holders is by divine choice. God Himself chooses and elects all office holders.²⁰ As a consequence, their authority comes from God. The prophet Jeremiah also believes that he had adequate authority although he did not have any colleagues or assistants; for he had been chosen by God and had been appointed to teach the people His message.²¹ He was confident that his calling was approved by the Holy Spirit.²² Calvin also thought that the prophet delivered the word of God courageously to the Israelites because he had received divine power from the Holy Spirit.²³ Jeremiah was an instrument of the Holy Spirit. According to Calvin, the prophet was already aware of his identity as the divine spokesman, so he acknowledged that he could not deliver something imprudent, but what he had received from God, faithfully.²⁴ In his sermon on Jer. 15:7-10, Calvin preaches that those who complain against the prophet are opposed to God because the prophet is a divine spokesperson. Calvin also emphasizes the fact that God is against them.²⁵ God works through human efforts and endeavors. Despite such efforts everything in the church has been carried out by God. This means that all the praise belongs to God.²⁶ In his lecture on Jer. 51:11, Calvin also clarifies the idea that Jeremiah was an authentic instrument of God by citing his works.

But we hence learn, that Jeremiah did not speak as a man, but was the instrument of the Spirit; for it was an indubitable seal to his prophecy, that he predicted an event a long time before the war took place. Cyrus was not yet born, who was the leader in this war: nor was

²⁰ Weber, *Die Treue Gottes*, 31-32; CO 2. 778 (*Inst.* 4.3.2).

²¹ CO 38. 39 (COR II 6/1. 362; Jer. 9:12). "Interim, sicuti jam dictum fuit, hoc modo ostendit sibi esse satis autoritatis, quamvis nemo accedat socius vel adjutor: quia electus sit a Deo, et missus ad hanc legationem ferendam."

²² CO 38. 341 (COR II 6/1. 750; Jer. 20:7). "... nec tantum habebat Spiritum Dei testem vocationis suae, sed in corde gestabat firmam doctrinae obsignationem."

²³ CO 38. 37 (COR II 6/1. 359; Jer. 9:11). "... quia nisi praevaluisset Dei gratia centies haud dubie fuisset fractus, neque ausus fuisset vel minimum verbum proferre."; Linde, *den Heiligen Geest*, 170-1. According to Linde, the Holy Spirit could reach into the heart of men without any external help, but this is not the way He works. The sermons and teachings that pastors delivered in the church have been His true method; Harms, *In God's Custody*, 145.

²⁴ CO 38. 47 (COR II 6/1. 371; Jer. 9:20). "... tametsi enim utitur mea opera, ego tamen ita sum organum ipsius, ut facile vobis constet me nihil temere proferre, sed fideliter tradere quae ab ipso accepi."

²⁵ Calvin, *Sermons*, 26 (Sermon 4 on 15:6b-10). "Ainsy maintenant le prophete, après avoir déclaré que c'estoit Dieu qui parloit et que luy il n'estoit que son organe, il montre bien qu'il faudra que ceulx qui ont murmuré contre luy sentent que Dieu est son garend et partie contre les Juifz."

²⁶ CO 39. 30 (COR II 6/2. 1248; Jer. 32:33). "Neque enim quisquam ad docendum erit idoneus, nisi quatenus dirigitur a Spiritu Dei. Merito ergo Deus sibi vindicat has partes, et vult sibi manere integram laudem aedificationis Ecclesiae suae, tametsi utitur hominum opera."

Darius as yet born; for seventy years elapsed from the time the Prophet spoke to the taking of Babylon. We then see that this passage is a sure proof of his faithfulness and authority.²⁷

Calvin explains that Jeremiah could foretell what would come because he received messages from God. Thus, in his exposition of this verse, Calvin asserts that the prophet could not prophesy about the actual affairs of the future unless he was given divine authority to do so by the Holy Spirit. The tongues of prophets should be consecrated by God²⁸ because they deliver the will of God. In other words, the chosen office holders have to submit to God alone.²⁹ They should respond to their calling even if they are not sufficiently qualified to undertake it.³⁰

Calvin applied this idea to his own ministry. He taught his students in the Geneva Academy that they should obey God if they wanted to become good office holders.³¹ Jeremiah argues that God is the author of all teachings and that no one can dispute with Him.³² So no one should pretend to be the chief pastor, for God is that.³³ Consequently, pastors and teachers have to follow the divine word sincerely. In this way church office holders are divine instruments appointed by God's will, so that they carry out His work. Even if God requires some kind of qualification from them, more importantly, they should ultimately work by the power of Holy Spirit. God allows the church to be nurtured and grow through office holders. There is nothing more miserable in the church than God taking away faithful pastors from the church.³⁴ God knows that church office holders cannot carry out their duty without divine wisdom. So, He prepares the necessary discipline and system of

²⁷ CO 39. 449 (COR II 6/2. 1784; Jer. 51:11). "Sed hinc colligimus, Jeremiam non humanitus locutum esse, sed fuisse organum Spiritus. Haec enim fuit indubia obsignatio prophetiae ejus, quod longo tempore antequam accideret bellum illud praedixit eventum. Atqui nondum natus erat Cyrus, qui princeps fuit illius belli: imo Darius nondum etiam erat natus. Nam septuaginta anni elapsi sunt antequam capta fuerit Babylon, ex quo locutus erat Propheta. Videmus ergo hunc locum certam esse approbationem fidei et autoritatis ejus."; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 5, 213.

²⁸ CO 37. 480 (COR II 6/1. 30; Jer. 1:9). "Sufficit igitur quantum ad verbi Ministros spectat, linguas ipsorum consecratas esse Deo, ne sua figmenta admisceant purae ejus doctrinae."

²⁹ CO 38. 279 (COR II 6/1. 670; Jer. 17:16). "... sed quia Deus injunxit mihi hanc provinciam, necesse est mihi parere."

³⁰ CO 37. 78 (COR II 6/1. 28; Jer. 1:7). "Caeterum ubi Deus nos vocat, etiam si omnia nos deficient, tamen obsequendum est."

³¹ CO 38. 280 (COR II 6/1. 671; Jer. 17:16). "Ergo initium fieri debet ab obedientia, si volumus nos probare legitimos Doctores."

³² CO 38. 341 (COR II 6/1. 750; Jer. 20:7). "Propheta hic pronuntiat Deum esse autorem suae doctrinae, nec sibi posse quidquam exprobrari, quod non recidat in ipsum Deum."

³³ CO 38. 280 (COR II 6/1. 672; Jer. 17:16). "Ergo nemo unquam Ecclesiae Dei sic praefuit, ut esset summus Pastor:"

³⁴ CO 37. 563 (COR II.6/1. 134; Jer. 3:15). "Sequitur ergo Ecclesiam Dei non tantum gigni opera sanctorum et piorum Pastorum, sed etiam foveri, et ali, et confirmari etiam ejus vitam usque ad extremum. Sicuti non satis est ordinem politicum semei erigi, nisi magistratus in officio perseverent: ita nihil magis exitiale Ecclesiae, quam ubi Deus aufert bonos Pastores."

administration in the church.³⁵ In fact, although the church seems to be led by them, God is the one who leads and governs. As a result divine authority will not disappear from the church.³⁶

11.4 The Important Role of Church Office Holders

Calvin divides the church into two groups: visible and invisible. He emphasizes the visible church as well as the invisible one, and teaches that believers form a community in the visible church.³⁷ He served a community in Geneva as a pastor and teacher, so we can understand that he had interest in the visible church. Calvin's thought concerning the visible church appears in his *Les Ordonnances ecclésiastiques* 1541.³⁸ In this book, Calvin introduces four offices: Pastor, Doctor (Teacher), Elder, and Deacon. He argues that these church offices should be well administered for the betterment of the church.³⁹ Their roles are important in every church. Churches are maintained by the service of the church office holders. One can well understand churches through the structure of its office holders.⁴⁰ This is because God makes office holders encourage the spirit of His people and help them to participate in the salvation of God (as Calvin mentions in his lecture on Jer. 5:14).⁴¹ Calvin explains that the people of God can reach salvation by hearing the good news through their ministry in the church. As a result, Calvin notes that it is more honorable for church office holders to deliver the word of God than to do other things.⁴² In fact, pastors deliver the word. God is present with believers in His word. According to Calvin, God speaks through His true servants. Thus believers

³⁵ CO 37. 563 (COR II 6/1. 134; Jer. 3:15). "... sed hic loquitur Deus de continuo cursu, vel tenore doctrinae suae, et bene compositi regiminis:"; Höpfl, *The Christian Polity*, 91.

³⁶ CO 38. 281 (COR II 6/1 672; Jer. 17:16). "... denique non resignat jus suum, ... sed substituit in vicem suam qui doceant, et sic quidem ut retineat quod sibi proprium est.;" Höpfl, *The Christian Polity*, 114.

³⁷ CO 2. 753 (*Inst.* 4.1.7). "Quemadmodum ergo nobis invisibilem, solius Dei oculis conspicuam ecclesiam credere necesse est, ita hanc, quae respectu hominum ecclesia dicitur, observare eiusque communionem colere iubemur.;" Hesselink, *Calvin's First Catechism*, 157. In most of book IV of the *Institutes*, hence, Calvin's main concern is in the visible church – its features, marks, ministry, authority and organization.

³⁸ Selderhuis, *John Calvin*, 118-9. This book has been used as a textbook for the structure of the reformed church and has been in use worldwide for centuries.

³⁹ Calvin, *Theological Treatises*, 58; Hesselink, *Calvin's First Catechism*, 158; "This fourfold ministry was based upon the Scriptures and the theology and practice of Calvin's colleagues, such as Johannes Oecolampadius in Basel and Martin Bucer in Strasbourg." Lee, "Calvin's Ministry in Geneva," 206; Calvin compares the ministry to muscles that connect believers to one another forming one body. CO 2. 778 (*Inst.* 4.3.2). "His verbis illud ostendit hominum ministerium, quo Deus in gubernanda ecclesia utitur, praecipuum esse nervum quo fideles in uno corpore cohaereant; ..." Höpfl, *The Christian Polity*, 108.

⁴⁰ Weber, *Die Treue Gottes*, 31.

⁴¹ CO 37. 625 (COR II 6/1. 212; Jer. 5:14). "Nam quorsum Deus Evangelii sui Ministros nobis destinat, nisi ut ad salutem nos invitent, atque ita suaviter reficiant animas nostras?"

⁴² Calvin, *Sermons*, 29 (Sermon 5 on Jer. 15:10-11, 14-15). "Car il n'y a rien plus honorable que de porter la parole de Dieu."

have a clear testimony of His presence whenever true and faithful pastors do their work.⁴³ Calvin thinks that the true pastor who delivers the word of God sincerely is an incomparable blessing to the church. God comes to believers and takes care of them. Further, He saves them by the ministry of the word in the church. That is why ministry is called the ‘visitation of God’.⁴⁴ In other words believers can experience the presence of God in the church whenever true pastors faithfully carry out their office.

While focusing on the word ministry, Calvin talks about the attitudes of church office holders. First of all, even though there are obstacles to their ministry, they should do that which God has given them to do.⁴⁵ They cannot avoid being criticized if they do not carry out their ministry confidently.⁴⁶ In addition, teachers and pastors should lead church members to follow the word of God no matter how high or low the members are in society. Church office holders should reprove socially important people if necessary.⁴⁷ Moreover, the office holders should obey the word of God⁴⁸ in cases where they are in conflict with congregations.⁴⁹ They should not hesitate to deal with the arrogant and stubborn.⁵⁰ Furthermore, they should perceive the deceit and intrigue of the unfaithful in order to perform their office faithfully and properly. They are also required to know how to apprehend the human mind in order to edify effectively, for there are lots of hidden things in the human mind.⁵¹ It is also important

⁴³ CO 39. 30 (COR II 6/2. 1248; Jer. 32:33). “Non est ergo cur quidquam melius expetamus, ubi Deus nobis adest per sermonem suum, quia habemus certum testimonium praesentiae ejus quoties surgunt veri et fidi Doctores.”; Calvin also says in his exposition on Eph. 4:11 that God made this office of pastor in order to establish His church. And this office will remain in the church until everyone in this world hears the good news: CO 51. 196 (Eph. 4:11). “Summa est, quod evangelium per certos homines praedicatur ad id munus ordinatos, hanc oeconomiam esse qua Dominus ecclesiam suam vult gubernare, ut incolumis maneat in hoc mundo, et tandem solidam suam perfectionem obtineat.”

⁴⁴ CO 39. 30 (COR II 6/2. 1248; Jer. 32:33). “Ab altera autem parte colligimus quam incomparabile bonum sit habere fidos et probos Doctores, quia Deus per eorum manum et operam certo declarat se curam gerere salutis nostrae, ac si vigiliis ageret, ac si mane surgeret, ac si nos inviseret. Et praedicatio Evangelii non abs re etiam vocatur Dei visitatio.”

⁴⁵ Calvin, *Sermons*, 28 (Sermon 4 on Jer. 15:6b-10). “Voilà comment les hommes qui ont charge de la parole se doibvent fortifier et dire: “Que quelque empeschement qu’on nous face, si fault il neantmoins que ce que Dieu nous a commis passe comme tout debout.””

⁴⁶ CO 37. 491 (COR II 6/1. 44; Jer. 1:17). “Et hinc colligimus etiam, quicumque vocati sunt ad regendam Dei Ecclesiam non posse eximi a culpa, nisi ingenue et audacter proferant quidquid sibi mandatum est.”

⁴⁷ CO 38. 322 (COR II 6/1. 725; Jer. 19:3). “Quantum ad Doctores ipsos spectat, debent exemplo Jeremiae tam magnos quam parvos docere: deinde arguere ubi opus est, et increpare, ita ut respectus personae locum non habeat.”; Manetsch, *Calvin’s Company*, 178-181.

⁴⁸ CO 37. 493 (COR II 6/1. 47; Jer. 1:18). “... sed parere jubenti Deo.”

⁴⁹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 30 (Sermon 5 on Jer. 15:10-11, 14-15). “... c’est asscavoir qu’il fault que les ministres de la parole de Dieu <ne> soient <pas> exemptz de riotte; non pas qu’ilz en soient cause, mais pourtant qu’ilz portent ceste doctrine.” The officers of God’s words, pastors sometimes have some conflicts and fight with people, because they deliver the gospel and the doctrine of God.

⁵⁰ CO 38. 246 (COR II 6/1. 627; Jer. 16:10). “Interea monentur officii sui omnes Doctores, ne scilicet sese inflectant, non vident sibi negotium esse cum superbis hominibus et immorigeris, sicuti alibi visum est.”

⁵¹ CO 38. 32 (COR II 6/1. 353; Jer. 9:6). “Necesse est igitur verbi Ministros admonitos esse, ut probe et cum fructu munere suo fungantur, tenere fallacias, et ambiguos recessus quibus solent homines fallere. Quoniam ergo multa sunt

that faithful office holders in the church should not conduct themselves wickedly, nor allow caprice, but lead church members to undertake God's demands.⁵² Through this, the truth of God should not be submitted to the will of men.⁵³ In this context, Calvin points out that because the pastors and teachers are lazy they neglect wrongdoings such as adulteries, fornications, perjuries and frauds in the church.⁵⁴ Thus, Calvin asks that they should be aware of the importance of their office, and then do their best to fulfill their mission diligently. Calvin also teaches believers how to react to church office holders respectfully. When God shows how life is to be lived through faithful instructors and competent teachers, believers should not reject the teaching, instead they should be ready to obey. Further, they prove it not only by words but also by deeds.⁵⁵

In the *Institutes* (1559) 4.3.4-9, Calvin explained all four offices in the church, but in his lectures and sermons on Jeremiah, he deals mainly with two office holders – the pastor and the teacher – those who interpret the Bible and deliver its messages. Like the prophets in the Old Testament, Calvin studied the Bible, and taught it in Geneva. So he described the pastors and teachers more than other offices.⁵⁶ Not that Calvin did not deal with other offices at all. He mentions the office of elders in his lecture on Jer. 19:2.

They (the chief priests) were chosen from those first orders who ruled the Church, and Jeremiah calls them the elders of the priests. There were also others chosen from the people who presided over the Church. And we know that there were two public functionaries, or, as they say, a twofold government: the priests were the rulers of the Church with regard to the law, so that their government was spiritual; there were also the elders of the people who managed civil affairs; but there were some things in which they ruled in common.⁵⁷

abscondita in cordibus hominum, qui volet efficaciter docere, necesse est ut teneat, excutiendos esse intimos cordium recessus.”

⁵² CO 38. 235 (COR II 6/1. 613; Jer. 15:19). “Ideo necesse est, omnes probos Ecclesiae Doctores ita se gerere ut non concedant hominum vitiis, neque foveant ipsorum delitias: sed ut cogant eos subire jugum Dei.”

⁵³ CO 38. 235 (COR II 6/1. 614; Jer. 15:19). “Summa est, veritatem Dei non debere flecti ad hominum arbitrium, ...”

⁵⁴ CO 38. 418 (COR II 6/1. 849; Jer. 23:10). “Videmus ergo quantopere detestetur Deus hanc ignaviam in omnibus verbi sui Ministris, et quos praefecit Ecclesiae suae Doctores, dum connivent ad scelera, et secure praetereunt adulteria et scortationes, et perjuriam et fraudes, et alias noxas: ...”

⁵⁵ CO 39. 222 (COR II 6/2. 1494; Jer. 42:5-6). “... ut cum Deus dignatur nos singulari isto privilegio, ut viam recte agendi nobis monstret, quemadmodum dirigit nos per magistros et Doctores probos et idoneos: ut etiam simus dociles et prompti ad parendum, neque ore tantum hoc testemur, sed praestemus re ipsa.”

⁵⁶ Plasger, “Ecclesiology,” 330. In particular, pastors and teachers can expound the Holy Scriptures; in the next section, we look more into the office of pastors.

⁵⁷ CO 38. 320 (COR II 6/1. 723; Jer. 19:2). “Ideo fuerunt delecti ex ordine illo primario, qui gubernarent Ecclesiam: eos vocat Jeremias *Seniores Sacerdotum*. Delecti etiam fuerunt ex populo, qui praessent Ecclesiae. Et scimus duos esse ordines publicos, vel duplex regimen, ut loquuntur. Sacerdotes erant praefecti Ecclesiae, nempe quoad Legem, ita ut spiritualis esset eorum gubernatio. Erant seniores populi, qui praerant rebus politicis, utrisque vero quaedam inter se communia.”; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 2, 433.

In the exposition above, Calvin mentions two offices in the church: pastors and elders. In particular, Calvin makes clear that the elders are elected from among the ordinary members of the church. While the pastor governs related to spiritual and ecclesiastical life, the elders lead the congregation and, in particular, supervise church members' daily life and social life.⁵⁸ Calvin does not overlook their cooperation for the benefit of their church and community. He demonstrates clearly that these church offices are based on his proposition that the church needs various offices which have different tasks,⁵⁹ although he only emphasizes two offices – pastors and teachers – in his lectures on Jeremiah.

11.5 The Office of Pastor

According to Calvin, the work of a pastor is mainly related to the words of God. For instruction of church members in true doctrine, pastors can work together with teachers while pastors can work with elders for advising and edifying the congregation. However, pastors have an exclusive task in the church: preaching the gospel in worship services and administering the sacraments.⁶⁰ On top of that, these tasks are connected to the marks of the church that Calvin taught. Thus, it is noteworthy that wherever there is a sufficient number of congregating believers, a pastor should be appointed.⁶¹

In his sermon on Jer. 17:13-16, Calvin mentions the preaching of the word of God, which is a pastor's main task. Pastors should never deliver anything else but what God has spoken, for He has given them their ministry of the word. God only approves of what He says.⁶² Calvin asserts, in his lecture on Jer. 11:18, that pastors should preach only the divine word and proclaim what has been

⁵⁸ CO 2. 782 (*Inst.* 4.3.8). “Gubernatores fuisse existimo seniores e plebe delectos, qui censurae morum et exercendae disciplinae una cum episcopis praecessent.”; McKee, *Elders and the Plural Ministry*, 25-37. Their office is to have oversight of the life of everyone, to admonish amicably those whom they see to be erring or to be living a disordered life and, where it is required, to enjoin fraternal corrections themselves and along with others.

⁵⁹ Spijker, *Bij Calvin*, 178-180; Cf. McKee, *Elders and the Plural Ministry*, 123-210 (Chap. 6-8). According to McKee, this plurality of ecclesiastical ministries in Calvin's doctrine could be influenced by Bucer.

⁶⁰ Calvin, *Theological Treatises*, 58.

⁶¹ CO 2. 781 (*Inst.* 4.3.6). “Ex his et similibus locis qui passim occurrunt colligere licet, in pastorum quoque functione has esse duas praecipuas partes, evangelium annuntiare et sacramenta administrare.”; Wallace, *Calvin, Geneva and the Reformation*, 141.

⁶² Calvin, *Sermons*, 125 (Sermon 18 on Jer. 17:13b, 15, 16). “... voicy Dieu qui m'a baillé charge de sa parole, il faut donc que je ne mette rien hors de ma bouche, ... Or il n'approuve que ce qu'il a dit.”; Blacketer, *The School of God*, 105.

revealed by the Holy Spirit.⁶³ Simply reciting the word of God is not their mission. They should first interpret the genuine meaning of God’s word and deliver the message to the congregation appropriately. Furthermore, they should apply the message properly to the situation of the congregation by reading the Bible carefully.⁶⁴ Calvin states that the well-being of the church is achieved when God raises up faithful ministers to declare the truth.⁶⁵ When the church lacks true pastors, all things in the church are soon ruined. True and godly pastors not only establish the church, but also nurture and help it grow.⁶⁶

If, though, that is case, how are pastors selected and appointed in the church? Calvin says that one without a proper calling cannot work as a pastor. This is because confusion arises in the church if one without a proper calling works as a pastor.⁶⁷ Anyone who wants to become a pastor should first confirm his calling. Even pastors can be wrong, or be in doubt in their judgment; but they have to be certain as to their calling and doctrine just like the prophet Jeremiah was.⁶⁸ They are chosen by God, receive a calling from Him, and obey that calling.⁶⁹ In other words, becoming a pastor requires a divine internal calling.⁷⁰ People cannot see that calling, so pastors should demonstrate it so that they are seen to be the true servants of God. According to Calvin, the only way to prove their calling is to proclaim the word of God alone.⁷¹ Those who speak divine word are the true pastors with a true divine calling.

⁶³ CO 38. 122 (COR II 6/1. 467; Jer. 11:18). “... sed tantum fideliter proferre quod divinitus injunctum erat, et patefactum etiam a Spiritu Sancto: ...”

⁶⁴ Calvin, *Sermons*, 125 (Sermon 18 on Jer. 17:13b, 15,16). “Vray est que Dieu <ne> nous a pas commis, afin de reciter l’Escripture tant seulement, mais afin de exposer sa volonté. Il faut donc que nous regardions tellement d’appliquer l’Escripture à sa fin que nous ne la corruptions point par noz gloses comme l’on fait en la papaulté, ...”

⁶⁵ CO 37. 563 (COR II 6/1. 134; Jer. 3:15). “Unde colligimus, non posse diuturnum esse Ecclesiae statum, nisi dum fidi Pastores praesunt, qui viam salutis ostendant. Ergo in hoc consistit Ecclesiae salus, si Deus excitet veros, et sinceros Doctores, qui annuntient ejus doctrinam.”

⁶⁶ CO 37. 563 (COR II 6/1. 134; Jer. 3:15). “Sequitur ergo Ecclesiam Dei non tantum gigni opera sanctorum et piorum Pastorum, sed etiam foveri, et ali, et confirmari etiam ejus vitam usque ad extremum.”

⁶⁷ Calvin, *Theological Treatises*. 58.

⁶⁸ CO 38. 342 (COR II 6/1. 751; Jer. 20:7). “... quicumque prodeunt ad docendum, debere ita esse certos suae vocationis, ... Verum quidem est, etiam optimos Dei Ministros posse aliqua in parte vel falli, vel suspensio esse iudicio: sed quantum ad summam vocationis et doctrinae, requiritur haec certitudo, quam nobis suo exemplo demonstrat Jeremias.”

⁶⁹ CO 38. 280 (COR II 6/1. 671; Jer. 17:16). “... , sed cui Deus manum porrexit, et qui vocatus duntaxat paret. Ergo initium fieri debet ab obedientia, si volumus nos probare legitimos Doctores.”

⁷⁰ CO 38. 432 (COR II 6/1. 866; Jer. 23:21). “Videmus itaque semper necessario requiri arcanam Dei vocationem ut quis sit vel Propheta, vel Apostolus, vel Pastor.”

⁷¹ CO 38. 433 (COR II 6/1. 866-7; Jer. 23:21). “Jam quia vocatio interior Dei non potest certo dignosci a nobis, videndum est an qui loquitur sit organon spiritus Dei. ... Quare, qui loquitur, ostendat re ipsa se legatum esse Dei. Quomodo autem ostendet? nempe si loquatur ex ipsius Dei ore, ...”

However, Calvin thinks that those who want to be a pastor should have an internal as well as external calling. He adds that God who requires believers in the church to do everything orderly and without confusion allows the election of pastors in the church.⁷² The election and appointment of church office holders is crucial to the church. As a result, wherever there is a church of God, it has its own laws and polity.⁷³ This means that when a church is officially established, a pastor needs an external and legal procedure for a calling.⁷⁴ The general and legitimate procedure for electing and ordaining a minister can be found in the *Les Ordonnances Ecclésiastiques* of 1541. However, the importance of these external procedures never means that pastoral candidates in Geneva were lacking in their acknowledgement of God's leading in their vocation when looking to the pastoral office.⁷⁵ Their internal calling cannot be separated from their external calling. But it is also difficult for a church to know exactly the inner calling of candidates, so these external procedures are essential. To do this, the church used to seek the judgment about the candidates from other pastors, including the Company of Pastors with much deliberation.⁷⁶ After that, the candidates were presented to the City Council. According to Manetsch, it is imperative to recruit the most gifted ministers in the church, because they wanted new ministers to enhance the reputation of the city and to cooperate with the civil authorities.⁷⁷ Then, a candidate should have an opportunity to preach to the whole church so that the congregation can express their approval or disapproval in electing him as their pastor. Yet, it is not easy to perform this procedure properly. In recruitment, if the candidate was judged to be unfit to be a pastor, the church should start the steps of election from the beginning. Sometimes, if he was not accepted by the congregation, the whole procedure should go back to the first step until the right

⁷² CO 38. 432 (COR II 6/1. 866; Jer. 23:21). "Vocatio autem secunda ordini adjuncta est. Deus enim vult omnia inter nos geri rite, et non confuse. Hinc igitur mos eligendi."; Höpfl, *The Christian Polity*, 111. Calvin proposes a system of official election in his *Institute* 4.3.15 and the *Church Order* 1541.

⁷³ CO 38. 432 (COR II 6/1. 866; Jer. 23:21). "Sed saepe continget ut sufficiat, praesertim ad tempus, Dei vocatio. ... Ergo vocatio ordinaria, de qua nunc loquimur, pendet ex statu rite composito. Ubicunque igitur est Ecclesia Dei, habet suas Leges, habet certam rationem gubernationis: ..."

⁷⁴ CO 38. 193 (COR II 6/1. 558-9; Jer. 14:14). "... sed ubi Ecclesia rite est composita, requiritur etiam externa et legitima vocatio."; There are three things to consider regarding external calling: the principal thing is the examination of the qualification of the candidate; second, what belongs to the appointment of the pastors; third, what ceremony or method of procedure it is good to observe in introducing them to their office. The detailed considerations can be found in *Ecclesiastical Ordinances 1541*. See Calvin, *Theological Treatises*. 58-61.

⁷⁵ Manetsch, *Calvin's Company of Pastors*, 84.

⁷⁶ "The ministers were guided by several basic principles as they chose new colleagues, including the belief that no pastoral vocation was superior to another; a commitment to the equal value of every parish assignment (whether in city or countryside); and the conviction that pastors must be motivated by a sincere desire to serve Christ's church rather than by ambition, greed, and overweening pride." Manetsch, *Calvin's Company of Pastors*, 94.

⁷⁷ Manetsch, *Calvin's Company of Pastors*, 95.

person was appointed.⁷⁸ Concerning the involvement of the entire congregation in elections, Calvin wanted maximum participation from the members of the congregation in the process of election.⁷⁹ The external calling means election and appointment based on the prospect's educational background, professional capabilities, and official approval by the civil and ecclesiastical authorities. This procedure gradually settled into practiced habit in the churches of that era. This trend to elect a proper pastor is apparent in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century sources.⁸⁰ Nonetheless, according to Karin Maag, a candidate's declaration of a sense of the inner calling for ministry is not of less importance than the external process,⁸¹ even though the whole church and civil authorities expended a lot of effort to carry out the process well. Such view of Maag is similar to that of Calvin: "but the external calling is never legitimate, except it be preceded by the internal; for it does not belong to us (human authorities) to create prophets, or apostles, or pastors. This is, hence, the special work of the Holy Spirit."⁸²

In his exegesis of Jeremiah, Calvin explains not only how to choose and appoint pastors, but he also describes who it is that should be a pastor: Those who can be regarded faithful pastors of the church by God are not affected by the reverence of people, never turn aside to the right side or to the left, but judge fairly, according to the word of God.⁸³ They, above all, fear God more than people; so they never change the law of God according to their own desires or the will of human beings, rather they judge all things by relying on what God has said. Therefore, unless pastors continue to be firm in their calling and carry on the battle against human wickedness, they cannot distinguish rightly the valuable from the worthless.⁸⁴ All servants of God should be able to be ready for these kinds of battles against human wickedness because they cannot carry out their ministry without defending their faith

⁷⁸ Lee, "Calvin's Ministry in Geneva," 207-8; Weber, *Die Treue Gottes*, 39; Plomp, *De Kerkelijke Tucht bij Calvin*, 172.

⁷⁹ Moehn, *Calvin's Sermons on Acts*, 103-4.

⁸⁰ Maag, "Called to Be Pastor," 71-73.

⁸¹ Maag, "Called to Be Pastor," 71.

⁸² CO 38. 432 (COR II 6/1. 866; Jer. 23:21). "Externa autem vocatio nunquam legitima erit, nisi praecedat illa interior. Neque enim nostrum est creare vel Prophetas, vel Apostolos, vel Pastores. Hoc enim est speciale Spiritus Sancti donum."

⁸³ CO 38. 234 (COR II 6/1. 613; Jer. 15:19). "Summa est, eos demum censeri coram Deo fideles Ecclesiae Pastores, qui non moventur respectu hominum, qui non sunt flexibiles in hanc vel in illam partem, sed recte judicant, et ex Lege Dei."

⁸⁴ CO 38. 235 (COR II 6/1. 613; Jer. 15:19). "... quia non posset discerni recto et legitimo iudicio pretiosum a vili, nisi Prophetae manerent firmi in cursu suae vocationis, et bellum gererent cum hominum pervicacia."

from the harsh attacks of the wicked.⁸⁵ Pastors should be firm in their ministry, even though many people may be against them.⁸⁶ In particular, even if their church members are against them, they should not take it as something strange.⁸⁷ Moreover, the servants of God should not forget the fact that God is the only pastor of the church. No human should claim to be the best pastor in the church.⁸⁸ In other words, the true pastor attributes all glory and power to God alone.

11.6 The Misunderstanding of the Catholic Church on Church Offices

According to Calvin, God raises His children through the ministry of church office holders, and leads them to grow by the church's motherly care.⁸⁹ Calvin also notes that His children could never be separated from the mother church, as bread and wine, the head and body cannot be separated.⁹⁰ Thus, it is urgent for believers to know the true church because their faith will be able to grow to the fullness of Christ in it. Christ is the spiritual food that makes them grow. This food is given by the preaching of the word and observance of the sacraments, which are the ministry of pastors.⁹¹ It is obvious that God is with the believers, and reveals Himself to them during the proclamation of the word and sharing of the sacraments.

However, while teaching this, Calvin criticizes Catholic teaching on the church offices. First, Calvin thinks that office holders in the Catholic Church hinder God from coming to a community. In fact, Calvin disapproves of their attitude when they study and preach the word of God. God comes to the church through His word, but they do not deliver the word in proper and sound ways. Above all, Calvin has a negative view of the fact that high priests do not preach in the Catholic Church.

⁸⁵ CO 38. 237 (COR II 6/1. 615; Jer. 15:20). "Caeterum, quamvis hoc semel dictum fuerit Jeremiae, tamen hic quasi in speculo nobis repraesentatur conditio omnium servorum Dei: quia non poterunt praestare quod illis Deus injungit, nisi sustineant multos et graves impetus: ..."

⁸⁶ CO 38. 126 (COR II 6/1. 473; Jer. 11:20). "Et ipsi quoque Prophetiae et Pastores debent colligere ex hoc loco, quemadmodum nuper dixi, quamvis totus mundus adversetur, non tamen desistendum esse a constantia, neque ideo debere esse flexibiles: ..."

⁸⁷ CO 38. 219 (COR II 6/1. 593; Jer. 15:10). "Non mirum igitur nobis videri debet, si hodie etiam non tantum professi Christi hostes nos onerent multis convitiis: sed qui volunt censi Ecclesiae membra illi quoque nobis maledicant."

⁸⁸ CO 38. 280-1 (COR II 6/1. 672; Jer. 17:16). "Ergo nemo unquam Ecclesiae Dei sic praefuit, ut esset summus Pastor: quia Deus nihil sibi detrahit, cum transfert partes docendi in suos Ministros, quin potius manet ipse integer: ..."

⁸⁹ CO 2. 746 (*Inst.* 4.1.1). "Incipiam autem ab ecclesia: in cuius sinum aggregari vult Deus filios suos, non modo ut eius opera et ministerio alantur quamdiu infantes sunt ac pueri, sed cura etiam materna regantur donec adolescent, ac tandem perveniant ad fidei metam."

⁹⁰ Latini, "The Church as Mother," 184.

⁹¹ Laniti, "The Church as Mother," 186.

Moreover, when they preach, their teachings are not biblical.⁹² Calvin thinks negatively about their false imaginations in their biblical expositions mixed together and preached them in front of the audience. So, Calvin thinks their preaching as totally corrupt, and rejects it wholly.⁹³ In this way, the preaching of the Catholic Church has problems not delivering properly what God has taught and of mixing other things in the divine word. Their sermons show that they undervalue God's teaching while exalting their interpretation. Preachers in the Catholic Church mislead their congregations into thinking that the pope is better than God in interpreting the Bible.⁹⁴ Calvin seems to argue that the preachers in the Catholic Church are not the means of revelation between God and His people, but an obstacle to the presence of God. Moreover, Calvin repudiates the Catholic ministers who do not understand genuine doctrine by calling them 'dogs and pigs.'⁹⁵ In addition, Calvin strongly criticizes the attitude of the Catholic Church toward the Bible. According to Calvin, it interprets the Bible in a way beneficial to them by distorting the word of God. In their eyes the Bible is neither certain nor clear.⁹⁶ Nevertheless they preach to their congregations even though they have an inadequate understanding of the Bible. So, in Calvin's view, they never preach, but pretend to preach the word of God. They also boast of being the true servants of God, although they confuse the whole church with their impious and incoherent sermons.⁹⁷ In sum, preachers in the Catholic Church became a hindrance to the proclamation of the divine word in the church through their false preaching and doctrine.

Second, the Catholic Church keeps God estranged from the church because of their hierarchy. On this, Calvin points out the wrongdoing of the Catholic Church in his interpretation of Jer. 18:18.

⁹² Calvin, *Sermons*, 122 (Sermon 18 on Jer. 17:13b, 15,16). "Ainsi nous voions en toute la papauté que ceux qui se disent prelatz sont condampnez par la sentence de Jeremie. Pourquoi? Car où est la doctrine qu'ilz anoncent? il leur semble que cela desroge à leur dignité! Encores qu'ilz parlent, qu'est ce qu'ilz disent? toute mensonge! Et pourtant, d'autant qu'ilz ont doctrine toute differente des prophetes, il les faut rejecter."

⁹³ Calvin, *Sermons*, 125 (Sermon 18 on Jer. 17:13b, 15, 16). "Au reste, si on nous veult faire plus sages que nous ne sommes en mellant les songes des hommes avec la parolle de Dieu, il est certain que ce n'est pas la verité mais toute corruption."

⁹⁴ Calvin, *Sermons*, 126 (Sermon 18 on Jer. 17:13b, 15, 16). "Car il faict comme si Dieu ne nous avoit aprins que nostre A B C, et que la pape fust l'expositeur et plus suffisant que Dieu. On voit donc que c'est une doctrine forgée du diable."

⁹⁵ CO 37. 481 (COR II 6/1. 32; Jer. 1:10). "Sed cum porci illi et canes vacui sint omni doctrina et pietate, ..."

⁹⁶ CO 38. 311 (COR II 6/1. 711; Jer. 18:18). "Scriptura est nasus cereus: nihil habet certum, vel firmum: potest enim torqueri in quamlibet partem, et hypocritae semper abusi sunt Dei verbo: sequitur ergo nihil esse certum, neque perspicuum in Scriptura."

⁹⁷ CO 38. 435 (COR II 6/1. 869; Jer. 23:22). "Nam scimus pessimos quosque proterve obtendere sermonem Dei: quemadmodum hodie Papistae quamvis inebriaverint totum mundum impiis deliriis, jactant tamen se esse Dei servos."

That the Church cannot err, that the Church is represented by the Pope, the bishops, and the whole clergy, and also that those whom they boastingly thunder out a continual succession from Peter. They, at length, conclude, that the Church of Rome is the mother of all the faithful, and also that the Holy Spirit dwells there; for whosoever succeeds in the place of Peter and occupies his chair, is endued with the same spirit and the same authority.⁹⁸

According to Hesselink, unless Christ is Lord and Priest in the church, it is nothing but chaos.⁹⁹ Since Christ is the head of the church, the church reveals Him as Lord and Priest. According to Calvin's arguments above, the pope, the prelates and the clerics represent the Catholic Church. Furthermore, they argue that they are the successors of the apostle Peter. Calvin thinks that their church cannot be called the true church as long as the pope is considered their head. Insisting that the Scriptures neither mention nor teach the papacy, Calvin criticizes their belief in the papacy because it is groundless and abominable.¹⁰⁰ Calvin also criticizes the appointment system of the office holders in the Catholic Church because the system is not biblical.¹⁰¹ Moreover, Calvin is seriously against the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the Catholic Church. As we have seen in the quote above, the Catholic Church has invented its own hierarchy and formed peculiar classes: pope, bishop, and clergy. Calvin reproaches those who boast of their pastoral office under the papacy – although they are called bishops, prelates, primates, and fathers – because they deprive God of the honor which He deserves.¹⁰² It should be noticed here why God gives believers church offices and allows them to receive praise in the church. God gives them church offices in order to carry out their mission efficiently, not to be proud of their positions.¹⁰³ More importantly, the Bible describes church officers and their roles, but does not mention the hierarchy that the Catholic Church argues for. Calvin concludes that those who argue for

⁹⁸ CO 38. 309 (COR II 6/1. 709; Jer. 18:18). "... , Ecclesiam non posse errare: repraesentari Ecclesiam in Papa et Episcopis et toto Clero. Deinde Praelatos, ut vocant, esse successores Apostolorum. Et ita plenis buccis detonant continuam successionem a Petro: unde tandem colligunt Ecclesiam Romanam esse matrem omnium fidelium : deinde illic Spiritum Sanctum residere: quia quisquis in locum Petri successit, et occupat ejus cathedram, ille praeditus est eodem spiritu, et eadem autoritate."; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 2, 417.

⁹⁹ Hesselink, *Calvin's First Catechism*, 161.

¹⁰⁰ CO 38. 336-7 (COR II 6/1. 743; Jer. 20:3). "Tota Scriptura quid sit Papatus non meminit, nec docet, quin potius totam faecem illam repudiat."

¹⁰¹ CO 38. 310 (COR II 6/1. 710; Jer. 18:18). "Neque enim vocatio eorum fundata est in verbo Dei : quia omnes sunt schismatici, et hoc etiam constat ex eorum canonibus, quia hodie nulla viget canonica electio apud eos."

¹⁰² CO 37. 504-5 (COR II 6/1. 61; Jer. 2:8). "... quemadmodum hodie vocamus et Episcopos, et Praelatos, et Primates, et Patres, qui in Papatu gloriantur se fungi munere pastoralis : et tamen scimus esse partim lupos, partim vero canes mutos: ... et spoliant Deum justo suo honore."

¹⁰³ CO 38. 311 (COR II 6/1. 710-1; Jer. 18:18). "Sed hinc discamus qua Lege, et in quem finem Deus passim ornet Ecclesiae Ministros et Pastores claris elogiis et insignibus: certe non ut superbiant falso praetextu, sed ut fideliter exequantur munus suum."

the hierarchy in the Catholic Church belong neither to the doctrine of Christ nor any order of the Law.¹⁰⁴ They exist only in their own tradition and order. In short, Calvin rejects the hierarchy that has sustained the Catholic Church for a long time.¹⁰⁵ Hence, this hierarchy practically ignores the government and sovereignty of Christ in the church, and seems to hinder, ultimately, the presence of God in the church. The true authority of the church is given to Christ only because He is the head of the church.¹⁰⁶ Calvin says the following: “while the name of the Catholic Church is boasted of under the papacy, and it seems that they respect God; but the word of God or what has been spoken by the apostles and prophets is regarded as almost nothing. We, hence, see that the papists separate God from themselves as the Jews did.”¹⁰⁷ In this way Calvin does not acknowledge their hierarchy, and at the same time condemns the Catholic Church under the papacy as being separated from God.

Third, Calvin criticizes the corrupt lives of the priests in the Catholic Church, comparing them to the false prophets of Jeremiah’s era. They not only corrupted the doctrine of God, but also defiled the worship of God. Even worse, their lives were wicked.¹⁰⁸ Calvin points out how their wickedness is at work, saying that they get paid by the church but are the like the dogs of the pope who bark against the pure truth of God.¹⁰⁹ Moreover, although they are called to be priests, they are so vicious and brutal that their piety is not more excellent than that of ordinary believers.¹¹⁰ As a result, Calvin’s evaluation shows that they cannot be a good example, not only in their faith, but also in their life and piety. According to Calvin those who are chosen as church office holders should have a good

¹⁰⁴ CO 38. 549 (COR II 6/2. 1013; Jer. 27:9). “... sicuti hodie possumus vocare et Sacerdotes, et Episcopos, et presbyteros, qui larvis istis se obtegunt, interea ostendimus nihil esse in ipsis episcopale, nihil ecclesiasticum, nihil denique quod sapiat Christi doctrinam, vel ullum legitimum ordinem.”

¹⁰⁵ Moehn, *Calvin’s Sermons on Acts*, 153; Höpfl, *The Christian Polity*, 110; Richel, *Het Kerkbegrip*, 215; Zachman, *Image and Word*, 407; Spijker, *Bij Calvin*, 175-6. Calvin criticizes the system of office in the Catholic Church, which is totally the form of a pyramid. Spijker also asserts that “Sola Scriptura” should become a basic fundamental of church structure as well as the doctrine of Justification.

¹⁰⁶ Wallace, *Calvin, Geneva and the Reformation*, 142, 145.

¹⁰⁷ CO 38. 548 (COR II 6/2. 1012; Jer. 27:9). “... sicuti hodie cum jactatur Catholicae Ecclesiae nomen in Papatu, videtur hoc totum referri ad Deum. Sed ubi profertur sermo Dei, ubi ostenditur quid locutus fuerit per Apostolos et Prophetas, hoc fere pro nihilo ducitur. Videmus ergo ut Deum a se ipso separent Papistae, quemadmodum olim fecerunt Judaei.”; Harms, *In God’s Custody*, 145; Ganoczy, “Calvin’s life,” 13. In the end, Calvin’s important work was not to establish a new church as an alternative to the church under the papacy, but only to restore and reform that which has been formed and maintained under a false structure.

¹⁰⁸ CO 38. 421 (COR II 6/1. 852; Jer. 23:11). “... quoniam non tantum vita ipsorum scelerata erat, sed etiam corruperant impie et perfide doctrinam Dei, et everterant ejus cultum.”

¹⁰⁹ CO 38. 579 (COR II 6/2. 1050; Jer. 28:15). “Sic etiam nobis breviter hodie transigendum est cum omnibus mercenariis Papae canibus, qui latrant adversus puram Evangelii doctrinam, ...”

¹¹⁰ CO 38. 589 (COR II 6/2. 1062; Jer. 29:8). “... et bestias illas, quae non debent numerari inter homines, vocamus tamen praesules, Episcopos, Praelatos: ...”

and honorable reputation and should not have any outstanding faults. Those who want to serve as church office holders need to examine their life carefully before their appointment.¹¹¹ Despite these requirements, the office holders of the Catholic Church seemed not to live an appropriate life for their position. Thus, they could not perform their tasks to preach the gospel, or to lead the congregation to God in a proper way faithfully. Truthfully, in turn, their life and work are not a reliable instrument for God to be united with His people, but a hindrance.

11.7 Conclusion

Unlike the *Institutes* of 1559, Calvin mainly deals with the offices of pastor, doctor and elder in his interpretation of Jeremiah among the four church offices. This is because he cannot help emphasizing the tasks of the prophet, who hears and preaches the word of God. Hence, it is not surprising that Calvin's ecclesiology as explained in this exposition focuses on the educational function of the church. In addition, Calvin makes clear that church office holders are divine instruments. They are first called by God inwardly. However, despite their inward calling, their external calling becomes important because they need to be elected and ordained by the congregation. Despite these callings, becoming a church office holder never means that God gives the office holder His authority entirely. The authority of the church belongs to God alone, so the office holder is to glorify God through their ministry and service. With this Calvin denounces the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. Significantly, there is authority in the church in the word of God and in the government of Christ as its head. Church office holders have important duties to perform in order to reveal the presence of God by preaching the gospel without making any kind of adjustments, and by obeying Christ. In sum, it is their ministry as the instruments of God to help His people experience the presence of God in the church.

¹¹¹ CO 52. 281 (1 Tm. 3:2). "Ergo ne autoritate careat episcopus, iubet eligi qui sit honestae et integrae famaе, nullique notabili vitio obnoxius. ... ut se vitamque suam diligenter examinent."

Chapter XII. *Ecclesia Militans: The Preservation of the Church II*

12.1 Introduction

Even if Calvin is not asked in person about the meaning of suffering, one can assume that Calvin knew the meaning better than many because he experienced difficult times repeatedly throughout his life.¹ In the year 1549, when Calvin preached on the book of Jeremiah, he still lived in Geneva as a religious refugee from France. Before that, he had been exiled from Geneva due to political and religious reasons. After coming back to Geneva from Strasbourg, he still suffered severely because of those who opposed his ministry.² Meanwhile, he lost his beloved wife, Idelette van Buren, on March 29, 1549.³ To make matters worse, in 1560 when he lectured on the book of Jeremiah at the Geneva Academy, his life was still unstable due to the situation in France.⁴ At that time, religious oppression of the Protestants in his motherland was getting worse. At the Academy, Calvin was training prospective pastors who were to be sent to France. His lectures on the book of Jeremiah might have been challenging but not encouraging to his students because the book is full of divine warnings of imminent catastrophe against the Israelites. On the other hand, his lectures on Jeremiah might have been good training for his students. Through Calvin's lectures on Jeremiah, the students could see how the true church goes through and gets over the trials caused by the corrupt church that is considered divine. In this context, his lectures were appropriate and useful to prospective pastors, who dedicated themselves to the Protestant churches in France under oppression.⁵ As if reflecting the situations in France, Calvin talked about the attitudes and missions of the suffering

¹ Plasger, "Ecclesiology," 331.

² Spijker. e.a., *Johannes Calvijn*, 111. In early 1546, Calvin wrote to his friend, Viret: "I am a refugee in this city," "I am a foreigner in this city and a guest to Geneva." From these quotes, we can assume that Calvin still had a painful time after he had come back to Geneva.

³ Selderhuis, "onderweg naar de dood," 85; Opitz, *Leben und Werk Johannes Calvins*, 66. Idelette gave birth to Jacque, a son of Calvin, in Geneva on July 28, 1542, but he died a few days later. Afterwards, she became weak and died on March 29, 1549. Calvin wrote to Farel of this event: "I tried so hard, but I could not calm down my pain." Also, Calvin wrote to Bucer: "I live only a half life now."

⁴ Berg, *Het rijk van Christus*, 30-37.

⁵ Balsarak, *Establishing the Remnant Church*, 194.

pastors while mentioning Jeremiah's ministry.⁶ Likewise, the problem of suffering Christians is a related subject.⁷

To explain his thought concerning the book of Jeremiah, this chapter first deals with the origin of the believers' suffering (12.2), then focuses on its purpose (12.3) and their attitudes in suffering (12.4). The following section (12.5) considers the relationship between their suffering and divine providence. Finally, the role of the church to aid believers will be examined in turn.

12.2 Where does the Suffering of Believers Come From?

Calvin thinks that the children of God cannot avoid suffering and tribulation. According to Calvin, the prophet states that as all trees are under the sun, so too the children of God as well as unbelievers have to face difficulties in their lives.⁸ He argues that there is no life without suffering and life is nothing but a series of adversities.⁹ Then where does the suffering of believers come from? This question may arise among believers in tribulation. Calvin mentions three causes for this in his exposition on Jeremiah.

The first cause are the iniquities and wickedness of all people, including the faithful. Calvin points out their tendency not to seek God whenever believers are full of sadness and suffering.¹⁰ Jeremiah continued to prophesy that the Israelites would become captive in Babylon because they were intentionally against God and disobeyed the divine word.¹¹ This means that the primary reason for their suffering is their sin and disobedience to God. While teaching about sin, Calvin thought that

⁶ CO 39. 149 (COR II 6/2. 1399; Jer. 37:14). "... servos Dei sic animosos esse oportet, ut contemnunt improborum maledicentiam: et quia sic placet Deo, sese ad tolerantiam comparent, ubi subeundum est aliquod dedecus, modo bene conscientia ipsorum semper coram Deo, et Angelis respondeat: deinde ut eorum etiam integritas refellat omnes obtrectationes, modo sint qui ipsos audire sustineant. Quod si non semper admittitur defensio, hanc quoque indignitatem devorent."

⁷ Calvin already had written about the Christian life and the way believers should live during their suffering in the *Institutes* of 1559. See CO 2. 505-528 (*Inst.* 3.7.1-3.9.6).

⁸ CO 38. 269 (COR II 6/1. 657; Jer. 17:7-8). "Oblique significat filios Dei non esse prorsus expertes rerum adversarum, ... Ergo significat Propheta, quamvis filii Dei sentiant magnos ardores, quemadmodum et increduli, quia communis est utrisque conditio, tamen fore semper salvos, quia etiamsi sol ardore suo summitatem torreat, paratum erit remedium:"; Zachman, *Image and Word*, 421.

⁹ CO 38. 380 (COR II 6/1. 800; Jer. 22:10). "... vita autem longior nihil aliud erit quam continua miseriarum series."

¹⁰ CO 39. 52 (COR II 6/2. 1275; Jer. 33:3). "... quoties tabescimus in dolore, vel aegritudine conficimur, hoc fieri nostra culpa, ..."

¹¹ CO 37. 611 (COR II 6/1. 194; Jer. 5:3). "Nam significat eos non errore vel inscitia peccare, vel esse abstractos: sed voluntaria malitia, et certa deliberatione abjicere omnem curam suae salutis, et quasi ex professo Deum repudiare, ita ut nolint perpeti vel doctrinam ejus vel correctiones."

the believers in Geneva also suffer from their own disobedience. So, they could not resent against God even though they were in severe difficulties, for it comes from their own wickedness.¹²

Second, the suffering of the believer comes from the wicked. In Jer. 12:1, the prophet fell into anguish seeing that the wicked thrived and the sinner was at ease. Similarly, Calvin points out that the believers could question why God does not punish the wicked who are prosperous.¹³ However, this case tells us that the accumulation of divine vengeance on the wicked when God is merciful to them.¹⁴ It is natural that believers feel negatively inwardly when they see the prosperity of the wicked. But, the faithful Israelites during the era of Jeremiah experienced hardship inwardly as well as outwardly. According to Calvin, the Israelites during the era of Jeremiah were boldly assured that they would not suffer punishment. However, this wrong belief was one of the reasons for their destruction. Due to their disobedience they despised God and ignored all divine warnings. In fact, these sinful assurances were offered by the false prophets of that time. Hence, another reason for the suffering and tribulation of the Israelites is their heeding the false prophets.¹⁵ Calvin states that every church of every era has had those who oppose the church. It is God's will to test the faith of His people through those who oppose the church.¹⁶ Calvin encourages his congregation in Geneva not to be discouraged by difficulties, as the Genevan church would experience such opponents.¹⁷ In addition, Calvin criticizes the monks under the papacy, who had their own false doctrine.¹⁸ In his sermon on Jer. 18:17-8, Calvin also preaches that the pope would be the same as those who held to false teaching and committed

¹² Calvin, *Sermons*, 62 (Sermon 9 on Jer. 16:1-7). "N'accusons donc point Dieu de cruauté, mais connoissons que si nous endurons du mal que cela vient pour noz pechez."; Calvin writes the same reason in his *Institutes* 2.1.10 (CO 2. 184). "A carnis ergo nostrae culpa, non a Deo nostra perditio est; ... Homini tantum suum exitium adscribendum apparet, quum Dei benignitate rectitudinem adeptus, sua ipse dementia in vanitatem delapsus sit." According to Calvin, men's difficulties originated from their sins, not from God. So, men cannot blame on God.

¹³ CO 38. 128 (COR II 6/1. 476; Jer. 12:1). "Exempli gratia, si quis, dum videt hodie res in mundo incompositas, incipiat secum liberius disputare: Quid hoc sibi vult? quomodo tamdiu patitur Deus licentiam istam grassari? cur ita dissimulat?"

¹⁴ CO 38. 129 (COR II 6/1. 477; Jer. 12:1). "... sed, quemadmodum videbimus, potius hoc modo accumulet gravio rem vindictam: dum scilicet impii magis ac magis se obdurant, cum ita indulgenter eos sustinet."

¹⁵ CO 38. 191 (COR II 6/1. 557; Jer. 14:13). "Oportuit enim Judaeis excuti pravam illam confidentiam, qua ipsos inebriaverant falsi Prophetae, qui simulabant se divinitus esse missos: et ita gloriabantur se esse servos Dei, se esse organa Spiritus Sancti. Quoniam ergo necesse erat hanc fiduciam detrahi Judaeis, quae erat interitus causa, quod scilicet obdurescerent ad Dei contemptum, et omnes minas spernerent: ..."

¹⁶ Selderhuis, "Church on Stage," 59.

¹⁷ CO 38. 439-440 (COR II 6/1. 875; Jer. 23:25). "... quia scilicet omnibus saeculis Deus voluit probare servorum suorum fidem, cum permisit hanc licentiam Satanae et ejus Ministris, ut obtruderent sacrum ejus nomen non sine mendacio. Et quoniam videmus huic malo semper obnoxiam fuisse Ecclesiam, non est quod hodie turbemur, si idem accidat, quia nihil est novum."

¹⁸ CO 38. 446 (COR II 6/1. 884; Jer. 23:31). "Nam hoc idem videmus nunc in Papatu. Monachi enim et ejusmodi nebulones habent suas fallacias: ..."

wickedness in the age of Jeremiah, if the prophet was the true servant of God.¹⁹ In Calvin's view, Jeremiah and lots of ministers of the Catholic Church in his era could never belong to the same party. In sum, Calvin thinks that, in some cases, the false prophets and the unfaithful office holders in the church could be significant causes for the believers' sufferings and adversities.

Finally, Calvin points out that God is the ultimate cause for believers' sufferings. Externally, the Chaldeans caused the Israelites to live in the kingdom of Babylon as captives. However, the Chaldeans were only instruments carrying out God's will. In fact, God was the commander in chief of the Chaldeans in their war with the Israelites. Calvin understands that God is the ultimate cause of the Israelites' tribulations.²⁰ No adversities happen to the Israelites by chance, but by God's plan and will. Also, God allowed them to suffer not only in the war with the Chaldeans, but also from natural disasters.²¹ Calvin concludes that God is the author of all calamities.²² In his sermon on Jer. 15:1-6, Calvin also emphasizes that the adversity that the congregation in Geneva sometimes experienced has been sent by God, not by accident.²³ Furthermore, Calvin mentions that all creatures are divine instruments and God can punish in various ways using creatures.²⁴ In his sermon on Jer. 15:7-10, Calvin describes adversity in his age and day: the plague, famine, and burdensome taxation.²⁵ In this way many different things – natural disasters, contagious diseases, and social problems, etc. – could become serious problems for believers. Nevertheless, it is clear that all adversities and miseries influencing the congregation occurred through God's providence.²⁶

¹⁹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 164 (Sermon 24 on Jer. 18:17-8). "Or tant y a que si Jeremie a esté serviteur de Dieu, le pape ne scauroit alleguer autre chose sinon qu'il se joint de la bande de ceulx qui ont erré du temps de Jeremye."

²⁰ CO 38. 144 (COR II 6/1. 496; Jer. 12:12). "In summa, significat Chaldaeos militare Deo, et illi impendere suam operam, quia dux sit praecipuus belli: ne scilicet existiment Judaei, fortuito sibi accidere tantas calamitates."

²¹ CO 38. 179 (COR II 6/1. 542; Jer. 14:2). "Ergo Propheta hic pronuntiat non posse rem insolitam ascribi naturalibus causis, ut terra in tantam penuriam incidat, sed esse extraordinarium aliquod judicium Dei."; CO 38. 141 (COR 6/1. 491-2; Jer. 14:1).

²² CO 39. 561 (COR II 7. 193; Lam. 2:21). "Haec igitur ratio est cur Propheta Deum faciat autorem omnium cladum: ..."

²³ Calvin, *Sermons*, 16 (Sermon 3 on Jer. 15:1-6). "Car du premier coup Dieu ne nous peult imprimer cela en nostre fantaisie que nous n'attribuions à fortune ces maulx qui nous adviennent et [ne] regardions [point] que c'est sa main."

²⁴ Calvin, *Sermons*, 16 (Sermon 3 on Jer. 15:1-6). "... quant il nous vouldra pugnir en son ire, qu'il a de divers moyens que nous n'avons point encores accoustumé."

²⁵ Calvin, *Sermons*, 22 (Sermon 4 on Jer. 15:7-10). "Quant la peste est cessée, il nous fault endurer la famyne. Après nous avons tant d'impositions que nous sommes mangez. Brief il n'y a anget en toute la terre, où l'on ne voye les verges de Dieu."

²⁶ Calvin, *Sermons*, 149 (Sermon 22 on Jer. 18:11-14). "... pour leur monstrer que cela ne viendra point des hommes, mais par la providence de Dieu."

In sum, the adversities that the church has gone through or will experience are caused not only by believers' sins or unbelievers' wrongdoings, but the genuine cause is the will of God. This is because God is the sovereign of all things. Believers experiencing tribulations need to know the meaning of the divine will which allows them to suffer.

12.3 Why does God Allow His People to Suffer?

If the suffering of believers comes from God, one may ask why God allows them to suffer. The book of Jeremiah is full of the prophet's warnings foretelling that the Israelites would be taken into captivity in Babylon. Thus, Calvin's interpretation of the book reveals the various reasons that God allows for suffering. Three of those reasons will be dealt with here.

First, God wants to test the faith of His people through difficulties. According to Calvin, the church of God may fall into troubles. In that case the faithful, who have already endured difficulties, can triumph, while the people of little faith may stumble and, at worst, lose their faith.²⁷ God puts His people to the trial not only because of ecclesiastical issues, but also famine and want, disease, exile and prison, and any other evils.²⁸ However, the divine purpose for trials is hidden from His people. Nevertheless, they could endure their suffering with their faith that God's fatherly love guides their lives. Hence, the faithful may accept divine tests as the unique privilege of being the children of God.²⁹ In addition, Calvin states that the faithful could not overcome their difficulties boldly unless they have knowledge of divine mercy.³⁰ Without this knowledge, they cannot realize the will of God, who permits suffering. However, one may possess that knowledge as long as God gives it. All things considered, the faithful can survive in difficulties not by human wisdom or power, but through God's

²⁷ CO 38. 335 (COR II 6/1. 741; Jer. 20:2). "Possemus tunc labascere, et prorsus etiam concideret fides nostra: nisi succurrerent haec exempla, quae demonstrant olim etiam tentatos fuisse fideles, et exercitatum fuisse eorum fidem ejusmodi certaminibus."

²⁸ CO 39. 97 (COR II 6/2. 1331; Jer. 34:20). "... sed cum Deus fame, et inopia, deinde morbis, vel exilio, vel carcere, vel aliis malis exercet atque affligit servos suos, ..."

²⁹ Thomas, *Calvin's teaching on Job*, 228.

³⁰ CO 39. 484 (COR II 6/2. 1827; Jer. 51:46). "Nisi ergo gustum misericordiae Dei conciperent fideles nunquam fortibus animis perferrent tentationes quibus Deus eos exanimat: ..."

particular care.³¹ The only way that the people of God can endure or overcome their trials is to come directly to God in order to seek aid.³²

Second, God allows suffering in order to teach His people who He is. God promised to keep and protect the Israelites just like a father cares for his children. However, the Israelites forgot who God is and lived like people who have nothing to do with Him. Without tribulation and pain, the people of God would not fully acknowledge the power of the God who protects them.³³ So, God allowed them to suffer to let them know who God is. The prophet Jeremiah also knew that God protected and helped His people, in particular, when they were in trouble.³⁴ Likewise, God wanted the Israelites to know divine care and to flee to Him during their difficulties.³⁵ God also wanted them to know that He judges based on His righteousness.³⁶ He wanted them to be aware that their sufferings are not accidents but manifestations of the divine will. Ultimately, God reveals Himself to be a judge as well as a protector of the Israelites through their pain. God wants His people to mature and submit to divine authority.³⁷

Third, God allows suffering in order to lead His people to repent and arrive at salvation in the end. God first wants them to realize that they are too wicked to be saved by themselves.³⁸ Then, God leads them to repent and to become humble. So, they may realize that their spirit can be saved even though their body will perish.³⁹ Calvin argues that the punishment of His servant is temporal and

³¹ CO 38. 277 (COR II 6/1. 668; Jer. 17:14). "... Non esse in hominis arbitrio stare vel se tueri incolumem ut salvus sit, sed esse singulare Dei beneficium."

³² CO 37. 531 (COR II 6/1. 95; Jer. 2:29). "... sed recta veniendum esse ad Deum ipsum, ut nobis opituletur in necessitate."

³³ CO 38. 352 (COR II 6/1. 763; Jer. 20:13). "... nisi enim praecederet miseria et afflictio, nunquam satis agnosceremus Dei potentiam in nobis servandis."

³⁴ CO 39. 602 (COR II 7. 325, 327; Lam. 3:58). "Summa est, Prophetam (qui loquitur tamen in omnium fidelium persona) sensisse Deum vindicem et auxiliatorem, neque tantum in una causa, sed quoties laboravit."

³⁵ CO 39. 643 (COR II 7. 463; Lam. 5:20). "... , ut ad Dei misericordiam confugerent."

³⁶ CO 38. 223 (COR II 6/1. 597; Jer. 15:14). "Oportuit autem haec omnia illis praedici, ut scirent se justa Dei vindicta plecti, cum devicti essent a Chaldaeis: nam putassent hoc factum fuisse fortuito, ..."; der Kooi, "Calvin's Theology of Creation and Providence," 58. Calvin's hermeneutics shows God's fatherly love and justice on righteous people. God reveals Himself to be an avenger of injustice and defender of the innocent. The duality that runs as a hidden thread through the course of history is found in God's image.

³⁷ CO 39. 189 (COR II 6/2. 1452; Jer. 39:14). "... et ita huc et illuc ipsos flectit atque impellit, ut cogantur velint nolint parere ejus imperio."

³⁸ CO 38. 129 (COR II 6/1. 477; Jer. 12:1). "... , quia volebat stomachum facere Judaeis, ut sentirent se rejici, et rejici tanquam indignos quorum salutem amplius curaret."

³⁹ CO 37. 590 (COR II 6/1. 167; Jer. 4:18). "... sed vocentur a Deo in iudicium, nempe ut tacti Dei timore respiciant, vel saltem, si pereundum sit secundum carnem, ut tamen humiliati veniam obtineant, et salvi fiant spiritu."

finite. And, all of these pains are helpful to the salvation of believers.⁴⁰ Calvin's sermons convey the same message: the people of God should see divine love even in their distress. The suffering of the faithful is the sign of their salvation because suffering is a balm for their souls.⁴¹ God never wants His people to perish. When Calvin preached such a message, his political status was not stable in Geneva. Nevertheless, he taught divine mercy to his congregation: God permits pains that are helpful to the faithful.

Ultimately, suffering is not a mere difficulty and pain to the faithful. There are reasons why the faithful suffer: God tests their faith through discomfort and shows who He is to His people. Furthermore, suffering works as medicine leading the faithful to piety and to the way of salvation.

12.4 The Attitude of the Faithful in the *Ecclesia Militans*

Interpreting the book of Jeremiah, Calvin compares the attitude of the faithful with that of the unfaithful when both go through hardship. Then he concludes that they are quite different. According to Calvin, the unfaithful moan in adversities, and abandon themselves into sorrow. They become like wild beasts, turning away from God. Furthermore, the ungodly grumbles against God.⁴² Quite differently, the believers try to keep their faith in God during their adversities. However, they sometimes act like the unbelievers, being weak in faith. Calvin stresses how believers in the *Ecclesia Militans* should handle their difficulties in his exposition of the book of Jeremiah.

First, the faithful should become humble in the suffering that God allows while reflecting on their behavior. Calvin argues that it is stupidity if the faithful do not become humble in suffering. Calvin teaches that the people of God should beg for divine mercy to take back His anger after they have learned from suffering.⁴³ True humility is the best attitude of faith and the humble believers obey

⁴⁰ CO 39. 360 (COR II 6/2. 1670; Jer. 49:12). "Nam poenae quibus exercentur servi Dei sunt temporales duntaxat et finitae: quoniam sunt totidem medicinae. Sunt enim salutis adjumenta quaecunque patimur, ..."; Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 111.

⁴¹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 21 (Sermon 4 on Jer. 15: 6b-10). "Il nous est souventesfoys remonstré que quant Dieu nous afflige, encores congnoissons nous son amour en cela. Car c'est signe qu'il pense de nostre salut, d'autant qu'il ne veult point que nous perissions. Car les afflictions qu'il nous envoie sont aultant de medicines."

⁴² CO. 39. 597 (COR II 7. 311; Lam. 3:50). "... increduli satis superque dolent in rebus adversis: imo sese projiciunt ad moerorem: sed adversi sunt prorsus a Deo, et sunt quasi ferae bestiae. ... quemadmodum videmus impios tumultuari contra Deum."

⁴³ CO 38. 594 (COR II 6/2. 1069-70; Jer. 29:12). "Fuit haec non tantum pigrities, sed stupiditas, quod non fuerint subacti Dei ferulis, ut ipsum invocarent. ... Summa est igitur, postquam profecerint in Dei ferulis, tunc venturos esse supplices, ut deprecentur iram ejus."

the word of God.⁴⁴ Once again, the principle for obeying and following God during tribulations is humility. Humility means to give God what is appropriate while the faithful acknowledges their meaninglessness.⁴⁵ However, this humble attitude cannot be formed in a day. According to Calvin, the prophet thought that weakening the impudent Israelites needs a long time; namely, seventy years.⁴⁶ The faithful should make great effort to learn to become humble, with divine help.⁴⁷ Calvin emphasizes that the faithful should reflect on themselves, examine their life, and obey God willingly.⁴⁸

Second, the faithful should stay strong in their sufferings. Although God does not solve difficult situations promptly, they should endure situations patiently.⁴⁹ Moreover, they should wait for God to restore them.⁵⁰ Calvin argues that the pain caused by problems related to faith is a battle to prove their perseverance and consistency of faith.⁵¹ In particular, church office holders could receive more attacks and condemnations than ordinary church members. In this case, the servants of God need to be courageous as to disdain all slanders of the unprincipled, and to be patient whenever any reproach makes them annoyed.⁵² Thus, the people of God should bear their pain patiently and rely on God while being silent or quiet, instead of seeking remedies here and there.⁵³ This is the appropriate attitude of true believers in the *Ecclesia Militans*. With this attitude, true believers can obtain peace in their sufferings. This real patience of the faithful means to bear any sufferings which God may put upon them. Furthermore, according to Calvin, even if suffering is unbearable, they should not take it

⁴⁴ CO 38. 259 (COR II 6/1. 644; Jer. 16:21). “Humilitas autem optima est ad fidem praeformatio, ut se verbo Dei subjiciant.”

⁴⁵ CO 38. 163 (COR II 6/1. 520; Jer. 13:15). “... quemadmodum etiam principium obedientiae est humilitas, ubi homines agnoscunt se nihil esse, et deferunt Deo quod illi debetur.”

⁴⁶ CO 38. 594 (COR II 6/2. 1069; Jer. 29:12). “Sed quoniam tam rudi erant et prae fracto ingenio, Propheta hic breviter admonet opus esse multis annis ad ipsos domandos, quia non sufficerent viginti aut triginta.”

⁴⁷ CO 38. 295 (COR II 6/1. 690; Jer. 18:3). “Caeterum, si ad nos descendimus, idem quoque reperiemus, nempe violenter agendum esse nobiscum, ut discamus nos humiliare sub potenti Dei manu, quemadmodum Petrus nos admonet.”

⁴⁸ CO 39. 518 (COR II 7. 47, 49; Lam. 1:8). “Nam commune est omnibus lugere in rebus adversis: sed finis luctus est contumacia: quae tandem prorumpit in furorem, ubi increduli sua mala sentiunt, et se interea non humiliant coram Deo. Atqui fideles non obdurescunt in luctu suo, sed descendunt in se ipsos, et examinant suam vitam, et sponte coram Deo se prosternunt, ac subeunt voluntariam damnationem, et fatentur Deum esse justum.”

⁴⁹ Haas, “Ethics and Church Discipline,” 334.

⁵⁰ CO 39. 224 (COR II 6/2. 1497; Jer. 42:8). “... si Deus non statim proferat quod cupimus, quemadmodum jam dixi, expectandum est placidis et tranquillis animis revelationis tempus et opportunitas.”

⁵¹ Balsarak, *Establishing the Remnant Church*, 201.

⁵² CO 39. 149 (COR II 6/2. 1399; Jer. 37:14). “... servos Dei sic animosos esse oportet, ut contemnant improborum maledicentiam: et quia sic placet Deo, sese ad tolerantiam comparent, ubi subeundum est aliquod dedecus, modo bene scientia ipsorum semper coram Deo, ...”

⁵³ CO 39. 579 (COR II 7. 251; Lam. 3:26). “Qui autem miseras suas patienter tolerat, vel qui in Deum recumbit ubi instant pericula, ille dicitur silere vel quiescere: ...”

as a burden, and should endure it while seeking divine help.⁵⁴ Unless they maintain a high degree of perseverance with calmness and quietness even when their situation appears hopeless, ultimately, they are not truly patient.⁵⁵ In his sermon on Jer. 18:21-23, Calvin also recommends that the faithful should never desire God to judge quickly, and wait until God judges at His designated time.⁵⁶

Moreover, Calvin encourages those suffering to remember the promise and mercy of God. This is the third attitude of the faithful. God promised to give His church stability and continuity, for He would be graceful to His church day after day, and year after year.⁵⁷ This promise shows that the Israelites would be in difficult situations for a time, yet this condition would not last forever because God would eventually console them so that they would not only exult, but also praise His mercy, when they are liberated.⁵⁸ Jeremiah the prophet reminds us of the promise that the church would be restored fully and completely. He also proclaims that God would not only restore Judah but also the other tribes, who had previously been exiled.⁵⁹ God would bestow favor on His church forever so that the church would have everlasting joy.⁶⁰ The faithful who suffer in the *Ecclesia Militans* should put their hope in the triumph of the church (*Ecclesia Triumphans*) that God promised, and look forward to His mercy. Through divine comfort and mercy, they can gain power to endure their pain. But, some people argue that the faithful cannot maintain hope, because their adversities often result in sorrow, sadness, exhaustion, and torment.⁶¹ On this issue, Calvin wants the faithful in suffering to fix their

⁵⁴ CO 39. 581 (COR II 7. 257; Lam. 3:28). “Ergo cum Propheta dicit hoc esse specimen verae tolerantiae si ferimus super nos, intelligit si non succumbimus rebus adversis, neque obruimur, nam patientia fit ut minime sit nobis grave suscipere quidquid Deus imposuerit oneris, ...”

⁵⁵ CO 39. 582 (COR II 7. 259; Lam. 3:29). “Ergo Propheta hic docet, filios Dei non satis probare suam tolerantiam, ubi aequo animo ferunt mediocre castigationem, nisi pergant ad ulteriorem perseverantiam, nempe ut in rebus perditis, ubi videntur desperati, tamen quieti adhuc maneant.”

⁵⁶ Calvin, *Sermons*, 171 (Sermon 25 on Jer. 18:18b-23). “Et ne nous precipitons point en voulant avancer le jugement de Dieu, mais attendons que luy mesme en vienne faire le jugement.”

⁵⁷ CO 38. 633 (COR II 6/2. 1119; Jer. 30:19). “Ergo Deus promittit firmum et diuturnum statum Ecclesiae, quoniam de die in diem, et ab anno in annum prosequetur suam gratiam.”

⁵⁸ CO 38. 632-3 (COR II 6/2. 1118; Jer. 30:19). “... significat, etiamsi ad tempus angantur Judaei, et gemant ac lugeant, non fore tamen illud perpetuum, quia Deus tandem ipsos consolabitur, ut non tantum gaudeant, sed praedicent ejus misericordiam ubi fuerint liberati.”

⁵⁹ CO 38. 647 (COR II 6/2. 1138; Jer. 31:6). “Propheta hic amplificat Dei beneficium, quia non tantum restituet Tribum Jehudah, sed decem quoque Tribus, quae prius abductae fuerant in exilium. Hic ergo promittit plenam et solidam restitutionem Ecclesiae.”

⁶⁰ CO 38. 662 (COR II 6/2. 1155; Jer. 31:12). “Sed Deus hic promittit se ita fore propitium Ecclesiae suae ut habeat perpetuam materiam gaudii.”

⁶¹ CO 39. 577 (COR II 7. 243, 245; Lam. 3:25). “Poterat objici res adversas gignere dolorem, taedium, moestitiam, angorem: ita fieri non posse, ut se in spe contineant qui tantum respiciunt in unum Deum.”

eyes on God.⁶² Through this, they can rely on what God will do for them. Moreover, Calvin encourages believers in Geneva to have these attitudes too.⁶³

In sum, when the believers suffer in the *Ecclesia Militans*, they should obey the will of God, become humble, and turn their adversities into opportunity to examine themselves. Besides, they should put up with their sufferings in faith, looking only at the promise of God for eternal salvation.

12.5 The Suffering of the Faithful and the Providence of God

As we have discussed, the attitude of the faithful towards suffering should be different from that of unbelievers. Nevertheless, some of the faithful, like unbelievers, think that the world is controlled by the chance or fortune, not by divine providence. They do not think that God judges the world with righteousness and good.⁶⁴ The unbelievers, who think chance and luck to be the mover of the world, do not understand that God allows wars, famine and infectious disease, and that pain cannot take place in this world without His allowance.⁶⁵ Rather, they think that God does not care about human affairs and history, and that He only sleeps in heaven without taking care of men in the world.⁶⁶ According to Calvin, God's declaration of His government over all things filling heaven and earth should be applied to His providence and strength.⁶⁷ In other words, God's providence and strength is widespread everywhere, so it is impossible for men to hide from God.⁶⁸ However, men are inclined to judge what God has done and is about to do according to their comprehension, as if His

⁶² CO 39. 577 (COR II 7. 245; Lam. 3:25). "... et experientia sentire fideles nihil esse melius, quam habere omnes suos sensus defixos in uno Deo."

⁶³ CO 39. 532 (COR II 7. 95; Lam. 1:21). "Quamvis ergo hostes non ita acute considerarent unde affligeretur Ecclesia, tamen ex fidei sensu sic Ecclesia debuit loqui, *Deum scilicet fecisse, Gavisum sunt igitur quod tu feceris* deinde, ..."

⁶⁴ CO 38. 130 (COR II 6/1. 478; Jer. 12:2). "Dum felicitas impiorum animos nostros conturbat, occurrunt duae perversae cogitationes: aut temere hunc mundum versari, et non gubernari Dei providentia: aut Deum non fungi officio boni et aequi iudicis, qui patitur ita lucem misceri cum tenebris."

⁶⁵ CO 38. 490 (COR II 6/1. 939; Jer. 25:20). "Nam haec causa est obstinationis, ubi homines imaginantur fortuito omnia contingere. Et hac ratione Deus severe invehitur in eos, qui non agnoscunt ipsum esse autorem omnium bellorum, famis et pestilentiae: et nihil adversi accidere, nisi ex ejus iudicio."

⁶⁶ CO 39. 272 (COR II 6/2. 1556; Jer. 44:27). "... nemp quoniam hypocritae, etiamsi existiment Deum non curare res humanas, et fingant ipsum in coelo dormire, ..."; Schreiner, *The Theater of His Glory*, 16.

⁶⁷ CO 38. 438 (COR II 6/1. 874; Jer. 23:24). "Ergo quod hic pronuntiat Deus *se implere coelum et terram*, referri debet ad providentiam ejus et potentiam: ... sed dicitur implere coelum et terram, quatenus omnia gubernat, quatenus omnia veniunt coram ipso in rationem, quatenus denique est iudex mundi."

⁶⁸ CO 38. 438 (COR II 6/1. 874; Jer. 23:24). "... quoniam et providentia ejus, et virtus, et justitia diffusa sit ubique, ut quocumque homines sese transferant, non possint tamen ab ejus oculis se abscondere."

power is limited.⁶⁹ When God carries out His judgment in a hidden and unexpected way⁷⁰ in particular, they judge His power by the standard of self. Calvin ridicules their attitude because they are like a fly attempting to devour all of the mountains.⁷¹ No adversity in this world could happen without God's providence.⁷² God does not need any external aid, and He accomplishes His own purpose through His incomprehensible power.⁷³ Therefore, the providence of God reaches to all parts of the world. Human works can not be hidden from Him, and no one can escape from His hand.⁷⁴ In His providence all suffering is not accidental, but intentional for everyone, especially for the faithful.

In fact, the providence of God is secretly hidden. So, even the children of God need the eyes of faith to see divine providence.⁷⁵ Specifically, the faithful who suffer should believe that their life depends on God. No matter how brutal the suffering is, it cannot destroy the faithful unless God permits it. However, men overestimate their own power in controlling their life because divine providence is invisible. Calvin encourages the faithful to remember the fact that they are within the divine care and protection even if divine help is invisible when they are in tribulation.⁷⁶ Calvin explains that the Babylonian invasion in Judah was divine punishment on the Israelites through Nebuchadnezzar. There is no other way to understand this historical event except through divine providence.⁷⁷ Even if the people of Israel suffered as slaves in Babylon, it was temporary and God eventually redeemed them.⁷⁸ All these things were fulfilled under the providence of God. God worked in a mysterious way that men could not predict.⁷⁹ Thus, according to Calvin, the prophet shows that

⁶⁹ CO 39. 418 (COR II 6/2. 1743; Jer. 50:25). "Corrigit ergo Propheta illam pravitatem, ad quam natura sumus nimium propensi, dum scilicet statuimus pro captu mentis nostrae quid Deus sit factururus, ac si potentia ejus non esset infinita."

⁷⁰ CO 39. 417 (COR II 6/2. 1743; Jer. 50:25). "... , ubi scilicet Deus judicia sua exequitur modis arcanis et inopinatis."

⁷¹ CO 39. 418 (COR II 6/2. 1743; Jer. 50:25). "... , perinde est ac si musca vellet vorare omnes montes."

⁷² CO 39. 214 (COR II 6/2. 1483; Jer. 41:10). "... neque vero haec calamitas accidit nisi justa Dei providentia."; Silva, "The meaning of Human Suffering," 86.

⁷³ CO 39. 243 (COR II 6/2. 1520; Jer. 43:10). "Sed Deus qui non indiget externis auxiliis, dicitur mittere, ubi exequitur suum decretum, idque virtute incomprehensibili."

⁷⁴ CO 39. 16 (COR II 6/2. 1230; Jer. 32: 19). "Summa est, Dei providentiam sic extendi in omnes mundi partes, ut opera hominum minime eum lateant, nec quisquam possit effugere manum ejus."

⁷⁵ CO 38. 526 (COR II 6/1. 985; Jer. 26:14). "... quia Dei providentia nobis occulta est, neque possumus eam cernere nisi fidei oculis."; Pitkin, *What Pure Eyes Could See*, 129-130.

⁷⁶ CO 38. 527 (COR II 6/1. 986; Jer. 26:14). "... , vitam scilicet nostram esse in fide et custodia Dei."; Cf. Schreiner, *The Theater of His Glory*, 65.

⁷⁷ CO 39. 242 (COR II 6/2. 1520; Jer. 43:10). "Missio haec non aliter intelligenda est, quam de imperio occulto Dei."

⁷⁸ Calvin, *Sermons*, 11 (Sermon 2 on Jer. 14:20a, 21b, 22; 15:1). "Car Babilone estoit comme un sepulchre et le peuple d'Israel estoit là dedans comme poury, et toutesfois Dieu les en retire par un moyen desesperé."

⁷⁹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 11 (Sermon 2 on Jer. 14:20a, 21b, 22; 15:1). "... , mais ce pendant il a un moyen en sa main le quel nous n'avons point congneu."

concerning their suffering the Israelites should not focus on what the Chaldeans did, but rather on the hidden hand of God, because He had led the Chaldeans to fulfill His divine plan.⁸⁰

According to Calvin, the faithful should rely on divine providence when they face adversities.⁸¹ And, they should live their life believing that everything will be done according to God's will.⁸² In particular, when they experience troubles caused by the unfaithful, the faithful should trust that their enemies are in the hands of God. Otherwise, the faithful might experience depression. In order to get rid of depression, they should acknowledge that God governs everything.⁸³ In addition, they should know that God changes men's thoughts and actions according to His will. No matter how capricious they are in their plans and purposes, the faithful should be aware of the truth of divine impassibility.⁸⁴ Furthermore, the doctrine of divine providence is a great comfort to the church in tribulation⁸⁵ because the church can overcome suffering believing that everything is in the control of the divine will and providence. Moreover, the doctrine is more meaningful to the church in tribulation because God shows special interest in the church.⁸⁶ However, the doctrine of providence is not related to the issue of suffering alone. Calvin asserts that if the faithful do not believe in God as a Creator and Governor, there will be no faith, prayer, perseverance, or humility.⁸⁷ Calvin teaches that the doctrine of divine providence is deeply related to faith itself beyond the issue of suffering.

12.6 The Role of the Church in the Discipline of Believers

⁸⁰ CO 39. 538 (COR II 7. 117; Lam. 2:4). "Non fuit quidem conspecta Dei manus, sed docet Propheta non considerandos esse duntaxat Chaldaeos, quin potius fidei oculis debere inspicere occultam Dei manum, qua reguntur. Illa igitur fuit Dei manus quae stetit contra populum."

⁸¹ CO 39. 166 (COR II 6/2. 1421; Jer. 38:12). "Sed minime dubium est quin rejecerit omnes suas curas in Deum et ejus providentiam."

⁸² CO 39. 164 (COR II 6/2. 1419; Jer. 38:10). "Eventus enim sunt penes unum Deum: ille reperiet quos voluerit exitus. Interea nostrum est simpliciter pergere in cursu nostro quamvis putemus labores nostros fore evanidos, et carituros omni fructu."

⁸³ CO 39. 228-9 (COR II 6/2. 1502; Jer. 42:12). "Hoc autem diligenter tenendum est, quia cum videmus nos undique circumdari ab impiis, ... praesertim ubi praediti sunt potentia in nostram perniciem, nisi nobis certo persuasum esset ipsorum animos et affectus et omnes sensus esse in manu Dei, et regi ejus voluntate, necesse esset nos concidere tanquam exanimis. Ergo hoc ad mitigandos omnes metus plurimum valet cum audimus flexibiles esse et regi hominum animos pro Dei arbitrio."

⁸⁴ CO 39. 588-9 (COR II 7. 283; Lam. 3:37-8). "Sed si attollimus oculos ad arcanam Dei providentiam, cum hominum consilia huc et illuc flectat pro suo arbitrio, certe utcunque homines varii sint in suis deliberationibus, Deus tamen non variat."

⁸⁵ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 94; Schreiner, *The Theater of His Glory*, 35.

⁸⁶ Parker, *Calvin An Introduction*, 46.

⁸⁷ CO 39. 589 (COR II 7. 283; Lam. 3:37-38). "Nulla enim erit fides, nulla invocatio, nulla patientia denique nulla prohibitas, nisi sciamus Deum ita gerere curam mundi, cujus est creator, ut nihil accidat nisi ejus certo et firmo decreto."

During the era of Jeremiah, God informed his servant that the Israelites would be punished. They were disobedient to God, but could know the divine will through the messages of the divine servant. In other words, there was a faithful medium between God and the people of God at that time. Based on this fact Calvin says that church of each era has had sincere pastors who declare the way of salvation. He also states that their proclamation has brought comfort to the church.⁸⁸ Furthermore, Calvin argues that the church would be established, cared for, and nurtured by holy and faithful pastors.⁸⁹ His argument shows the role of the church clearly: that it is to nurture the people of God with the divine word.⁹⁰ In his sermon, Calvin argues that those who do not preach and yet consider themselves prelates are not pastors.⁹¹ Pastors have to lead people to salvation with the word of God just like the prophets of the Old Testaments led the Israelites to God with divine prophecies.⁹² God chooses church office holders in order to give people divine light and to show them the way of salvation.⁹³ The prophet Jeremiah had carried out such a ministry, not for one year or ten years, but for more than forty years.⁹⁴ His long teaching career meant a sort of ‘discipline’⁹⁵ to prepare the Israelites for warfare against their spiritual enemies. According to Calvin, believers should be disciplined because their children should be raised fearing God by well-disciplined parents.⁹⁶ It is important that the next generation of the faithful be instructed and disciplined in the church. However,

⁸⁸ CO 37. 563 (COR II 6/1. 134; Jer. 3:15). “Unde colligimus, non posse diuturnum esse Ecclesiae statum, nisi dum fidi Pastores praesunt, qui viam salutis ostendant. Ergo in hoc consistit Ecclesiae salus, si Deus excitet veros, et sinceros Doctores, qui annuntient ejus doctrinam.”

⁸⁹ CO 37. 563 (COR II 6/1. 134; Jer. 3:15). “Sequitur ergo Ecclesiam Dei non tantum gigni opera sanctorum et piorum Pastorum, sed etiam fovendi, et alii, et confirmari etiam ejus vitam usque ad extremum.”

⁹⁰ Harms, *In God’s Custody*, 160. Calvin’s ecclesiology stresses the church’s educational responsibility through its teachers (priests and prophets).

⁹¹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 122 (Sermon 18 on Jer. 17:13b, 15-16). “Si donc nous entendons que quelqu’un se dye prelat et qu’il ne presche point la parole de Dieu, nous pouvons dire qu’il n’est point pasteur; ...”

⁹² CO 37. 563 (COR II 6/1. 134; Jer. 3:15). “Non potuit quidem fieri, ut populus ad Deum rediret, nisi missi ante fuissent Prophetae: ...”

⁹³ CO 37. 656 (COR II 6/1. 251; Jer. 6:13). “Deus enim illos ordinaverat ut praeferrent lucem, ... et viam salutis monstrarent reliquis omnibus.”

⁹⁴ CO 37. 698 (COR II 6/1. 304; Jer. 7:27). “Nam, quemadmodum initio diximus, non tantum unius anni, vel decem annorum operam impendit populo: sed concionatus est per viginti, triginta, quadraginta annos et ultra, persecutus est eundem cursum.”

⁹⁵ Leith, *John Calvin’s Doctrine*, 84. Those who serve God are people whom he trains in piety, and their life is a warfare against a real enemy. So all of these metaphors come to focus in the use of military terms. The Christian soldier is the most important and prominent designation Calvin gives to the Christian life.

⁹⁶ Calvin, *Sermons*, 98 (Sermon 14 on Jer. 17:1-4). “Par cela nous sommes admonestez de faire nostre devoir que noz enfans soient bien instruitz en la craincte de Dieu.”

the prophet said that since the Israelites were reluctant to receive the prophet's teachings they became ignorant and blind to the divine word.⁹⁷

What did the prophet want to teach the Israelites in tribulation? First of all, the prophet taught them to listen, learn and obey the word of God. Such teaching was also applicable to the church in Geneva during Calvin's era.⁹⁸ Calvin recommends that his congregation listen to the divine word with humility and not to judge the word based on their reason even if the word seems to be unreasonable.⁹⁹ Sometimes unexpected problems upset the stability of the church.¹⁰⁰ In this case believers should deal with the problems based on the divine word, not on their judgment and will. Second, Calvin teaches the believers to endure their pain with humility.¹⁰¹ When false prophets contaminate true teaching with false and Satan tries to bring everything into confusion believers should stay strong in the truth of God.¹⁰² Receiving divine teaching in such tribulation is more important than anything else because believers can overcome their pain with teaching. Third, the prophet proclaims to the people suffering that God is not only a judge of their sins, but also a father. God punishes His people due to their sin as well as out of His fatherly love for them.¹⁰³ God punishes His people to the extent that they can bear, not to the extent of what they deserve.¹⁰⁴ This divine fatherly love reveals the characteristics of teaching in the church. That is to say, the church should discipline and edify members like a father does his children. If everything seems to be getting worse at church, one does not need to be disappointed; God still protects His church because of His fatherly love.¹⁰⁵ The promise of God's care is certain. Even if the promise seems slow to arrive, the faithful should not worry. According to

⁹⁷ CO 37. 700 (COR II 6/1. 306; Jer. 7:28). "Hoc loco quia agitur de doctrina, intelligit Propheta eos sponte caecutire, quoniam scilicet nolint doceri."

⁹⁸ CO 38. 454 (COR II 6/1. 893; Jer. 23:37). "..., audiendum scilicet esse Deum, ut discamus, et ut obediamus ejus voci."

⁹⁹ CO 39. 436 (COR II 6/2. 1766-7; Jer. 50:44). "Discamus ergo ex his verbis, ubi opera Dei prae se ferunt aliquid absurditatis, ea humiliter suspicere, neque revocare ad calculum nostrum."

¹⁰⁰ To research more, see Opitz, *Leben und Werk Johannes Calvins*, 90-113.

¹⁰¹ CO 38. 553 (COR II 6/2. 1018; Jer. 27:12). "Sic etiam ex opposito ubi cum vera humilitate nos offerimus Deo castigandos, statim nobis placatur."

¹⁰² CO 39. 28-9 (COR II 6/2. 1246; Jer. 32:32). "Discamus ergo etiamsi surgant pseudoprophetae et obtenebrent puram doctrinam suis fallaciis: ... Denique haec vera nostrae fidei probatio est, si constanter manemus in veritate Dei, ubi Satan nihil non tentat et machinatur, ut omnia permisceat."

¹⁰³ CO 38. 93 (COR II 6/1. 431; Jer. 10:24). "Ergo unicum esse asylum in ejus misericordia, non ut ignoscat nobis in totum, quia nobis utile est castigari ejus manu: sed ut tantum pro sua paterna clementia nos castiget."

¹⁰⁴ CO 38. 93 (COR II 6/1. 431; Jer. 10:24). "Deus ergo ita indulget miseris peccatoribus, ut respiciat quid ferre queant, non autem quid meriti sint."; Thomas, *Calvin's teaching on Job*, 228.

¹⁰⁵ CO 39. 484 (COR II 6/2. 1827; Jer. 51:46). "Non est ergo cur hodie miremur si videntur omnia pessum ire, cum tamen Deus promiserit salutem Ecclesiae sibi fore semper pretiosam, et se de ea fore sollicitum."

Calvin, when the chosen people of God were exiled, God protected them no matter how miserable their situations were.¹⁰⁶ One may conclude that the prophet taught the Israelites to have a similar attitude to the one we discussed above, in 12.4.

In addition, Calvin explains in the introduction of his lectures on Lamentations why believers facing trials received teaching from the prophet. Even when everything seems to be hopeless and God seems to abandon His church, it is important that His chosen people realize that God stretches His hand out in compassion to the miserable.¹⁰⁷ That is to say, He helps those who are in a desperate state by means of His word. Here, Calvin notes what Jeremiah taught:

When, therefore, he (Jeremiah) understood that his teaching would not be without fruit, he was thus induced to speak first of God's judgments; second, to exhort the people to repentance; third, to encourage them to hope; and last, to open the door for prayer to God, so that the people in their extremities might venture to flee to God's mercy;¹⁰⁸

As seen above, the prophet first speaks of God's judgment, urges the Israelites to repent before judgment comes, and encourages them to be strong in hope. Finally, he teaches them to pray in their sufferings. It is noticeable, however, that these fourfold teachings are meaningful and beneficial only to God's chosen people, for it is hard for the unfaithful to understand and follow divine teaching.

In sum, Calvin argues that the faithful need discipline, and that this could be done only in the church. Jeremiah taught God's word to the Israelites during their difficulties, and Calvin also educated God's people with His word when they suffered from religious conflict. It is no exaggeration that the suffering of the faithful can lead them to a place of education in the faith.

12.7 Conclusion

¹⁰⁶ CO 38. 240 (COR II 6/1. 619; Jer. 16:4). "Nam Deus servavit quidem electos, sed mirabiliter: deinde servavit eos in exilio tanquam in sepulcro, cum simul ipsi quoque abrepti essent a patria."

¹⁰⁷ CO 39. 505 (COR II 7. 7; Praelectiones in Lam.). "... sed ubi omnia sunt desperata, et Deus videtur Ecclesiam suam deseruisse, si adhuc viget prophetia, et Deus apparet, qui manum porrigat miseris et fere deploratis, hinc multum proficiemus: et illa est praecipua utilitas doctrinae."

¹⁰⁸ CO 39. 506 (COR II 7.7; Praelectiones in Lam.). "Cum ergo intelligeret fructuosam fore suam doctrinam, ita adductus fuit, ut non desineret de iudiciis Dei primum disserere, et deinde hortari populum ad poenitentiam, tertio animare ad spem, et postremo etiam aperire januam invocationi Dei, ut populus in rebus extremis tamen auderet ad Dei misericordiam confugere: ..."; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 5, 300.

Calvin knew the pain of being a religious refugee because he was one. In fact, Calvin experienced attacks from some of the Genevans while he was ministering in Geneva. In other words, Calvin is a theologian and pastor who suffered. He believed in God, but his life was full of pain and suffering. Calvin teaches that the suffering of believers comes from God. Such difficulties teach them who God is. Calvin also informs believers about the attitudes and viewpoints they should hold in their suffering. His teachings help the faithful understand the providence of God. Likewise, through the suffering God allows, the faithful can gain knowledge of God and men. The suffering of the faithful leads them to a place of education. And the need and necessity of education in the church become more obvious. When the people of God suffer, God wants to stay near them rather than abolishing their suffering. On top of that, He shows His people that He is their father. As a consequence, the theme, 'the suffering of the church,' reminds us of the role of God caring for His people.

Chapter XIII. Election: *The Restoration of the Church I*

13.1 Introduction

During Jeremiah's era, God allowed the Israelites, known as His people, to be captured by the Babylonians. For a long time the Israelites assumed that God chose them to be His people. They also believed that the promise would keep them safe. However, God allowed foreigners to rule the Israelites. Then, He proclaimed His plan through the prophet that He would gather them to His promised land again (Jer. 31:7-9). Moreover, God maintained His covenant with the Israelites through the remnant that returned from exile. Through all the events mentioned above, the word 'choice' plays an important role. God had 'chosen' the Israelites as His people long ago, then 'chosen' some of the exiles after their Babylonian captivity, and led the 'chosen' remnant to the 'chosen' land, Canaan. Therefore, the election of Israel is an important theme in this dissertation.¹ This theme is significant because we know the following: due to divine choice, some of the Israelite captives returned to Canaan from Babylon while others remained in Babylon. Divine choice is ultimately the decision that determines the future of the Israelites.

In this chapter, the characteristics of God's choice in Calvin's exposition of the book of Jeremiah are discussed first (13.2 and 13.3), and the next two sections (13.4 and 13.5) explain how Calvin deals with his thoughts on double predestination and God's will in Jeremiah. Then, the faith of the elect (13.6) and the relationship between God's choice and the restoration of the Israelites (13.7) will be examined in turn.

13.2 Unchanging and Mysterious Election

Who are the true members of the church, known as the people of God? How do they become church members? Discussing what constitutes the church is discussing who the members of the church are. The church is the gathering of those who are called to be holy (1 Cor. 1:2). Calvin says that the foundation of the church is the divine choice, i.e., that God chooses His people from among

¹ Abraham, *Divine Agency and Divine Action*, 179-180; "Election was not understood merely to refer to individuals, but to the communities to which they belonged." McGrath, *John Calvin*, 258

all people.² In other words, the church is the gathering of those who are chosen to be the people of God. Such a divine choice is like a cord uniting His people with Him. God does not want to be separated from His people.³ Therefore Calvin describes the relationship between God and His chosen people⁴ as well as His intention to always be with them⁵ when he describes divine choice. However we can learn the doctrine, theoretically, through Calvin's teaching. Nevertheless, no one knows who the true believers are or who the chosen people of God are with certainty because election belongs to God only.

God said that He would bring back the Israelites who were captive in Babylon. However, only some of them would return and rebuild the community of God (Jer. 23:3). God had mercy on the Israelite exiles, but not all of them could receive His mercy. Mercy is limited to the faithful who are chosen by God.⁶ In other words, those who God called as His church are not Israel itself, but part of it. Through this we know that it is God who keeps His people alive.⁷ Likewise, the church is formed and preserved by divine election and divine calling. According to Calvin the prophet promised the restoration of the church in Jer. 23:3.⁸ This restoration is limited to God's chosen people only. Thus, God's people taking part in the restoration of the church are not all of the Israelites, but only a small number of them. God has called and gathered a few people with true faith,⁹ then given His mercy on them. They are the chosen and separated people from among all Israelites.¹⁰ Moreover, they were called 'the remnant.'

In addition, God chooses His children secretly without hesitation or argument: those whom God chose as His children would be recovered according to His divine will and remain in His church

² CO 2. 747 (*Inst.* 4.1.2). "... ,cujus fundamentum est arcana illius electio."; Neuser, "Predestination," 312.

³ CO 38. 158 (COR II 6/1. 514; Jer. 13:11). "Fuit igitur quasi conjunctionis mutuae vinculum illa Dei electio, ut nollet a populo separari."

⁴ CO 37. 497 (COR II 6/1. 52; Jer. 2:30). "Neque enim alio jure familiaris fuit Deo, nisi quod electus fuit."

⁵ CO 39. 268 (COR II 6/2. 1551; Jer. 44:21). "... denique nunquam Deus ita alienatus fuisset a suo populo, quem ipse adoptaverat: ..."

⁶ CO 39. 24 (COR II 6/2. 1240; Jer. 32: 28). "Postea adjungit se tandem propitium fore exulibus: sed restringitur gratia illa ad solos electos et fideles."

⁷ CO 38. 256 (COR II 6/1. 640; Jer. 16:19). "... multo igitur magis salvi manebunt ex genere Abrahae quicumque divinitus sunt electi: ac tametsi corpus ipsum populi intereat, Dominus tamen qui suos novit, non sinet illos perire etiam in rebus desperatis."

⁸ CO 38. 402 (COR II 6/1. 828; Jer. 23:1-3). "Hic propheta restitutionem Ecclesiae promittit: ..."

⁹ CO 37. 606 (COR II 6/1. 187; Jer. 5:1). "Videmus ut Deus quasi seorsum colligat paucos illos in quibus residuum erat pietatis semen, imo in quorum animis vigeat aliqua religio."

¹⁰ CO 38. 404 (COR II 6/1. 831; Jer. 23:3). "Hic significat Deus se ita fore misericordem, ut tamen non omnes indifferenter recipiat in gratiam, sed exiguum illum numerum, qui constabat ex electis. Et ideo Paulus (Rom. 9, 27) attente distinguit inter populum, et inter reliquias gratiae, vel gratuitas."

to the end. God's secret election is everlasting.¹¹ The divine love God has towards His people is infinite, therefore His election is continuous without the constraints of time. Thus the elect will be elect forever. God promised to give His church stability and continuity. This means God's grace for the church is exercised from year to year.¹² Calvin encouraged his students to keep in mind that God predetermined to choose them to be His people when the church suffers, despairs and is cursed by its enemies.¹³

13.3 Unconditional Election

God's election was meaningful to the captive Israelites because He had planned to return His faithful people among the Israelites to their land. However His choice had nothing to do with the human will and was beyond the understanding of the Israelites. In his exposition of Jer. 30:10, Calvin asserts that God chooses His people according to His will without conditions.

He (God) calls him (Israel) his *servant*; not that the Jews were worthy of so honorable a title; but God had regard to himself, and his gratuitous adoption, rather than to their merits. He did not then call them servants, because they were obedient, for we know how contumaciously they rejected both God and his Prophets; but because he had adopted them.¹⁴

Calvin explains that the Israelites were chosen not because they were worthy, but because God chose them according to His will unconditionally.¹⁵ Here, Calvin emphasizes the importance of unconditional divine grace. Jacob was adopted as God's people by unconditional divine grace (*Dei gratuita adoptione*) before he was formed in the womb. Jacob had never chosen God because a man

¹¹ CO 38. 120 (COR II 6/1. 465; Jer. 11:17). "Atqui electio arcana non potest mutari. Ergo tenendum est illud discrimen, quod radices habent filii Dei in aeterna ejus electione, in quam non cadit poenitentia aut mutatio."

¹² CO 38. 633 (COR II 6/2. 1119; Jer. 30:19). "Ergo Deus promittit firmum et diuturnum statum Ecclesiae, quoniam de die in diem, et ab anno in annum prosequetur suam gratiam."

¹³ CO 39. 401 (COR II 6/2. 1722; Jer. 50:7). "Veniat igitur nobis in mentem hic locus, ubi Ecclesiae clades minantur ultimam ruinam, et nihil praeter materiam desperationis nobis occurrit: ubi etiam hostes ipsi insolenter sibi omnia arrogant, et jactant nos esse maledictos. Atqui Deus *est habitaculum justitiae, et spes Patrum*, nempe ut recumbamus in eam gratiam, quam semel pollicitus est, cum nos dignatus est sibi eligere et adoptare in populum peculiarem."

¹⁴ CO 38. 620 (COR II 6/2. 1102; Jer. 30:10). "Vocat *servum suum*, non quod digni essent Judaei tam honorifico titulo: sed Deus se ipsum potius respicit, et gratuitam adoptionem, quam ipsorum merita. Non igitur vocat eos servos, quia fuerint morigeri."; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 4, 18.

¹⁵ CO 38. 403 (COR II 6/1. 830; Jer. 23:2). "Habet igitur hic respectum gratuita suae adoptionis, etiamsi tanto beneficio reddiderant se indignos Judaei."; CO 39. 304 (COR II 6/2. 1598; Jer. 46:27). "Cur ergo Jacob fuit servus Dei? non quod hunc honorem promeritus esset suis meritis, sed quia Deus gratis illum sibi eligere dignatus fuerat."; Muller, *Christ and the Decree*, 24.

cannot choose God. Only God can choose a man from nothing (*electio ex nihilo*).¹⁶ Thus, the more we learn of the doctrine of election, the more unconditional divine mercy is revealed.¹⁷

Moreover, according to Calvin, only the divine power can restore the Israelites living in a foreign country, because only the hand of God can reach Chaldea.¹⁸ Thus, the whole process of salvation, including God's election, is done through divine power alone,¹⁹ which happens only because of divine mercy.²⁰ Calvin stresses clearly that God's election does not require human merit. And Calvin criticizes the Catholic Church for its assertion that human satisfaction can please God.²¹ The Catholic Church erred in excluding themselves from the divine power by thinking that their merit could compensate for their sin. They should have known that their sin is forgiven by divine unconditional grace, not by their effort and merit. In this respect, Calvin teaches that human sin cannot render divine election uncertain.²² In other words, human merit as well as demerit cannot affect their divine election because God saves His people unconditionally regardless of their being guilty or not.

In addition, Calvin highlights the fact that God's unilateral election of the Israelites is based on the covenant between God and them.²³ He still keeps His covenant faithfully.²⁴ So it is certain that there is a true remnant among the Israelites. Through the remnant, God will keep the covenant. Furthermore, by using this expression "the partaker of adoption for free," Calvin teaches the students in his lectures that they are chosen by the divine calling and are the children of Abraham.²⁵ According

¹⁶ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 275.

¹⁷ CO 38. 620 (COR II 6/2. 1103; Jer. 30:10). "... neque hic laudari obedientiam, quasi probe et fideliter responderit vocationi Dei, sed tantum commendari gratuitam adoptionem."

¹⁸ CO 38. 621 (COR II 6/2. 1103; Jer. 30:10). "... quasi diceret manus sibi esse satis longas, ut possit eas extendere usque in Chaldaeam, et inde eos abstrahere."

¹⁹ CO 38. 278 (COR II 6/1. 668; Jer. 17:14). "Ergo tam initium quam totius cursus salutis nostrae progressum hic Deo tribuit."

²⁰ CO 38. 90 (COR II 6/1. 427; Jer. 10:23). "... hoc est, esse penes unam Dei misericordiam hominis salutem: non autem hoc positum esse in studio vel cursu hominis."

²¹ CO 38. 183 (COR II 6/1. 547; Jer. 14:7). "Et hac doctrina refellitur quidquid stulte non minus quam superbe commenti sunt Papistae de satisfactionibus."

²² Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 277.

²³ CO 38. 184 (COR II 6/1. 548; Jer. 14:8). "... notanda est causa fiducia, qua suffultus fuit, nempe quoniam Deus populum illum elegerat: quoniam promiserat sibi fore in peculium."

²⁴ CO 38. 198 (COR II 6/1. 566; Jer. 14:19). "... etiam si Deus exitio tradat corpus populi, tamen fore in suis promissis fidelem et constantem."

²⁵ "In the Latin text Calvin implies that he is also one of the chosen people by using 'we or us' (First, Plural) instead of using 'they or them.' (Third, Plural)" CO 38. 656 (COR II 6/2. 1149; Jer. 31:9). "Ergo nomen primogeniti non demonstrat alios deinde sequi, secundum et tertium suo ordine, sed possemus dicere Ephraim vocari Dei primogenitum, gentium respectu, quae tandem consortes fuerunt gratuita adoptionis. Sumus enim filii Abrahae, quia insiti sumus per fidem in electum populum."

to Calvin, all believers are elected by divine unconditional grace just like the Israelite remnant. Calvin thus urges his students that they should be grateful for divine mercy and to meditate on the final days of their life, when God blesses them in a way unlike unbelievers.²⁶ Likewise, Calvin shows in his exposition of Jeremiah that the divine covenant is a cause for their divine election, and that it is accomplished only by the goodness and mercy of God.

13.4 Predestination: Election and Reprobation

During his ministry, Calvin suffered from his contemporaries' attacks and negative reactions to his doctrine of predestination for a long time. His main opponents including Albert Pighius, Hieronymus Bolsec, Jean Trollet, and Sebastian Castellio challenged a variety of aspects of his thought on predestination. In particular, they were against Calvin's view of reprobation, that is, on double predestination.²⁷ The doctrine of double predestination was not favored by Geneva's colleague cities including Zurich.²⁸ One of his opponents, Bolsec, was expelled from Geneva on December 22, 1552 after a long dispute over the double predestination. But, he continued to harass Calvin and defamed Calvin repeatedly.²⁹ Nevertheless, it is clear that Calvin's view of double predestination is not his own idea. He has been influenced by the Church Fathers and contemporary scholars, and formed the doctrine under their influences.³⁰ According to Beeke, Calvin has created this doctrine under the influence of his contemporaries, Luther and Bucer as well as through St. Augustine.³¹ But, the most important resource for his doctrine, he believes, is the Bible.³² In the *Institutes* of 1559

²⁶ CO 39. 515 (COR II 7. 41; Lam. 1:7). "... separavit nos ab incredulis, et voluit splendere in nobis sua beneficia. Nunc videndum est, ne simus stupidi, quantisper Deus liberalitatem erga nos suam prosequitur: quin potius discamus reputare quid valeant Dei beneficia, et in quem finem et usum spectent."

²⁷ The details about them are well summarized in the articles following; See on de Boer, "John Calvin's 'Disputatio de Praedestinatione'," 584-7 and Beeke, *Debated Issues in Sovereign Predestination*, 135-139. Sinnema, "Calvin's view of Reprobation," 116-7; Beeke, "Calvin, Beza, and Perkins on Predestination," 73-4.

²⁸ Neuser, "Predestination," 317. Not only Bullinger but also Melanchthon did not agree on the doctrine of double predestination; Trueman, "Election: Calvin's Theology," 102; Venema, "Heinrich Bullinger's Correspondence," 436-7.

²⁹ Opitz, *Leben und Werk Johannes Calvins*, 101; Jenkins, *Calvin's Tormentors*, 109-110; McGrath, *A Life of John Calvin*, 16-17.

³⁰ "The 'modern Augustinian school' (schola Augustiana moderna), exemplified by such leading medieval theologians as Gregory of Rimini and Hugolino of Orvieto, had taught a doctrine of absolute double predestination – that God allocates some to eternal life, others to eternal condemnation, without any reference to their merits or demerits." McGrath, *John Calvin*, 168.

³¹ Beeke, *Debated Issues in Sovereign Predestination*, 96-99; Cf. Jenkins, *Calvin's Tormentors*, 110-111; For the development of the doctrine of election and predestination after Calvin, see Trueman, "Election: Calvin's Theology," 104-120; Beeke, "Calvin, Beza and Perkins," 72.

³² Sinnema, "Calvin's view of Reprobation," 117-8; Beeke, "Calvin, Beza, Perkins on Predestination," 73.

Calvin critically says that it is senseless to study predestination beyond the revelation of the divine word.³³

Calvin's doctrine of double predestination appears in a well developed form in his exposition of Jer. 18:7-9.

I have said that this part of the doctrine is more popular and comprehensive, for he refers to repentance. When Paul adduced this similitude, - that we are in the power of God as the clay in the hand of the potter, he spoke not in so popular a manner: for he did not speak of repentance, but ascended higher and said, that before the world was created, it was in God's power to determine what he pleased respecting every individual, and that we are now formed according to his will, so that he chooses one and rejects the other. Paul then did not refer to faithfulness nor to repentance, but spoke of the hidden purpose of God, by which he has predestined some to salvation and some to destruction (Rom. 9:21).³⁴

In Jer. 18:7-9, Jeremiah declares that concerning a nation God can build, plant or destroy and uproot it according to His own will. Previously, Jeremiah says, based on the word of God, that the Israelites are like the clay in the potter's hands and God is like the potter. And, Calvin explains this analogy again.³⁵ He emphasizes that every man is in the hand of God. Therefore, in his interpretation of Jer. 18:7-9, Calvin mentions Apostle Paul's analogy of the potter in Rom. 9:21. Through this, he explains the divine predestination clearly. God can choose one while abandoning others as He created men to conform to His will. In other words, Calvin talks about the final days of people's lives, which is determined according to the divine hidden predestination (*arcana Dei praedestinatione*). According to Calvin, there is no reason for election and reprobation other than the divine decision.³⁶ God had, even before the creation, predestined mankind; but His plan has been hidden and is known to Him alone. Thus, a man cannot understand it completely, Calvin argues.³⁷ So, a man should stick to the divine

³³ CO 2. 680 (*Inst.* 3.21.2). "Sit igitur primum nobis hoc prae oculis, aliam praedestinationis notitiam appetere, quam quae verbo Dei explicatur, non minoris esse insanae, ..."; Bavinck, "Calvin and Common Grace," 116. Since Calvin is a theologian of the Bible, Bavinck says, those scholars who want to study Calvin's thoughts on the reprobate need to study the Bible first; Sinnema, "Calvin's view of Reprobation," 119.

³⁴ CO 38. 298 (COR II 6/1. 694; Jer. 18:7). "Dixi hanc partem doctrinae magis esse popularem, quia ad poenitentiam spectat. Paulus dum hanc similitudinem affert (*Rm* 9, 21), nos esse in Dei potestate non secus atque lutum est in manu figuli, non loquitur ita populariter. Neque enim disputat de poenitentia, sed altius conscendit: nempe antequam creatus esset mundus, fuisse in arbitrio Dei statuere de singulis quid fieri vellet: nunc etiam nos formari pro ejus arbitrio, ut alios eligat, alios reprobet. Paulus ergo illic neque fidem, neque poenitentiam attingit, sed concionatur de arcana Dei voluntate, qua alios ad salutem, alios ad interitum praedestinat."

³⁵ CO 38. 295 (COR II 6/1. 691; Jer. 18:3-4). "Nunc in applicatione notanda sunt antitheta: Sicuti in arbitrio et potestate figuli est lutum, ita etiam in arbitrio Dei sunt homines. Ergo Deus confertur figulo."

³⁶ CO. 2. 699 (*Inst.* 3.23.1); Abraham, *Divine Agency and Divine Action*, 179. In the action of predestining the agent performs a singular action; God does one thing: God issues a decree; Sinnema, "Calvin's view of Reprobation," 123-4.

³⁷ CO 38. 298 (COR II 6/1. 694; Jer. 18:7). "Deus enim ante creationem mundi statuit quid fieri vellet de singulis hominibus. Sed hoc est arcanum ejus consilium, et nobis incomprehensibile."; Sinnema, "Calvin's view of Reprobation," 123-4.

principles. In other words, a man is made according to the God's will, so everyone should be calm in front of Him.³⁸ For the potter has power to make the vessel of clay as well as abandon it. According to Calvin, Jeremiah applies this teaching to the people of God. This means that God chose the descendants of Abraham as His children by the covenant of grace, yet He denied those who ignored His grace and mercy.³⁹ Furthermore, God mentions the punishments saying that He would be merciful to a nation while concerning other nations He would uproot and destroy them.⁴⁰ Here, Calvin's view of double predestination is clearly stated.⁴¹ There exist both the elect and the reprobate. In addition, since his *Institutes* of 1539, Calvin no longer rendered 'election' as the synonym of 'predestination.' As Beeke says, "For Calvin, election and reprobation do not need distinct definitions because they are defined in the definition of predestination."⁴² In this respect, 'predestination' is a 'loftier' concept than 'election'; so, election and predestination cannot be used as synonyms.

Furthermore, God does not simply render the Israelites the elect. According to Calvin, the Kingdom of Judea is like a threshing-floor. On the floor there are some people strangers to the true faith, so they are a pile of chaff. And there are a few piles of wheat.⁴³ Although the Israelites are the people of the promise, God has already turned away from those who have lost their true faith. Among the Israelites, the elect are separated from the reprobate. Likewise, Calvin says that in the church the wheat are mixed with the chaff.⁴⁴ However, according to Calvin, distinguishing the elect from the reprobate does not belong to human judgment.⁴⁵ The reprobate does not enjoy the paternal grace of

³⁸ CO 38. 298 (COR II 6/1. 694; Jer. 18:7). "Ergo tenendum est illud principium, sic homines formari Dei arbitrio, ut omnes obmutescere oporteat, quia sine profectu obstrepent reprobi, si excipiant, Quare me sic finxisti?"

³⁹ CO 38. 298 (COR II 6/1. 694; Jer. 18:7-10). "Sed Jeremias hic doctrinam suam accommodat populo, ut ostendat, Deum sic gratuito foedere elegisse et adoptasse Abrahae genus, ut tamen possit repudiare indignos, nempe quicunque spreverint tantam gratiam."

⁴⁰ CO 38. 298 (COR II 6/1. 695; Jer. 18:7-10). "Sed simul etiam disserit de poenis: *Deus loquitur super gentem unam et super Regnum unum, ut beneficiat. Rursum loquitur Deus, ut evellat, ut perdat gentem et Regnum.*"; CO 2. 685 (*Inst.* 3. 21.5).

⁴¹ "This double predestination was not written clearly in his *Institutes* of 1536. This doctrine was mentioned first in 1537 officially through *Instruction et confession de foy dont on use en l'eglise de Geneve* (CO. 22. 5-75)." Neuser, "Predestination," 315; Beeke, *Debated Issue in Sovereign Predestination*, 117.

⁴² Beeke, *Debated Issues in Sovereign Predestination*, 132; Cf. Abraham, *Divine Agency and Divine Action*, 180.

⁴³ CO 38. 206 (COR II 6/1. 576; Jer. 15:1). "... sed distinguere oportet inter paleam et triticum. Erat tunc Judaea quasi area Dei, ubi quoniam multitudo a pietate desciverat, apparuit magna paleae congeries: ..."

⁴⁴ CO 38. 444 (COR II 6/1. 880; Jer. 23:28). "Sic etiam in Templo saepe permixtum erit triticum paleae, ..."; Cf. de Boer, "John Calvin's 'Disputatio de Praedestinatione'," 585.

⁴⁵ CO 38. 284 (COR II 6/1. 675; Jer. 17:18). "Quia autem nostrum non est discernere inter electos et reprobos, ..."

God, rather God is a judge to them.⁴⁶ As a result, there is a difference between the elect and the reprobate. Some people betray God, break laws, and stubbornly stride proudly into perdition, while others continue to obey God humbly. The former are abandoned, but the latter are chosen by the divine will.⁴⁷ The latter have true faith and repentance, so they are clearly different from the unfaithful.⁴⁸

Based on this argument, Calvin also distinguishes his audience from the Catholic Church in his sermons. He preaches from Jer. 16:14-19 that it is amazing to see the divine plan fulfilled through the restoration of Jerusalem, divine care for His people, and the remnant from the Babylonian captivity.⁴⁹ In this sermon, Calvin calls the remnant ‘us or we,’ while comparing Babylon to the evil papacy. He asserts that the people of God should praise God’s divine grace because God is a living God having saved ‘us’ from the Catholic Church, Babylon.⁵⁰ Calvin calls his audience ‘the elect,’ and applies these verses to their situation. According to Calvin, the audience is the remnant in the church, but the Catholic Church stands opposite them. In addition, he teaches that God protects the church and leads Jesus to care for it. Also, the chosen people accept Jesus as their savior, and God wants to be glorified by them.⁵¹ In other words, Calvin implies that the elect will be saved by union with Christ in the church.⁵² Likewise, Calvin’s doctrine of predestination is embedded in his sermons.⁵³

The doctrine of predestination was necessary to believers who underwent religious conflicts during Calvin’s era. This is because this doctrine gave them the hope of salvation even though God

⁴⁶ CO 38. 95 (COR II 6/1. 434; Jer. 10:25). “Electionem Dei aestimat ex vocatione, vel foedere, et ideo ex opposito reprobos omnes ducit, quos Deus privilegio illo paterni favoris dignatus non est. ... Deum esse patrem erga electos suos, iudicem erga omnes reprobos.”

⁴⁷ CO 38. 672 (COR II 6/2. 1169; Jer. 31:18). “... quia hinc colligimus discrimen manifestum esse inter electos et reprobos, quoniam alii calcitrant et ferociunt adversus stimulos, et obstinatis animis ruunt in suam perniciem: alii vero sese placide Deo subjiunt: quia alii sunt reprobi, alii sunt electi.”

⁴⁸ CO 39. 531 (COR II 7. 89; Lam. 1:20). “Nam his duabus notis discernitur Ecclesia ab incredulis, nempe poenitentia et fide.”

⁴⁹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 80 (Sermon 12 on Jer. 16:14-19a). “Daventage que les murailles ont esté reediffiées, et puis comment Dieu a tousjours conservé ce peuple, et alors la promesse a esté accomplie que non seulement il y a eu une pongnée de gentz en son Eglise qui estoient sortiz de Babilone, mais que tous peuples se sont rengez au service de Dieu.”

⁵⁰ Calvin, *Sermons*, 81 (Sermon 12 on Jer. 16:14-19a). “N’avons nous donc pas matiere de dire: “Dieu est vivant!”, voire quant il nous a retirez de ceste Babilone? ... Et puis, comment est ce que nous estions detenez en ceste malheureuse papauté? et nous voyons comment il nous en a delivrez par sa grace.”

⁵¹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 81 (Sermon 12 on Jer. 16:14-19a). “... qu’il la garde neantmoins pour nous donner à son Filz Jesuschrist en garde, afin qu’il se monstre envers nous tel qu’il est nommé, c’est asscavoir Saulveur. Voila que nostre Seigneur nous a retirez en son Eglise, à fin qu’il soit honoré de nous.”

⁵² Beeke, *Debated Issues in Sovereign Predestination*, 149. Calvin’s doctrine of predestination is closely connected to His Soteriology.

⁵³ de Boer, “John Calvin’s ‘Disputatio de Praedestinatione,’” 594. de Boer says that Calvin chose not to present a systematic line of reasoning, but to let Scripture speak; Cf. Neuser, “Calvin the preacher,” 60.

would not redeem the whole of the Israelites.⁵⁴ God chose the remnant, called them, and built churches showing His infinite mercy to them. God continues to do the same work in the future.⁵⁵ Thus, it is apparent that the doctrine of predestination was a true hope to those who tried to keep the faith under religious oppression from the Catholic Church.

In sum, Calvin's understanding of predestination not only shows the difference between the elect and the reprobate, but also helps believers have hope and faith under aggressive religious oppression.⁵⁶

13.5 The Divine Will: The Parable of the Two Baskets of Figs in Jeremiah 24

Calvin develops the importance of the doctrine of double predestination by dealing with the doctrine in his exposition of Jer. 24.⁵⁷ This chapter uses the analogy of two baskets of good and bad figs. Through this analogy, God wants to correct the attitude of the Israelites who were proud to be the chosen people.

The two baskets filled with figs were placed before the temple of the Lord in Jeremiah's vision. The figs in one basket were good, while the ones in the other basket were "so bad that they could not be eaten"(ESV). God considers the good figs the Israelites captive in Babylon, while the bad the Israelites who remained in Judah (Jer. 24:5,8). According to Calvin, this analogy shows that all people stand before divine judgment, and the exiles were captives by the divine will, not by their

⁵⁴ CO 38. 651 (COR II 6/2. 1142; Jer. 31:7). "... ut fideles non abjicerent spem in posterum tempus, quamvis non statim restitueret Deus totam suam Ecclesiam."

⁵⁵ CO 38 652 (COR II 6/2. 1143; Jer. 31:7). "... sed colligit undique Ecclesiam suam, sic tamen ut semper appareat gratuita ejus misericordia, quoniam erunt reliquiae duntaxat."

⁵⁶ Neuser, "Predestination," 315; Beeke, "Calvin, Beza and Perkins," 74-5. Starting from *De libero hominis arbitrio et divina gratia*, which was Pighius' response to Calvin's *Institutes* of 1539, Calvin several times wrote on "predestination." In 1549, Calvin delivered messages on divine predestination in his sermons on Jeremiah. And in 1552, starting from the debates with Bolsec, Calvin had to participate in theological debates over the predestination several times. Like this, he emphasized predestination based on the Bible. Such emphasis also can be found in the *Institutes* of 1559. In addition, when he taught the book of Jeremiah at the Geneva Academy in 1560, he still interpreted the Bible through predestination. So, even if he underwent hardships while teaching divine predestination, he wanted to make his students and audience understand predestination. This is because this doctrine was essential, he believed, to the believers who were oppressed due to their religion. Specifically, the doctrine of predestination gave them hope and comfort, he thought, and helped them to overcome their difficulties; Pranger, "Calvin's concept of Predestination," 299; Neuser, "Calvin the Preacher," 60-61.

⁵⁷ Cf. Beeke, *Debated Issues in Severeign Predestination*, 130-131.

enemy's will.⁵⁸ Here, the people of Israel are clearly divided into 'the captives and the remnant.'⁵⁹ However when the remnant in Judah heard this analogy from the prophet, they thought the good figs to be themselves. This is because they took their situation to be better than that of the exile even though life in Judah was difficult.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, God said differently: the life of the exiles in Babylon was better than that of the remnant in Judah.⁶¹ Since the exiles felt despair in their captivity, God wanted to comfort them. However, the remnant in Judah did not recognize their miserable situation nor beg for divine mercy. They were proud of their status over the exiles and ignored any warning and threatening by abusing the divine love.⁶² They committed more sin to enjoy their freedom,⁶³ so they could not be the good figs. God said that His punishment of the remnant in Judah would be severe, and worse. Thus, in order to correct their disobedience to God, Jeremiah taught them the divine revelation.⁶⁴ That is, the revelation about how God took care of the exiles in Babylon (Jer. 24:6). It was the will of God. God promised to bring the exiles back to Canaan and to establish them there. This means that God preserves the church.⁶⁵ This work is possible because exile and restoration are all within the power of God.⁶⁶

In order to teach this, God said as follows: "I will give them a heart to know that I am the LORD, and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart (Jer. 24:7, ESV)." In his exposition of this verse, Calvin emphasizes that God abates the punishment of the exile, and that God changes their mind, brings them back to their land and then makes them the true church.⁶⁷ Here, Calvin replaces the expression of changing their mind with the

⁵⁸ CO 38. 458 (COR II 6/1. 899; Jer. 24:1). "... et qui in exilium jam ejecti sunt, non tractos fuisse pro libidine hostium, sed quoniam Deus in ipsos animadvertere voluerit."

⁵⁹ CO 38. 458 (COR II 6/1. 899; Jer. 24:1). "Distinctio igitur hic notatur inter exules, et inter eos qui adhuc fruebantur patria: ..."

⁶⁰ CO 38. 458 (COR II 6/1. 899; Jer. 24:2). "Quamquam ergo gravis erat Urbis et populi calamitas, tamen, ut jam dictum fuit, putabant se quodammodo beatos esse Judaei, qui in Urbe manebant, prae fratribus suis qui erant mortuis similes, ..."

⁶¹ CO 38. 459 (COR II 6/1. 901; Jer. 24:3-5). "Quod ergo remotissimum erat a communi sensu, Deus pronuntiat magis optabilem esse eorum sortem, qui apud Babylonios captivi degunt, quam eorum qui adhuc quieti manent in suo nido."

⁶² CO 38. 459 (COR II 6/1. 900; Jer. 24:3).

⁶³ CO 38. 460 (COR II 6/1. 901; Jer. 24:5). "Hinc igitur minarum contemptus, hinc ad peccandum major licentia, ..."

⁶⁴ CO 38. 460 (COR II 6/1. 901; Jer. 24:5). "Propheta igitur ut frangeret hanc superbiam, quam flectere non poterat, exposuit hanc visionem, quae oblata fuerat divinitus."

⁶⁵ CO 38. 461 (COR II 6/1. 903; Jer. 24:6). "... hoc dicitur de Ecclesiae conservatione."

⁶⁶ CO 38. 460 (COR II 6/1. 902; Jer. 24:6). "Nam si ipse emiserat, fuit etiam in ejus arbitrio reducere."

⁶⁷ CO 38. 462 (COR II 6/1. 903-4; Jer. 24:7). "... nunc concionatur Propheta de gratia multo excellentiore, quod scilicet Deus non tantum mitigabit externas poenas, sed intus mutabit ac corriget corda, ut non tantum redituri sint in patriam Judaei, sed futuri sint vera Ecclesia, ..."

repentance. In other words, they would be blessed through repentance and could then worship God.⁶⁸ Furthermore, Calvin argues that their repentance is possible only by His grace.⁶⁹ God would make His people return to God according to the divine will. However, the Catholic Church seemed to argue that a man could return to God, by himself, without divine help, after having abandoned God.⁷⁰ Calvin thought their argument was in line with that of Pelagius. Pelagius argued that if repentance is totally up to God, He is full of jealousy.⁷¹ So, Pelagius and the Catholic Church argued that a man could return to God without the help of the Holy Spirit. Nonetheless, Calvin insists that the only way for the Israelites to return to Canaan is through divine grace, as he shows in his exposition of this verse.⁷² This is because only God can enlighten and renew the human mind. In this restoration of the Israelites there is no other way except divine mercy.⁷³ As a result, Calvin emphasizes to his audience: their repentance completely depends on the work of the Holy Spirit because they cannot return to God unless He makes them do so.⁷⁴

In sum, the divine act of election depends on His will.⁷⁵ But election can sometimes be different than human expectation. So God reveals His secret will through words in order to disabuse men of their improper confidence that a man may have in himself.⁷⁶

13.6 Faith and the Repentance of the Elect

God revealed to the Israelites that His church would be restored. And the restoration would be given to those who are elected by divine hidden predestination as discussed earlier. However, such divine revelation was not necessary to them because the restoration must have been fulfilled within

⁶⁸ CO 38. 462 (COR II 6/1. 904; Jer. 24:7). "... quod populus respiscet, ut non tantum ad satietatem percipiat quidquid potest expetere bonorum, sed sincere colat Deum."

⁶⁹ CO 38. 462 (COR II 6/1. 904; Jer. 24:7). "Jam colligimus ex his Prophetae verbis, poenitentiam singulare esse Dei donum."

⁷⁰ CO 38. 463 (COR II 6/1. 905; Jer. 24:7). "... et ita putant nos sponte posse converti postquam a Deo defecimus."

⁷¹ CO 38. 463 (COR II 6/1. 905; Jer. 24:7). "... quemadmodum Pelagiani existimant, prope Deum esse invidum, ubi pronuntiat conversionem hominis esse in manu sua. Sed diabolicus est ille furor."

⁷² CO 38. 464 (COR II 6/1. 907; Jer. 24:7). "Jam rursus hinc colligimus Deum esse nobis propitium non aliter quam pro suo beneplacito ut a se ipso tantum causamumat."

⁷³ CO 38. 465 (COR II 6/1. 907; Jer. 24:7). "... certe non possumus causam aliam reperire quam gratuitam Dei misericordiam."

⁷⁴ CO 38. 466 (COR II 6/1. 908; Jer. 24:7). "Nos quidem non convertimur, nisi conversi, nec sponte, vel propria industria nos convertimus, sed hoc est opus Spiritus Sancti."

⁷⁵ Cf. Muller, "The Use and Abuse of a Document," 41-42. According to Muller, the mistake of Bolsec who was against Calvin is to exclude the divine will from the election of His people.

⁷⁶ CO 38. 469 (COR II 6/1. 912; Jer. 24:10). "Vult enim excutere Judaeis stultam fiduciam qua erant inebriati."

the divine plan and providence whether they knew it or not. Nevertheless, God let them know their restoration and election through the prophet. Then, why did God reveal His will to the Israelites? According to Selderhuis, Calvin argues that God reveals His decision in order to keep believers faithful in the midst of worldly disturbances.⁷⁷ In other words, the goal of divine revelation is to maintain and strengthen believers. It is obvious that God protects His people. However, the divine revelation of the Babylonian captivity seemed to contradict the fact that He takes care of His church. Only if God mentions the destruction of His people does this shake the faith of His people. So God told them about their restoration and election as well as their failure. That is, God revealed that He would bless and save the faithful from perdition in order for them to be free from anxiety in the midst of their miserable life in exile.⁷⁸ According to Calvin, unlike the unfaithful, the faithful cannot be satisfied until they are fully assured of the divine blessing.⁷⁹ Therefore, God could not but tell them of His election and protection, in order to assure them. As Parker remarks, “[e]lection does not depend on faith, but it is confirmed inwardly by faith.”⁸⁰ In this context, the prophet scolds the misbelief of the Israelites who think that they are not in danger: their belief is that they are the chosen people, even though they depend on themselves and not God.⁸¹ The children of God have their hope in their election by God and enjoy everlasting life within it.⁸² Hence, the revelation of divine election strengthens the belief of the faithful and shows that they are in the care of God.

What then are the characteristics of the chosen people? First, they repent and obey God when He punishes them. It is not that they are elected due to their repentance,⁸³ but that their obedience and repentance are the unique grace only given to the chosen people.⁸⁴ In other words, repentance itself

⁷⁷ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 277.

⁷⁸ CO 39. 412 (COR II 6/2. 1736; Jer. 50. 20). “Ergo ut liberet inquietudine et omnibus tormentis piorum animos Propheta noster dicit Deum fore propitium, ita ut peccata omnia Israel et Jehudah sepeliat ne in memoriam amplius veniant vel iudicium.”

⁷⁹ CO 39. 412 (COR II 6/2. 1736; Jer. 50:20). “Sed quantum ad fideles spectat, nunquam tranquilli esse possunt donec persuasi sint, Deum illis esse propitium.”

⁸⁰ Parker, *Calvin. An Introduction*, 119.

⁸¹ CO 38. 120 (COR II 6/1. 465; Jer. 11:17). “Quoniam ergo Judaei freti longa quiete, et suis opibus, putabant se esse extra omne discrimen, Propheta hanc confidentiam deridet.”

⁸² CO 38. 120 (COR II 6/1. 465; Jer. 11:17). “..., quod radices habent filii Dei in aeterna ejus electione, in quam non cadit poenitentia aut mutatio.”

⁸³ CO 38. 464 (COR II 6/1. 907; Jer. 24:7). “..., tamen non ideo poenitentia debet existimari causa veniae, aut reconciliationis: ...”

⁸⁴ CO 38. 672 (COR II 6/2. 1169; Jer. 31:18). “... quasi diceret non contingere hoc promiscue omnibus ut respiciant, et se subjiciant Deo, ubi poenas exigit de ipsorum peccatis, sed peculiare esse electo populo beneficium.”

depends only on divine grace and mercy.⁸⁵ If God leads the elect, they feel the work of the Holy Spirit within themselves. By that work they can turn to God. Those who never repent while boasting of their election should not speak of being a member of the divine people.⁸⁶ On the contrary, even though the reprobate proves to be guilty, they still neither admit their wrongdoings nor repent before God. Rather, they are against God and offensive to the servants of God.⁸⁷ Calvin recommends that the congregation in Geneva not get worse in committing sins when God leads them to repent.⁸⁸ Repentance is the true attitude of the elect. As a result, after repentance the elect have renewed life. The elect gains the knowledge of God and their salvation, so that they will not stay novices in faith any longer.⁸⁹ Hence, their life should be different. Looking at their life can be the answer to the question as to why God chooses them as His people and calls them into the church.

13.7 God's Election and the Church

God chose the Israelites not because they deserved it. And it was not because they were righteous and holy. Yet it is obvious that God was delighted to choose them. Nevertheless, the divine choice also happens among the Israelites. That is, Issac was elected while Ishmael was not, and Jacob was elected while Essau was not.⁹⁰ This happened according to God's will. This choice was repeated during the Babylonian captivity. Sending all the Israelites away into Babylon, God separated the chaff and residue from the grain. Then, being winnowed, the chaff and residue disappeared in the air while the wheat remained. It is the divine plan. Calvin thinks it is a process of the divine cleansing of the church.⁹¹ The wheat is those who hide in God and also those who God allowed to return. No one

⁸⁵ CO 38. 464 (COR II 6/1. 907; Jer. 24:7). "... imo docet satis aperte hic locus, ex gratia Dei et mera misericordia pendere ipsam poenitentiam."

⁸⁶ CO 38. 466 (COR II 6/1. 908; Jer. 24:7). "Interea quisquis sibi praetextu gratiae indulget, et Deum non curat, nec ullo poenitentiae studio afficitur, non potest jactare se esse ex populo Dei."

⁸⁷ CO 38. 121 (COR II 6/1. 466; Jer. 11:18). "Scimus scelestissimos quosque, etiam si teneantur convicti, non tamen libenter cedere et agnoscere ac fateri culpam: sed fremere adversus Deum, et insurgere etiam adversus Prophetas."

⁸⁸ Calvin, *Sermons*, 63 (Sermon 9 on Jer. 16:1-7). "Et pourtant quant encores aujourd'hui nostre Seigneur nous attend à repentance, regardons à ne plus empirer."

⁸⁹ CO 38. 694 (COR II 6/2. 1198; Jer. 31:34). "Summa est igitur, omnes Dei electos fore etiam instructos dono intelligentiae, ut non subsistant in primis elementis."

⁹⁰ Parker, *Calvin. An Introduction*, 115.

⁹¹ CO 38. 405 (COR II 6/1. 832; Jer. 23:3). "Nam perinde ac dum ventilatur triticum in cribro, paleae volitant huc et illuc, et quisquiliae, manet autem triticum, quod postea in horreum reponitur: ita cum Deus expulit in varias terras populum suum, tunc Ecclesiam purgavit."

could enter the land of Judah apart from the chosen.⁹² According to Calvin, the return and restoration of the people of God means the renewal of the divine church.⁹³ And the church would be extended more than before when God made His true church prosper through its divine restoration.⁹⁴ God will lead the elect not only from among the Israelites, but also from among the foreigners. Furthermore, God proclaims that He would give grace to those who used to be His enemies.⁹⁵ Through this He demonstrates His will to accept them as a part of His church.⁹⁶ In this way, the chosen people were gathered into the church and formed a community.

In Calvin's exposition of Jer. 23:4, God promises to nurture them after having called them.

He confirms the promise, for he would give them faithful and true pastors, who would perform their office as it behoved them; for it would not be enough that the sheep should be restored to their folds, except they were fed. We indeed know that a sheep is a silly animal, and therefore has need of a shepherd to rule and guide it. God then intimates by these words, that after he had collected his flock into the fold it would be the object of his constant care;⁹⁷

In the quote above, Calvin says that those elect people need servants of God to care for them. As he points out, the people of God need special care. So God promised to send them good shepherds in order to care for and protect His church. According to Calvin a good shepherd should guide and govern his sheep as well as protect the sheep from all violence and the invasion of wolves and robbers.⁹⁸ Calvin knows that there are groups inspired by Satan who covet the sheep and try to teach false doctrine to the church of the elect. Thus, he insists on the necessity of good shepherds for the church. In this regard, the prophet says that the good shepherd who fulfills the divine covenant completely is Jesus Christ (Jer. 23:5-6). Calvin also teaches his audience that their covenant with God

⁹² CO 39. 260 (COR II 6/2. 1541; Jer. 44:14). "Deus autem dicit nullos in terram illam redituros, nisi qui evaserint, nempe quibus permissa fuerit libertas redeundi, cum finitum esset captivitatis et exilii tempus."

⁹³ CO 37. 566 (COR II 6/1. 138; Jer. 3:18). "... sed jam tunc coepit Deus Ecclesiam suam restituere, ..."

⁹⁴ CO 37. 566 (COR II 6/1. 138; Jer. 3:18). "... ampliorem scilicet fore Ecclesiam, ubi Deus populum reduxerit, quam prius fuisset: postea Deum facturum ut floreat vera pietas, et quidem absque aemulatione et litibus."

⁹⁵ CO 38. 150 (COR II 6/1. 503-4; Jer. 12:15). "Nam pronuntiat Deus se extracturum electos suos ex illis populis. Deinde adjungit se progressurum longius, nempe ut etiam in favorem suum recipiat qui prius fuerant hostes."

⁹⁶ CO 38. 152 (COR II 6/1. 506; Jer. 12:16). "Ego censebo gentes illas in populo meo, ut sint pars Ecclesiae meae: ..."

⁹⁷ CO 38. 405-6 (COR II 6/1. 833; Jer. 23:4). "Confirmat promissionem, quia scilicet illis dabit fidos et probos Pastores, qui munus suum obeant, quemadmodum oportet. Neque enim satis esset reduci oves in suas caulas nisi pascantur. Scimus enim animal illud esse fatuum: ideoque opus habere Pastore a quo regatur. Significat ergo his verbis Deus, postquam gregem suum collegerit in ovile, sibi continuam fore ejus curam, ..."; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 3, 134.

⁹⁸ CO 38. 406 (COR II 6/1. 834; Jer. 23:4). "Et scimus officium veri Pastoris duabus partibus constare. Neque enim satis esset oves regere, nisi ipsas defenderet contra omnem violentiam, incursus latronum et luporum."

will be shattered if they do not concentrate on Christ or do not look for what they need in Christ.⁹⁹ That the good shepherd of the church, Christ, nurtures and protects the elect makes divine choice effective and definite.¹⁰⁰ God gathers the elect and connects them to Himself with an unbreakable bond in Christ, the Head of the church.¹⁰¹ Because of that His people stay firmly planted in the church. All these things are possible in Christ. Therefore, God makes His word to be preached in the church, and leads His people to follow Him through His word. So those who neither take part in Holy Communion nor listen to sermons show that Christ is worthless to them.¹⁰² God built up the church and gathered His people in that church in order for them to live as the flock of Christ.

Here there is one important fact to remember: God does not desert His church but rather preserves it in His mercy. This is not for the sole comfort and honor of the church, but for the divine promise and honor.¹⁰³ The church is the glorious throne of God where His name is called upon. His name is thereby known to the world through the church.¹⁰⁴ In other words, the church is the place where only the name of God is praised and honored. Therefore, the preservation of the church is important to the people of God as well as the name of God. Moreover, God continues to gather the elect into the church because He wants to be glorified by them. In his sermon on Jer. 14:19-21, Calvin emphasizes that they - ‘we’ in his sermon – must live for the glory of God through their whole life.¹⁰⁵ God helps His people to do this.¹⁰⁶ In other words, there is no other reason for God to choose and help His people than glorifying the name of God. It is no exaggeration, in Calvin’s mind, to say that this is the reason the church exists.

⁹⁹ CO 38. 407 (COR II 6/1. 835; Jer. 23:5). “... , ut sciamus promissiones Dei fringere apud nos, vel esse suspensas, vel etiam evanescere, nisi erigimus sensus omnes ad Christum, et in ipso quaerimus quidquid alioqui non posset nobis fixum esse.”

¹⁰⁰ Parker, *Calvin. An Introduction*, 115.

¹⁰¹ CO 38. 158 (COR II 6/1. 514; Jer. 13:11). “Fuit igitur quasi conjunctionis mutuae vinculum illa Dei electio, ut nollet a populo separari.”; CO 2. 685 (*Inst.* 3.21.7). “... , ut efficax et vere stabilis sit electio, necesse est ascendere ad caput in quo electos suos coelestis pater inter se colligavit, et sibi insolubili nexu devinxit.”

¹⁰² Calvin, *Sermons*, 131 (Sermon 19 on Jer. 17:17-23). “Mais ce pendant ceux qui ne viennent point au sermon ny à la cene monstrent bien que Jesucrist ne leur est rien, ...”

¹⁰³ Calvin, *Sermons*, 3 (Sermon 1 on Jer. 14:19, 20b, 21a). “... , c’est assavoir qu’il faut estre assurez que jamais Dieu ne rejectera son Eglise. Et pourquoy? Car il n’est question de nostre, mais est question de sa promesse, de son honneur et de sa gloyre.”

¹⁰⁴ Calvin, *Sermons*, 3 (Sermon 1 on Jer. 14:19, 20b, 21a). “Elle est donc nommée le trosne de Dieu. Pourquoi? Car Dieu n’est point congneu en ce monde, sinon là où il est invocqué.”

¹⁰⁵ Calvin, *Sermons*, 4 (Sermon 1 on Jer. 14:19, 20b, 21a). “... , Dieu se veult servir de nous à sa gloyre. Quant donc nous nous rengeons à sa volonté, il regne en nous. Nous debvons bien tendre à cela en toute nostre vie.”

¹⁰⁶ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 277.

God elects and unites His people in an amazing way even though the body is dispersed. However, it is not an ephemeral event. That is, the gathering of the elect does not happen only once. God has done it continuously, and such divine grace naturally also happened during Calvin's era.¹⁰⁷ Calvin confesses that God takes care of the faithful in Geneva with His fatherly mercy as well as blesses them, unlike his dealing with the unfaithful.¹⁰⁸ Such a confession is based on his belief about the elect. His confession would have been seen as helpful to those who suffered during that time. Calvin encourages the believers who may have lost their faith in tribulations feeling anxiety to lift up their eyes and look at God.¹⁰⁹

13.8 Conclusion

Calvin's doctrine of Election in his interpretation of the book of Jeremiah is not theoretical. Calvin explains in the *Institutes* (1559) 4.1.2 that the foundation of the church is the mysterious choice of God and God alone. He argues that the members of the church should feel assured of their being grafted into the church. Meanwhile, his application of the doctrine in his exposition of Jeremiah is more pragmatic and educational because he teaches his interpretation to his students and congregation in the church and classroom in Geneva during the 16th century. Such contextualization makes his ecclesiology in his interpretation more practical than his ecclesiology as it appeared in the *Institutes* of 1559.¹¹⁰ Specifically, in his interpretation of Jeremiah, this doctrine of election is apparent, forming the basis of his comprehensive hermeneutics because the doctrine is useful to revealing the will of God which calls the captives from Babylon into a new community of the church.

¹⁰⁷ CO 38. 598 (COR II 6/2. 1073; Jer. 29:14). "Videmus ergo non uno duntaxat tempore fuisse impletum hoc vaticinium, sed describi nobis Dei gratiam quam saepius antehac exeruit, et nunc adhuc exerit in congreganda Ecclesia."

¹⁰⁸ CO 39. 515 (COR II 7. 41; Lam. 1:7). "Deus enim non tantum vulgari more liberaliter nobiscum hactenus egit, sed dignatus est nos testimoniis favoris sui plus quam paterni: separavit nos ab incredulis, et voluit splendere in nobis sua beneficia."

¹⁰⁹ CO 39. 642 (COR II 7. 459; Lam. 5:19). "Ubi autem res adversae obnubilant oculos nostros, tunc fides quodammodo evanescit: saltem turbamur et obstupescimus. Remedium autem est, in Deum oculos attollere, ..."

¹¹⁰ Calvin explicitly highlights the importance of the doctrine of election in his *Institutes* of 1559 while saying that it is wrong if pastors and teachers do not teach people the doctrine. CO 2. 679 (*Inst.* 3.21.1). "Qui fores occludunt, ne quis ad gustum huius doctrinae accedere audeat, non minorem hominibus, quam Deo faciunt iniuriam; ..." Calvin explains the doctrine of election, and at the end, he writes a simple summary of what he explains. This makes it different from his application to his audiences in his sermons and lectures. CO 2. 686 (*Inst.* 3.21.7). "Quod ergo scriptura clare ostendit dicimus, aeterno et immutabili consilio Deum semel constituisse, quos olim semel assumere vellet in salutem, quos rursum exitio devovere. Hoc consilium quoad electos in gratuita eius misericordia fundatum esse asserimus, nullo humanae dignitatis respectu; quos vero damnationi addicit, his iusto quidem et irreprehensibili, sed incomprehensibili ipsius iudicio, vitae aditum praecludi. Iam vero in electis vocationem statuimus, electionis testimonium."

Furthermore, Calvin's formulation of the doctrine of election and predestination is based on Scripture. This chapter has dealt with not only the beginning of the church but also its future: the divine calling of His people into the church is not ephemeral but perpetual. Therefore, since God has decided, from eternity past, it is clear that God will rule the church in the future. The people of God in the church are clearly walking towards the final moment with God. Calvin consistently implies that the church is not static but dynamic, going gradually towards God by His guidance. Calvin's interpretation of this issue is completely theocentric. In this view, this doctrine of election is in line with the understanding of God as a caregiver and preserver of the church through the covenant. Calvin describes the church as based on Christ through the doctrine of election. Therefore one must consider Christology or Soteriology when investigating the doctrine of election which differentiates the people of God from the reprobate.¹¹¹ In the next chapter, we will look into this issue further.

¹¹¹ Trueman, "Election: Calvin's Theology," 112; Muller, *Christ and the Decree*, 25.

Chapter XIV. Christ: *The Restoration of the Church II*

14.1 Introduction

As we discussed earlier, the church began by divine election. This divine action is the foundation for the restoration of the church. Calvin emphasizes that believers being called again to the church of God could recover not by their own ability, but by divine election as they were first planted as the church in their land. The restoration of the church is impossible without divine election. Then what is the focal point in the process of rebuilding a church? The answer to this question is the controlling question of this chapter. For Calvin, the image of the church rebuilt by believers who accepted Christ as savior is significant. This is because he considers the situation of the Israelites, who returned from Babylonian captivity, to be the same as that of the church in Geneva during his lifetime.¹ Having returned to Canaan, the Israelites were only ‘a remnant,’ so they had to make great effort to rebuild the church. Likewise, the church in Geneva had less members compared to the Catholic Church, and those few members had to renew their church.² Calvin also tried to rebuild the church with Christ as its center. This fact can be found in his description of the church as the kingdom of Christ ruled by Christ and the body of Christ having Him as its Head.³ When he lectured on Jeremiah in the Geneva Academy, reformed churches in France were pursuing religious reform but undergoing severe religious oppression like the Israelites had under Babylonian imperialism. Calvin tried to build and stabilize reformed churches but could not accomplish his goal. The prosperous period for the church had not yet dawned,⁴ but Calvin had hope that its prosperity could be achieved through Christ. So for Calvin, mentioning the restoration of the church is related to the ultimate hope of the church.

In this chapter, we study the Christ-centered church through Calvin’s exposition of the book of Jeremiah. First, the role of Christ in the restoration of the church will be dealt with. Second, from

¹ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 239-240; McGrath, *John Calvin*, 69.

² Kingdon, *Reforming Geneva*, 25-30.

³ Milner, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Church*, 164; CO 2. 817-8 (*Inst.* 4.6.9). “Habet enim illa Christum unicum suum caput, sub cuius principatu omnes inter nos cohaeremus, secundum eum ordinem et eam politiae formam quam ipse praescripsit.”

⁴ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 240.

14.4 to 14.7, the two images of the church, the kingdom of Christ and the body of Christ, will be discussed. In detail, 14.4 and 14.5 look at the meaning of the kingdom of Christ and the attribute of the spiritual church while 14.6 and 14.7 are on that of the body of Christ and the union of Christ and the believers.

14.2 The Restoration of the Israelites and the Church

However, the papists will oppose (the teachings of Christ) because they made gods in their carnal way. And when they serve God, they argue for freewill. As they insist their merits, Christ seems to be totally hidden. When it comes to a question of invoking God, it will happen, as they have said earlier, that no one would recognize Jesus Christ among the Apostles.⁵

As we learn from the quote above, in his sermon on Jer. 15: 19-21, Calvin vehemently criticizes the Catholic Church which serves God without Christ and does not consider the work of Christ important. It is an oxymoron that those who were called to be Christians denied Christ and depended on the wisdom of other gods. According to Calvin, the Catholic Church diminished the importance of Christ in their church. God says that there is no hope of salvation without Christ, a mediator of promise.⁶ Moreover, Calvin explains that the people of God are purged by the blood of Christ and reconciled with God.⁷ This applies to the return of the Israelites. Since their return was an experience of divine grace, Calvin thinks, the restoration of God's true people was to replant or rebuild His church in His land. Moreover, he emphasizes that the return should be centered on Christ.⁸

⁵ Calvin, *Sermons*, 54 (Sermon 8 on Jer. 15:19-21). "Mais incontinent les papistes s'esleveront, car ilz ont forgé des dieux à leur façon charnelle. Et puis quant il est question de faire service à Dieu, on mettra en avant le liberal arbitre; les merites viennent au devant, et Jesuscrist est là comme du tout ensepvely. Et s'il est question d'invocquer Dieu, il adviendra, ce qu'ilz disent eulx mesmes, qu'on ne congnoist Jesuscrist d'entre les apostres."

⁶ CO 38. 407 (COR II 6/1. 835; Jer. 23:5). "Deus ergo hic revocat ipsos ad Messiam: quasi diceret nihil salutis sperandum esse, nisi in Mediatore qui promissus illis fuerat: ..."

⁷ CO 38. 695 (COR II 6/2. 1200; Jer. 31:34). "Hinc colligit, sanguine Christi ita nos fuisse purgatos, et ita reconciliatos Deo, ut fiducia salutis nostrae debeat illic penitus quiescere."

⁸ CO 39. 46 (COR II 6/2. 1267; Jer. 32:41). "Atqui Prophetæ, quemadmodum dixi, incipiunt a reditu populi: sed statuunt simul Christum in medio, ut cognoscant fideles reditum illum fuisse tenuem duntaxat gustum plenæ gratiæ, quæ a Christo demum expectanda erat. Tunc ergo Deus vere plantavit populum suum."

Here he teaches that God replanted them by having united them with Christ when He had called them to the church.⁹

Through this, Calvin clarifies that Christ is the center of the restoration of the Israelites as well as of the rebuilding of the church. Here he points out that the restoration and salvation centered in Christ is done by the proclamation of the gospel. The proclamation of the gospel enabled Gentiles, who could not hear true teaching, to know the truth.¹⁰ Christ broke down the wall between the Jews and the Gentiles, and made no difference between them.¹¹ By mentioning Christ's work, Calvin taught that the church in his era became the people of God by Christ.¹² God gathered not only the Jews but also other nations in His hands through Christ, Calvin argues, which continued from the church in the Old Testament under divine providence.¹³

Furthermore, Christ as the center of the Israelites' return reveals the continuity of the church. God promised his people would be saved by the work of His only Son while implying the restoration of the church. All nature proves this fact,¹⁴ Calvin says, the eternal promise makes the church remain forever, even though the world disappears.¹⁵ In the quote below, Calvin discusses the restoration of Israel.

But he promises deliverance, not only to the tribe of Judah, but also to the whole kingdom of Israel. Though very few returned, yet God offered the benefit that he had promised to all in common: and then, as it has been often said, this promise is to be extended to the coming of Christ. For God confined not his favor to those few years in which liberty was granted to the

⁹ CO 39. 46 (COR II 6/2. 1267; Jer. 32:41). "Dicimur autem inseri in Christum et plantari, cum Deus in Ecclesiam suam nos adoptat: ..."

¹⁰ CO 39. 57 (COR II 6/2. 1282; Jer. 33:9). "... hoc autem factum est per Evangelii promulgationem, quia tunc demum passim celebrata fuit Dei bonitas erga Judaeos, ubi Legis cognitio et doctrinae propheticae ad externos pervenit, qui prius nihil audierant de vera pietatis doctrina."

¹¹ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 238. Selderhuis says, "This radical change which Calvin traces means that the children of God will originate not only from the children of Abraham but also from the children of Adam."

¹² CO 39. 46 (COR II 6/2. 1267; Jer. 32:41). "Quoniam autem Christus maceriem diruit, ut nullum jam sit discrimen inter Judaeos et Graecos, Deus plantat nos in terra sancta, dum inserit in corpus Christi."

¹³ CO 39. 389-90 (COR II 6/2. 1707; Jer. 49:39). "Et scimus has partes Christo tribui, quod Deus velit colligere sub ejus manu quidquid dissipatum est et in coelo, et in terra. ... et ita quodammodo tunc per Christum mediatorem manum illis porrexit Deus, et januam illis aperuit in spem salutis aeternae."

¹⁴ CO 38. 699 (COR II 6/2. 1204; Jer. 31:36). "Agitur autem etiam illic de Foedere, quod Deus percussurus erat cum populo suo in manu unigeniti Filii. Citat Lunam testem in coelo."

¹⁵ CO 38. 699 (COR II 6/2. 1204-5; Jer. 31:36). "... sed postquam dixit, Tu idem es, ex aeternitate Dei, postea etiam descendit ad aeternitatem Ecclesiae, filii filiorum tuorum manebunt. Nunc videmus Ecclesiam posse praeferrri toti mundo: ..."

Jews, when they returned from their exile in Babylon; but included the everlasting salvation that remained for them, of which the prelude was their return.¹⁶

In the quote above, Calvin clarifies that the return of the exiles means the restoration of the church. First of all, he emphasizes the restoration of the Jews as well as the kingdom of Israel. In addition, the center of restoration is Christ, and the promise of restoration should be extended to the presence of Jesus, Calvin argues. He also teaches that their return means not only the restoration of the church, but also their everlasting salvation through Jesus Christ. Therefore, according to Calvin, the return of the Israelites implies the restoration of the Christ-centered church, and shows the divine grace of the everlasting salvation. It serves as the prelude to everlasting salvation and thus extends far beyond the mere restoration of the church.

14.3 Covenant, Election and Christ

The Church is deeply related to divine election. God has chosen the Israelites according to His will and adopted them to be His children. Jeremiah emphasizes divine election by means of the analogy of the ‘planter’: God had planted them in Canaan.¹⁷ The Israelites have been rooted in divine steadfast love according to His divine will, not theirs. In other words, this implies that they could be uprooted by God if He wills it. Calvin asserts in his exposition of Jer. 11:16-7 that God could destroy them promptly if the destruction of the Israelites were His divine joy.¹⁸ If God determines their destruction, their assurance of safety is meaningless even if they have been safe for a long time or they could escape from danger themselves.¹⁹ Calvin explains this clearly in his exposition of another text from Jeremiah. The ancient kingdom of Israel was the prototype of the heavenly kingdom and

¹⁶ CO 39. 55 (COR II 6/2. 1279; Jer. 33:7). “Promittit autem non tantum Tribui Jehudah, sed etiam toti Regno Israel liberationem. Etsi enim perquam exigua portio reversa est, Deus tamen communiter omnibus obtulit beneficium quod pollicitus fuerat: deinde, ut saepius dictum fuit, promissio haec extenditur usque ad Christi adventum. Deus enim non restringit gratiam suam ad paucos annos, quibus permissa fuit Judaeis libertas, ut redirent ab exilio babylonico: sed complectitur simul aeternam salutem quae ipsos manebat, et cujus praeludium erat reditus ille.”; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 4, 235-6.

¹⁷ Muller, *Christ and the Decree*, 35. According to Muller, Christ himself, on Christological concerns, is the “author of election” together with God the Father; Gibson, “A Mirror for God,” 449.

¹⁸ CO 38. 120 (COR II 6/1. 464-5; Jer. 11:17). “Summa est: quoties Deus volet, statim ipsos perituros, quia non consistunt propria virtute, sed tantum ejus gratia: ...”

¹⁹ CO 38. 120 (COR II 6/1. 465; Jer. 11:17). “Quoniam ergo Judaei freti longa quiete, et suis opibus, putabant se esse extra omne discrimen, Propheta hanc confidentiam deridet. Ostendit quam vana sit: quia scilicet Deus illos plantaverit, et ita idem possit eos facile evellere.”

king David was the prototype of Christ. But when his descendants, the Israelites, were completely given to wickedness, their disbelief could no longer be forgiven.²⁰ They were uprooted completely from the land of Canaan according to the divine will. The will of God is the most important thing in both the building up and the falling down of the church. However, even when they were exiles in Babylon, divine grace did not vanish, but was hidden momentarily, because “there shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse” according to God’s will (Isa. 11:1, ESV).²¹ God made a new covenant with Israel according to His will, so He did not remember their sins and fulfilled His promise through the coming of Christ.²² This covenant became the genuine hope that the truly faithful could hold on to in their suffering.

In this divine promise, Calvin focuses on Jesus Christ. When the prophet talks about the restoration of the church, he emphasizes the shepherd. Unless the people of God focus on their Messiah, their belief in and hope for revival cannot be realized. Moreover, without Christ, the fatherly love of God cannot be delivered to them and divine mercy cannot be assured, Calvin argues.²³ Calvin teaches the believers in Geneva during his time why the prophet emphasizes Christ. If they do not focus on Christ nor seek for the things that could be found only in Christ, the covenant with God might disappear, become incomplete and be in vain.²⁴ Calvin focuses on Christ too when he compares the old covenant with the new covenant. God must have revealed an old covenant as a model because it was before the first coming of Christ when God and the ancient Israelites entered into that covenant. After the coming of Christ, God made anything hidden under the law to be completed through Christ.²⁵ In Calvin’s lecture on Jer. 32:40, the prophet mentions the new covenant with Christ because

²⁰ CO 38. 372 (COR II 6/1. 789-90; Jer. 22:3). “... , quia erat Regnum illud sacerdotale, et erat imago coelestis Regni, quod postea in Christo solide patefactum fuit. Ergo cum Reges Jehudah, qui erant posteri Davidis essent Christi imagines, minus ferenda fuit eorum impietas, postquam immemores suae vocationis desciverant a patris sui Davidis imitatione, et facti sunt prorsus degeneres.”

²¹ CO 38. 400 (COR II 6/1. 826; Jer. 22:30). “Fuit igitur abscondita Dei gratia ad tempus, sed nunquam extincta fuit, quia tandem surrexit surculus e trunco Isai, quemadmodum dicitur apud Isaiaem.”

²² CO 38. 696 (COR II 6/2. 1201; Jer. 31:34). “... , quia Deus promittit se non fore amplius memorem iniquitatum, dum novum foedus percutiet cum populo suo: id factum est adventu Christi. Ergo Christus solus hoc praestitit, ...”

²³ CO 38. 406 (COR II 6/1. 834; Jer. 23:5). “Hoc quidem nunc clarius apparet sub Evangelio, sed Patrum fides non potuit plena esse, nisi sensus suos dirigerent in Messiam. Quoniam igitur nec amor Dei certus esse potuit olim Patribus, nec rata benevolentiae et paterni favoris testimonia absque Christo: ...”

²⁴ CO 38. 407 (COR II 6/1. 835; Jer. 23:5). “Quod ergo tam frequenter occurrit apud Prophetas observatu dignum est, ut sciamus promissiones Dei frigere apud nos, vel esse suspensas, vel etiam evanescere, nisi erigimus sensus omnes ad Christum, et in ipso quaerimus quidquid alioqui non posset nobis fixum esse.”

²⁵ CO 38. 688 (COR II 6/2. 1190-1; Jer. 31:31). “... , veniendum est, sicuti jam dixi, ad formam ipsam, quoniam nondum patefactus erat Christus, percussit Deus foedus Novum, ubi sancivit per filium suum quidquid sub lege adumbratum fuerat.”

God has no intention of setting the covenant without Christ as made evident in His teachings through the Prophets and the Law.²⁶ In addition, the legitimacy of the covenant between God and the Israelites depends on Christ alone. In order to explain this, Calvin quotes St. Paul in his exposition of Jer. 33:15. Unless Christ intervenes to acknowledge or confirm, the divine promise loses its legitimacy.²⁷ All covenants are founded upon Christ.²⁸ Moreover, this shows that the election of the Israelites is based in Christ. The divine election is the foundation of the divine covenant. As a result, if the covenant is established based on Christ, He is the warranty of the divine election.²⁹ Therefore, Christ is the center of the whole process of the divine covenant and election. All covenants are established through Christ, accomplished by Christ, and guaranteed by Christ.

14.4 The Kingdom of Christ and the Church

In Jer. 33:17-8, the prophet proclaims the blessing that the Israelites will receive after the restoration of Israel. He also proclaims that among the returnees from the Babylonian captivity there will be a ruler governing the Israelites, and that among the descendants of Levi there will be a priest worshipping God. That is how the people of Israel will be safe, the prophet says.³⁰ However, describing these verses in detail Calvin argues that even though there will be a king and a priest in Israel, if they do not have Christ, they would fall into a miserable state.³¹ Thus, the true and sole blessing of the church is to obey Christ³² so that He may bear the office of king and priest for the church. Likewise, if Christ becomes the king of the church and rules the congregation in it, the church

²⁶ CO 39. 42 (COR II 6/2. 1262; Jer. 32:40). “Dubium igitur non est, quin Propheta simul cum Novo Foedere Christum producat coram oculis, quia sine ipso minime sperandum fuit, ut Deus aliud foedus percuteret, quemadmodum constat ex tota Lege et prophetica doctrina.”

²⁷ CO 39. 64 (COR II 6/2. 1290; Jer. 33:15). “Hic ostendit Propheta, quod postea scripsit Paulus, in Christo omnes Dei promissiones esse Etiam et Amen, hoc est, non aliter stare, nec posse ratas esse, quantum ad nos, nisi occurrat Christus, qui ipsas sanciat. Efficacia igitur promissionum Dei in solo Christo consistit.”

²⁸ CO 39. 64 (COR II 6/2. 1290; Jer. 33:15). “Jam rursus tenendum est foedus illud fuisse fundatum in solo Christo.”

²⁹ CO 39. 65 (COR II 6/2. 1291; Jer. 33:15). “Adoptio igitur ipsa fuit fundamentum foederis, deinde Christus ipse fuit arra et pignus tam foederis quam adoptionis gratuita.”

³⁰ CO 39. 69 (COR II 6/2. 1297; Jer. 33:17). “Itaque confirmat totius populi statum fore incolumem, quia semper erunt ex posteris Davidis, qui succedant ad gubernandum, et semper etiam manebunt ex posteris Levi, qui sacrificia offerant.”

³¹ CO 39. 69 (COR II 6/2. 1297; Jer. 33:17). “Est autem hic locus diligenter notandus, quia hinc colligimus, etiamsi reliqua omnia nobis ex animi voto suppetant, nos tamen semper esse miseros, nisi Christus sit caput nostrum, et fungatur tam Regis quam Sacerdotis officio.”

³² CO 39. 70 (COR II 6/2. 1297; Jer. 33:17). “Haec igitur unica est Ecclesiae felicitas, subesse Christo, ita ut munus utrumque quod hic describitur exercent.”

as the gathering of believers can be called the kingdom of Christ.³³ What is the church which is described by the analogy of the kingdom of Christ? To investigate this, it is necessary to look closely at how Calvin interprets the return of the Israelites. Calvin states that when the prophet foretells the return of the Israelites, he extends it to the concept of the kingdom of Christ. The return of the Israelites from Babylon is the mere beginning of divine grace. Through this, God commenced the genuine work of salvation.³⁴ Hence, according to Calvin, the prophets think that the return of the Israelites is the prelude to the kingdom of Christ and the starting point of the church's renewal.³⁵ Understanding the church through the concept of the kingdom is how Calvin teaches who the king of the kingdom is. In Jer. 23:5, Jeremiah proclaims the divine plan: after the return of the Israelites "[God] will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king" (Jer. 23:5). Moreover, Calvin declares that the righteous branch is Christ.³⁶ He also explains who Christ as king is. Christ is qualified to be king because He is just, righteous and wise. So, He is able to perform His work as a good and flawless king.³⁷ Furthermore, the prophet states that Christ appears as a king as well as savior of His church. In this context, since the work of Christ extends to the salvation of His people beyond His kingdom, the joy of the church will be real under Christ who is the king and savior inside and outside of the church.³⁸

Only Christ can carry out the dual offices of king and savior perfectly. But, for us, earthly kings are understood as the image of Christ.³⁹ In other words, we are not capable of understanding the true king completely, so we cannot help having a picture of the kingship of Christ through earthly kings. Nonetheless, the earthly kings, the descendants of king David, are clearly different than Christ. Calvin says that among earthly kings many of them were apostates and corrupted divine worship.

³³ Wilcox, "The progress of the Kingdom," 320; Harms, *In God's Custody*, 118.

³⁴ CO 39. 37 (COR II 6/2. 1255-6; Jer. 32:37). "Sed quemadmodum alibi dictum fuit, quoties vaticinantur Prophetae de populi reditu, extendunt suam doctrinam ad totum Christi Regnum. Nam liberatio ab exilio nihil aliud fuit quam initium gratiae Dei. Exorsus est igitur Deus opus verae et solidae redemptionis cum populum in patriam reduxit: ..." ³⁵ CO 37. 566 (COR II 6/1. 138; Jer. 3:17). "Sed quia reditus ille, ac restitutio populi quoddam fuit Regni Christi praeludium, ideo semper incipere convenit a tempore illo, quoties vaticinantur Prophetae de nova Ecclesia.;" Wilcox, "The progress of the Kingdom," 318.

³⁶ CO 38. 409 (COR II 6/1. 837; Jer. 23:6). "Et ideo merito Christus dicitur *Justum germen*."

³⁷ CO 38. 409-10 (COR II 6/1. 838; Jer. 23:6). "Videtur ergo in summa hoc velle, Christum fore praeditum tam prudentiae quam rectitudinis et aequitatis spiritu, ut omnes numeros boni et perfecti Regis impleat."

³⁸ CO 38. 411 (COR II 6/1. 840; Jer. 23:6). "Christus nobis praefectus est in Regem, ut sit servator: ... Ergo cum Propheta dicit *salvum fore Jehudah*, tantundem hoc valet, ac si promitteret solidam felicitatem Ecclesiae sub Christo."

³⁹ CO 38. 410 (COR II 6/1. 839; Jer. 23:6). "... longa est inter Christum et alios Reges distantia, et tamen aliqua in parte apta est comparatio, dum proponuntur nobis Reges terreni tanquam figurae et imagines ipsius."

Further, some of them mistreated the prophets and were obsessed with their own greed.⁴⁰ Therefore, they were not qualified to be proper kings who fulfilled their office led by God. Thus, any earthly king could have become a proper king like Christ. Calvin states that only Christ, the true king, can make the church revived.⁴¹ Then what is the work of Christ as the king of the church? Needless to say, it is to rule the church. This is the clear will of God. In other words, it is not the divine will to rule His church without the Mediator.⁴² God wants His dominion to be effective through Christ, the true Mediator. Calvin encourages the congregation in Geneva to obey Christ by pointing out that unless they obey Christ, He cannot be their king.⁴³ Moreover, if the dominion of Christ is adhered to, the church becomes aligned with the divine will (as much as under the reign of king David, Calvin adds).⁴⁴

However, it is hard for man to comprehend the kingdom of Christ and His kingship fully. This is because He is different from earthly kings and His kingdom is also unlike nations on earth in quality. So, in order to help our understanding of His kingdom, it is helpful to mention various things like wealth, glorious light, great power and so on. But such things cannot explain the kingdom of Christ comprehensively. This only shows the limit of our understanding.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, this lack of understanding implies the indispensability of the church, the place of the divine reign. It has something which people cannot find in other places. First of all, Christ is in the church. Christ has come to church and appears to church members;⁴⁶ they can meet Him there. Moreover, He provokes the members' mind and makes them look up. If Christ does not exist, they cannot expect something

⁴⁰ CO 39. 66-7 (COR II 6/2. 1293; Jer. 33:15). "Et semper notanda est antithesis inter posteros alios Davidis et Christum. Viderant enim Judaei tristissima spectacula in posteris Davidis cum multi essent apostatae, et perverterent Dei cultum, alii saevirent adversus Prophetas et omnes bonos: essent etiam pleni avaritia et rapacitate: alii essent libidinosi."

⁴¹ CO 38. 635 (COR II 6/2. 1121; Jer. 30:21). "Hodie non habemus terrenum Regem, qui sit Christi imago: sed Christus per se Ecclesiam vivificat."

⁴² CO 38. 619 (COR II 6/2. 1101; Jer. 30:9). "... quia Deus non vult immediate, ut ita loquar, regere suam Ecclesiam, sed vult Christum esse interpositum, qui hic vocatur David."

⁴³ CO 38. 619 (COR II 6/2. 1101; Jer. 30:9). "... nempe Deum non aliter esse Regem nostrum, nisi cum subijcitur Christo, quem loco suo praefecit, et per cujus manum vult nobis praeesse."

⁴⁴ CO 38. 633-4 (COR II 6/2. 1120; Jer. 30:20). "... quasi diceret statum Ecclesiae non minus fore prosperum et felicem sub Christo, quam olim sub Davide floruerat."

⁴⁵ CO 38. 660 (COR II 6/2. 1153; Jer. 31:12). "... quemadmodum ubi agitur de Regno Christi, fit mentio auri, argenti, omne genus opulentiae, magni splendoris et magnae potentiae. Scimus enim non posse humano sensu statim comprehendi quod est extra et supra mundum."

⁴⁶ CO 38. 661 (COR II 6/2. 1155; Jer. 31:12). "... nunc autem figurae illae cessarunt, et Christus prodiit in medium, et apparuit nobis clarius."

greater than the Law, and they should not. Without Christ, they would be bound to the Law.⁴⁷ But, Christ exists in and rules the church. This means that the divine word is proclaimed in the church. Through the word of Christ, church members accept Christ as their king. He also leads them to look to God.⁴⁸ The proclamation of the gospel through Christ differentiates the church from other places.⁴⁹ Likewise, God teaching His people through Christ shows that there, in Him, are all truth and norms.⁵⁰ Furthermore, in Christ the new covenant between God and the Israelites exists. Divine grace flows into the world in the coming of Christ.⁵¹ So in the church there is salvation. According to Calvin, since salvation belongs to the heavenly kingdom not to any secular government or nation,⁵² one can be saved by the kingdom of Christ and not by earthly governments. The proclamation of the gospel, the new covenant and salvation exist in the reign of Christ not in any other place. This is the characteristic of the church, as it is known as the Kingdom of Christ.

In addition, the concept of historicity and time should be noted in the analogy of the church as Kingdom of Christ. Calvin urges his audience to remember that when the prophets mention the revival of the church, their prophecies include the comprehensive concept of the whole Kingdom of Christ.

The people began to do well when they returned to their own country; but soon after distresses came as Daniel had predicted. It was, therefore, necessary for them to look for the coming of Christ. We now taste of these benefits of God as long as we are in the world. We hence see that these prophecies are not accomplished in one day, or in one year, no, not even

⁴⁷ CO 38. 686-7 (COR II 6/2. 1188; Jer. 31:31). “Videmus ergo necessario hoc spectare ad Regnum Christi, quia extra Christum nihil potuit nec debuit sperari a populo, quod superaret Legem. Lex enim fuit regula perfectissimae doctrinae. Ergo si tollatur Christus, certum est, manendum esse in Lege.”

⁴⁸ Calvin, *Sermons*, 115 (Sermon 17 on Jer. 17:11-14). “... , mais c’est que par son Evangile on le congnoist le roy souverain; et puis le throsne du ciel respond à cela, quant nostre Seigneur nous monstre qu’il ne veult point que nous soyons icy fichez en la terre en nous donnant l’Evangile, mais il nous veult tirer en hault.”

⁴⁹ Wilcox, ““The restoration of the Church,”” 92-3. Calvin says that the role of human agents in the church is to proclaim the Gospel; Hesselink, “Calvin on the Kingdom of Christ,” 153-4.

⁵⁰ Calvin, *Sermons*, 109 (Sermon 16 on Jer. 17:9-11). “Sommes nous plains de mensonge, où est la verité? Sommes nous plains de rebellion, où est la reigle de toute doctrine? En Jesuchrist. Il faut donc l’aller querir là. Voila donc à quoy Dieu travaille le plus à nous ensaigner: ...”

⁵¹ CO 39. 42 (COR II 6/2. 1262; Jer. 32:40). “Nunc ergo videmus cur vocetur Foedus perpetuum, quod Deus nunc promittit. Jam tenendum est, hoc spectare peculiariter ad Regnum Christi. ... tamen debuit extendi continua series gratiae usque ad Christi adventum.”

⁵² CO 39. 68 (COR II 6/2. 1294; Jer. 33:16). “Jam repetere memoria convenit quod nuper attigi, nempe salutem cujus fit mentio, referri ad naturam Regni Christi. Si ageretur de terreno aliquo et temporali imperio, salus etiam posset esse temporalis. Sed quia hic promittitur spirituale et coeleste Regnum Christi, salus quae adjungitur penetrat usque ad coelos ipsos. Ergo latius patet quam totius mundi status.”

in one age, but ought to be understood as referring to the beginning and the end of Christ's Kingdom.⁵³

Calvin does not think that the Kingdom of Christ is achieved in one period.⁵⁴ The Kingdom started when the Babylonian captives returned to their native land. And, when Calvin lectured on this verse in the 16th century, the Kingdom of Christ was still in process. So, he clearly states that the Kingdom of Christ is not limited to the period of the presence of Jesus on earth nor does it resume when He comes again to this world. The Kingdom of Christ has continued to exist through history.⁵⁵ In his lecture on Jer. 30:21, applying various facets of the church to the churches of his time, Calvin says that it is not strange for the church to disintegrate (as happened under the papacy).⁵⁶ Like the churches of the Old Testament under the Law, all churches may experience hardship and lose their glory and beauty. However, the power of God is enough to restore the glory of the church. Thus, we should believe that the Kingdom of Christ will be revived and all of the divine blessings will shine throughout that Kingdom.⁵⁷ This shows that the divine reign through Christ will revive the corrupted church of Calvin's era, and, furthermore, that the church will not disappear as long as Christ resides in it.

14.5 The Spiritual Characteristics of the Kingdom of Christ

The Kingdom of Christ is invisible. No one can comprehend it completely. The reign of Christ, the most important character of the Kingdom, does not appear visibly in this world like earthly kings and rulers govern their nations. Thus, in order to understand the Kingdom of Christ it is

⁵³ CO 38. 682 (COR II 6/2. 1182-3; Jer. 31:24). "Coepit enim populus feliciter agere cum reversus est in patriam: sed paulo post angustiae, sicuti Daniel praedixerat: ergo necesse fuit expectare Christi adventum. Jam gustamus haec Dei beneficia quamdiu versamur in mundo. Videmus ergo non compleri uno die, vel anno, imo etiam saeculo haec vaticinia, sed debere intelligi de initio et fine Regni Christi."; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 4, 117-8.

⁵⁴ CO 38. 682 (COR II 6/2. 1182; Jer. 31:24). "Et in eo errant nostri, quod dum volunt restringere ad aliquod tempus istas promissiones, coguntur confugere ad allegorias, et ita torquere prophetias omnes, imo pervertere." Priests in Calvin's era fell into a fallacy interpreting that the promise of restoration would be achieved in a specific time. So, Calvin criticized them because they distort most of prophecies through this false interpretation.

⁵⁵ Wilcox, "The restoration of the Church," 80; Wilcox, "The progress of the Kingdom," 320.

⁵⁶ CO 38. 634 (COR II 6/2. 1120; Jer. 30:20). "Cum ergo hic dicit Propheta *filios Ecclesiae fore sicut ab initio*, ne miremur si aliquando contingat Ecclesiam dissipari, quemadmodum factum est in Papatu. Ecclesia enim non tantum mortua erat, sed sepulta: et erat non tantum putridum cadaver, sed quasi pulvis qui prorsus evanuerat."

⁵⁷ CO 38. 634-5 (COR II 6/2. 1121; Jer. 30:30). "Videmus ergo compleri etiam sub Regno Christi quod contigit sub Lege, nempe Ecclesiam aliquando obrui miseriis, et latere sine splendore et forma. ... quia ut aliquando floruit Regnum Christi, sic etiam sperandum est satis esse virtutis in Deo, ut recuperet Ecclesia suum splendorem, ut Regnum Christi iterum exurgat, et illic fulgeant omnes Dei benedictiones."

important to know the spiritual characteristics of the Kingdom.⁵⁸ According to Calvin, those who understand the spiritual characteristics of the Kingdom explain them using the image of civil government on earth. This is no surprise. This is because the prophet also presented the Kingdom of God through the image of an earthly kingdom to the Israelites.⁵⁹ It is certain that the Kingdom is not corporeal but, spiritual.

But it is necessary for us to consider what sort of kingdom it is. As, then, it is spiritual, the justice and judgment of which the Prophet speaks, do not belong only to civil and external order, but rather to that rectitude by which it comes that men are reformed according to God's image, which is in righteousness and truth. Christ then is said to reign over us in justice and judgment, not only because he keeps us by laws within the range of our duty, and defends the good and the innocent, and represses the audacity of the wicked; but because he rules us by his Spirit.⁶⁰

Calvin introduces the spiritual characteristics of the Kingdom. First of all, ruling in the Kingdom is based on justice and righteousness: this includes external order as well as the people's internal obedience to the image of God. Moreover, the ruling of Christ is to rule His people through the Holy Spirit. In the quote above, Calvin emphasizes that ruling within the Kingdom of Christ is spiritual and invisible. After all, Calvin teaches that the Kingdom of Christ is ruled by the Holy Spirit. This is the outstanding characteristic of the Kingdom, which cannot be found in any other nation. Since the Kingdom of Christ belongs to heaven, man cannot understand the Kingdom unless Christ enlightens the minds of people.⁶¹ Such a spiritual Kingdom ultimately appears to spiritually renewed people having the new covenant in their heart implanted through Christ. That is, God renews the elect by the

⁵⁸ Hesselink, "Calvin on the Kingdom of Christ," 152.

⁵⁹ CO 39. 67 (COR II 6/2. 1293; Jer. 33:15). "Sed interea necesse est venire ad naturam Regni Christi: quia scimus esse spirituale: sed depingitur nobis sub imagine terreni et politici imperii, ... Non mirum igitur est, si Prophetæ cum vellent sermonem suum accommodare Judæis, de Regno Christi disseruerint, ita ut proponerent visibilem ejus imaginem in terreno et politico imperio, ut jam diximus."

⁶⁰ CO 39. 67 (COR II 6/2. 1293-4; Jer. 33:15). "Sed necesse est reputare quale sit Christi Regnum. Cum ergo sit spirituale, justitia et judicium de quibus hic Prophetæ loquitur, non pertinent ad ordinem politicum, et externum duntaxat, sed potius ad rectitudinem, qua fit ut refoventur homines ad imaginem Dei, quæ est in justitia et veritate. Dicitur ergo regnare Christus super nos in justitia et judicio, non tantum quia Legibus nos continet in officio et conservat bonos et innoxios, reprimit audaciam improborum: sed quia nos gubernat Spiritu suo."; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 4, 253.

⁶¹ CO 38. 660 (COR II 6/2. 1153; Jer. 31:12). "Cum ergo Regnum Christi spirituale sit ac coeleste non potest comprehendi humanis mentibus nisi paulatim attollat suos, sicuti facit."

Holy Spirit, and leads them to serve God by changing their heart.⁶² Moreover, God accepts them as His people.

The Kingdom has benefits that only the people of the Kingdom can enjoy. First of all, the spiritual Kingdom promises calm and serenity. This is not because no one can attack or hurt the Kingdom of Christ, but because the people of the Kingdom are secured by the divine hand and care, bringing reconciliation and peace with God.⁶³ Salvation in the Kingdom is not limited to the Israelites' return and restoration only, but extends to the salvation enjoyed in heaven. They enjoy everlasting salvation there (*Salus est aeterna*). Calvin argues that since the promise of this salvation belongs to the Kingdom of Christ, that salvation must be perpetual as the Kingdom of Christ is eternal.⁶⁴ Therefore, the Kingdom always presents the hope of heavenly life.⁶⁵ Also, the Kingdom will be forever, as long as Christ reigns. This fact is well fitted to the spiritual character of the Kingdom. It sometimes undergoes hardships on earth, but will ultimately be everlasting thanks to the presence and rule of Christ.⁶⁶ So, these spiritual characteristics of the Kingdom mean that the Kingdom is calm, serene and secure with everlasting salvation, life and existence. Calvin argues that the church will be understood as the equivalent of the Kingdom of Christ as long as Christ rules it. Also, he states that the church will be kept secure in Christ.⁶⁷

Calvin thinks that such features and characteristics of the Kingdom of Christ appear visibly in the church. According to him, the church has everlasting salvation through Christ,⁶⁸ and it also has everlasting joy because of God's divine mercy towards His people.⁶⁹ The church is also spiritual. This

⁶² CO 38. 688-689 (COR II 6/2. 1191; Jer. 31:31). "Fuit igitur haec quoque aliqua novitas, quod Deus regenuit fideles Spiritu suo, ita ut non esset literalis tantum doctrina, sed efficax, quae non tantum verberaret aures, sed in animos penetraret, atque vere formaret in obsequium Dei."

⁶³ CO 38. 622 (COR II 6/2. 1105; Jer. 30:10). "Cum ergo spirituale sit Christi Regnum, sequitur hic promitti statum tranquillum et quietum, non ut nulli sint hostes qui nos infestent, vel nobis sint molesti: sed quia maxime ea quiete fruemur apud Deum, et vita etiam nostra in tuto erit, quia protegetur manu et praesidio Dei."

⁶⁴ CO 39. 68 (COR II 6/2. 1294-5; Jer. 33:16). "Sed quia debet haec promissio referri ad naturam Regni Christi, non dubium est quin sit perpetua, et quin debeat nos erigere usque ad ipsum coelum."

⁶⁵ CO 39. 37 (COR II 6/2. 1257; Jer. 32:38). "..., nobis proponi spem aeternae et coelestis vitae."

⁶⁶ CO 39. 136 (COR II 6/2. 1382; Jer. 36:30). "Regni enim perpetuitas, quae Davidi fuit promissa, talis fuit, ut ad tempus Regnum collapsum fuerit, et quasi pessumdatum: sed tandem iterum exortus est surculus ex radice Isai, et Christus qui vere unicus et aeternus est filius Davidis, ille sic regnare incepit, ut Regni ejus nullus sit finis."

⁶⁷ CO 38. 411 (COR II 6/1. 840; Jer. 23:6). "Sicuti enim spirituale est Regnum Christi, ita et quaecunque ex eo pendent. Ergo cum Propheta dicit *salvum fore Jehudah*, tantundem hoc valet, ac si promitteret solidam felicitatem Ecclesiae sub Christo."

⁶⁸ CO 38. 679 (COR II 6/2. 1178; Jer. 31:22). "Et hoc etiam notandum est, quia quod semel dixit Jeremias de redemptione populi extenditur ad aeternam Ecclesiae salutem."

⁶⁹ CO 38. 662 (COR II 6/2. 1155; Jer. 31:12). "Sed Deus hic promittit se ita fore propitium Ecclesiae suae ut habeat perpetuam materiam gaudii."

can be explained through its representative signs. As discussed in 7.6, Calvin states that the signs of the church are the proclamation of the word⁷⁰ and the sacraments – Baptism and Holy Communion. As we know, it is in the worship service that the word is proclaimed in the church. Discussing the external worship of the Israelites, Calvin argues that when the essence of worship departs from the symbols of the external worship, there appears unacceptable corruption and the contamination of worship.⁷¹ So, he argues that purifying the corrupted worship is by a sacrifice of Christ. Calvin encourages worshippers to worship spiritually with sincere hearts because they cannot worship sincerely without Christ.⁷² In addition, explaining baptism, Calvin does not ignore ‘union with Christ.’ According to Calvin, the internal capacity of baptism is to crucify the old self and to revive oneself in Christ.⁷³ Holy Communion could not be understood without union with Christ as well. Calvin teaches this directly: “When we are said to eat Christ (Matt. 26:26), the reference no doubt is to the union we have with Him, because we are one body and one spirit.”⁷⁴ Additionally, he states that the Bible compares the heavenly truth with food, and that this heavenly truth is useful to feed believers spiritually. So, if they accept it, chew it and digest it, then it becomes nutritious for them.⁷⁵ Calvin argues that Holy Communion should be Christ-centered. Holy Communion means that believers are in union with Christ and enjoy the spiritual benefits of that union. Therefore, the two signs of the church, the proclamation of the word, and the Sacraments, are based on spiritual union with Christ. So, the church is, of course, a community consisting of spiritual features. Such characteristics of the church draw out yet another feature of the church.

⁷⁰ Calvin argues in the *Inst.* 4.1.10 that when the words are proclaimed listening to the words carefully is as important as the proclamation.

⁷¹ CO 38. 190 (COR II 6/1. 555; Jer. 14:12). “Signa quidem per se Deus non negligit, neque repudiat: sed ubi veritas separatur, haec corruptela est intolerabilis.”

⁷² CO 38. 190 (COR II 6/1. 555; Jer. 14:12). “Sciamus ergo, quamvis in externo cultu nihil possit desiderari, tamen abominabile esse Deo quicquid tentamus, nisi praecedat cordis sinceritas.”

⁷³ CO 38. 56 (COR II 6/1. 383; Jer. 9:26). “... et ideo veniendum esse ad spiritum Baptismi, nempe ad rem ipsam, quia interior virtus est renovatio, dum scilicet vetus homo noster crucifigitur in nobis, et resurgimus cum Christo in vitae novitatem.”

⁷⁴ CO 38. 226 (COR II 6/1. 602; Jer. 15:16). “Cum dicimur comedere Christum, certe hoc refertur ad conjunctionem, quae nobis est cum ipso, quoniam sumus unum corpus et unus Spiritus: ...” Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. II, trans. by John Owen, 283.

⁷⁵ CO 38. 226-7 (COR II 6/1. 603; Jer. 15:16). “Si ergo doctrina coelestis cibus est ad pascendas spiritualiter animas nostras, merito dicimur eam comedere, dum non respuimus: sed cum avide eam suscipimus, ita ut nobis sit in alimentum, probe eam concoquimus et digerimus.”

The perpetuity then of which the Prophet speaks, is that which corresponds with the character of Christ's kingdom, and is therefore spiritual. Moreover, this passage teaches us that the Church will be perpetual, and that though God may permit it to be terribly shaken and tossed here and there, there will yet be ever some seed remaining, as long as the sun and the moon shall shine in the heavens, and the order of nature shall continue;⁷⁶

According to Calvin, the spiritual characteristics of the church show that the church will always be. Although the church sometimes goes through difficulties and gets attacked, it will exist on earth as long as the order of nature in this world lasts and, in other words, God reigns in this world through His providence. In the quote above Calvin, in his lecture, elucidates the perpetuity of the church based on the order of nature. But in his sermon on Jer. 16:19-21 his explanation for the perpetuity is existence of God: "let us conclude that there is one church on earth as long as there is one God in heaven. As He reigns in heaven, He has His body on earth."⁷⁷ In his sermon, Calvin emphasizes 'one' God and 'one' church thereby teaching that as long as God is in heaven and rules, the church will remain on earth.⁷⁸ Therefore, from another perspective, the perpetuity of the church means the stability of the church because God always blesses the church.⁷⁹ That is, God preserves His church in His amazing way despite the difficulties the church has, and He never lets the church collapse.⁸⁰

In sum, Calvin again stresses that the spiritual characteristics of the Kingdom of Christ guarantees the perpetuity of the church, and that the people of the Kingdom in the community of the perpetual church have the promise of everlasting salvation by communion of Christ.

14.6 Christ and the Church as His Body

⁷⁶ CO 38. 704 (COR II 6/2. 1211; Jer. 31:40). "Haec igitur perpetuitas est de qua concionatur Propheta, nempe quae respondet naturae Regni Christi, ideoque spiritualis est. Caeterum docet hic locus aeternam fore Ecclesiam, et quamvis graviter Deus permittat ipsam concuti hinc inde, tamen semper aliquod semen fore residuum quantisper fulgebunt Sol et Luna in coelo, et vigebit ordo naturae, ..."; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 4, 152.

⁷⁷ Calvin, *Sermons*, 88 (Sermon 13 on Jer. 16: 19-21). "Concluons donc que autant de temps qu'il y aura un Dieu au ciel, il y aura une Eglise en terre; et comme il est regnant là sus, il aura son corps çà bas."

⁷⁸ Wilcox, "The restoration of the Church", 88.

⁷⁹ CO 38. 633 (COR II 6/2. 1119; Jer. 30:19). "Ergo Deus promittit firmum et diuturnum statum Ecclesiae, quoniam de die in diem, et ab anno in annum prosequetur suam gratiam."

⁸⁰ CO 38. 704 (COR II 6/2. 1211; Jer. 31:40). "... quia etiam si quotidie Satan, et totus mundus minetur ei interitum, Dominus tamen mirabiliter eam usque ad finem conservabit, ut non pereat in saeculum."

The return of the Israelites happened under the guidance of the divine will that intended to make them one nation. Calvin thinks that the splitting off of the Israelites from the Davidic line was an act of divine wrath. Nonetheless, after having sent them out as exiles, God brought them back to Canaan and united them so that they not be divided again.⁸¹ Because of the return of the Israelites, Calvin focuses on the reunion of brothers (*fraterno consensus*). According to him, there is no greater goodness than this reunion because God chose to unite the descendants of Abraham as one body under one head.⁸² God let them enjoy abounding divine grace through their return. For this, He sets Christ in their center because they could not experience this grace without Christ.⁸³ So, God made them unite with Christ and called them over to the church.⁸⁴ In other words, God made them one body with Christ as their only head.⁸⁵ Moreover, not only the Israelites, but also other tribes could be united in Christ.⁸⁶ Even if there were no holy place where a few sincere believers gather, God would gather His elect in His own mysterious way. Calvin also argues that the divine calling is not momentary, but happens continuously over time; that is why believers still continue to come into the church.⁸⁷

In this context, describing Christ as the sole head of the church, Calvin criticizes the Catholic Church which forsakes this doctrine. Under the papacy, they argue that all ministers, including the pope and bishops, represent the church, and that the high ministers are successors of the apostles.⁸⁸ Specifically, they serve the pope as the head of their church and their master. On this Calvin severely denounces them, and furthermore, calls the pope Satan.⁸⁹ Such beliefs about the Catholic Church

⁸¹ CO 39. 394 (COR II 6/2. 1713-4; Jer. 50:4). "... Regnum vero Israel esset maledictum (defecerat enim a familia Davidis), illa vero erat quaedam impia Dei abnegatio. ... hoc est, Deus non tantum dispersionem illam colliget, sed remedium adhibebit ut nulla sit amplius dissensio: ..."

⁸² CO 39. 394 (COR II 6/2. 1713; Jer. 50:4). "Deus enim hac lege semen Abrahae adoptaverat, ut essent unum corpus sub uno capite: ..."

⁸³ CO 39. 46 (COR II 6/2. 1267; Jer. 32:41). "Atqui Prophetae, quemadmodum dixi, incipiunt a reditu populi : sed statuunt simul Christum in medio, ut cognoscant fideles reditum illum fuisse tenuem duntaxat gustum plenae gratiae, quae a Christo demum expectanda erat."

⁸⁴ CO 39. 46 (COR II 6/2. 1267; Jer. 32:41). "Dicimur autem inseri in Christum et plantari, cum Deus in Ecclesiam suam nos adoptat: ..."

⁸⁵ "Following Augustine, Calvin argues that Christ is predestined to be our head even as we are predestined to be his members." Muller, *Christ and the Decree*, 36; McGrath, *John Calvin*, 170-1.

⁸⁶ CO 39. 389 (COR II 6/2. 1707; Jer. 49:39). "Sed minime dubium est quin Propheta hic spem faciat Elamitis quam fecit antehac aliis gentibus, nempe ut coalescant rursus sub Christo capite."

⁸⁷ CO 38. 598 (COR II 6/2. 1073; Jer. 29:14). "... nempe Deum occulta ratione congregaturum esse omnes suos electos, cum tamen ubique horrenda esset vastitas, et nullus esset angulus in mundo, ubi habitarent tres vel quatuor fideles. Videmus ergo non uno duntaxat tempore fuisse impletum hoc vaticinium, sed describi nobis Dei gratiam quam saepius antehac exeruit, et nunc adhuc exerit in congreganda Ecclesia."

⁸⁸ CO 38. 309 (COR II 6/1. 709; Jer. 18:18). "... praesentari Ecclesiam in Papa et Episcopis et toto Clero. Deinde Praelatos, ut vocant, esse successores Apostolorum."

⁸⁹ CO 38. 575 (COR II 6/2. 1044-5; Jer. 28:11). "Sic Papistae crepant nomina praesulum et Episcoporum, seque successores Apostolorum gloriantur: diabolus autem ille eorum princeps vocat se Christi vicarium in terris."

prove that they are not a community of believers with Christ as its head. This shows a clear need for the reformation of the Catholic Church during Calvin's era. Calvin says that all kinds of blessings belong to Christ and everyone is miserable unless they are ruled by Christ and serve Him as high priest.⁹⁰ Through this argument Calvin stresses His office as high priest as well as that of King. Not only the high priests in the Old Testament but also the Levites represent Christ before His coming.⁹¹ When the priesthood in the ancient church and its system were corrupted, God wanted His people to look towards Christ, the true and only Mediator between God and people, not to look at external symbols.⁹² Christ is the Head of His church and the true Mediator between God and men. He does not offer sacrifices in worship services, but has completed every duty given to His people in the symbols of the Israelite rituals.⁹³ Moreover, Christ is the true high priest and justifies the people of His body. This is possible because everything belonging to the head of the church is common to every member of His church.⁹⁴ Calvin argues that since God the Father has given His son righteousness for His people, it is not surprising that the Son's righteousness is transferred to His members.⁹⁵ In other words, every member who accepts Christ as their head is united with Christ right after they are engrafted onto Him, and by this union they become righteous according to the righteousness of Christ. Likewise, those who become a part of the body of Christ enjoy everything in common with Christ. Furthermore, because other members enjoy things belonging to Christ in common, every member of the one body can have communion with the saints (*Communion Sanctorum*) centered on Christ.⁹⁶ Of the people united with Christ, Calvin says

⁹⁰ CO 39. 70 (COR II 6/2. 1298; Jer. 33:18). "Sed quemadmodum diximus, tenere principium illud convenit, omnes beatitudinis numeros hic comprehendi: ut rursus semper miseri sunt homines nisi regantur a Christo, et habeant eum Sacerdotem."

⁹¹ CO 39. 70 (COR II 6/2. 1297; Jer. 33:17). "Sequitur ergo, Sacerdotium illud fuisse umbratile: et Levitas gestasse personam Christi usque ad ejus adventum."

⁹² CO 39. 71 (COR II 6/2. 1299; Jer. 33:18). "Sed hoc modo testari voluit Deus expectandum esse alium Sacerdotem, neque ita manendum esse in figuris, quin mentes altius attollerent, nempe ad eum qui futurus esset unicus mediator ad placandum Deum."

⁹³ CO 39. 71 (COR II 6/2. 1299; Jer. 33:18). "Christus enim non mactavit vitulos, neque suffitum fecit, sed implevit ea omnia, quae tunc ostensa fuerunt populo sub figuris."; Harms, *In God's Custody*, 117. Calvin said, "the Catholic church divorced itself from Christ as head by inventing self-styled worship contrary to God's law."

⁹⁴ CO 39. 68 (COR II 6/2. 1295; Jer. 33:16). "Tandem adjungit, *Et hoc nomen quo vocabunt eam, Jehovah justitia nostra*. Cap. 23 hoc nomen Christo datum fuit, et proprie etiam competit in ipsum solum: nunc autem transfertur ad Ecclesiam, nempe quidquid proprium et capiti commune fit omnibus membris."

⁹⁵ CO 39. 68-9 (COR II 6/2. 1295; Jer. 33:16). "Cum ergo contulerit Pater Filio suo justitiam nostra causa, non mirum est, si ad nos transfertur quod penes ipsum residet."

⁹⁶ Weber, *Die Treue Gottes*, 108; Milner, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Church*, 182-8.

Now this passage is especially useful; for we may hence learn what is the right state of the Church; it is when all agree in one faith. But we must, at the same time, see what the foundation of this faith is. The Papists indeed boast of this union, but yet they pass by what ought to hold the first place, that is, that all must have regard to the only true God, according to what they are taught by his word.⁹⁷

One can learn what the church is through the fact that the church is one body with Christ as its head, Calvin states; ... every part of it is unified within the one faith.⁹⁸ This focuses on the church as of faith, and the faith mentioned by Calvin is to worship God alone, according to the word of God. In this exposition, he emphasizes having faith and worshipping God according to His word. So, having Christ as the head of the church means that one can worship God rightly in faith through Christ. As Calvin says in his interpretation of Jer. 6:20, the Holy Spirit splashes the blood of Christ on believers' hearts, thereby their sins and defilements are cleansed.⁹⁹ Also, every ceremony in the church is Christ-centered.¹⁰⁰ As a result, in a church having Christ as its head, its members can worship God with pure hearts through Christ. Therefore, becoming one body with Christ as its head first means union with Christ, second the communion of the saints. This union ensures that the members worship God through Christ in faith together.

14.7 The Union with Christ and His Presence

The analogy that Christ is the head and the elect are the body of Christ is another expression of the union between Christ and the people of God. Through the grace of being one body in Christ, the people of God become the ones who communicate with Christ. In order to understand the meaning of this union it is necessary to grasp the meaning of Holy Communion.¹⁰¹ Calvin teaches that those

⁹⁷ CO 38. 649 (COR II 6/2. 1139-40; Jer. 31:6). "Est autem locus hic apprimè utilis, quia hinc colligimus quisnam sit verus Ecclesiae status, ubi scilicet consentiunt omnes in unam fidem. Sed simul videndum est ubi fundata sit illa fides. Papistae quidem gloriantur de suo consensu, sed interea praetermittunt quod debebat tenere primum gradum, nempe ut omnes in Deum unum respiciant, quemadmodum edocti sunt ejus verbo."; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 4, 65.

⁹⁸ "The church is the body of Christ - Calvin thus speaks of the church in the singular. The church is called "catholic" or "universal," because there could not be two or three churches unless Christ be torn asunder - which cannot happen! (*Inst.* 4.1.2)." Plasger, "Ecclesiology," 326.

⁹⁹ CO 37. 663 (COR II 6/1. 260; Jer. 6:20). "Neque enim alibi quaerenda est expiatio, quam in sanguine illius, ut dum Spiritus Sanctus animas nostras eo aspergit puri simus ab omni macula."

¹⁰⁰ CO 38. 287 (COR II 6/1. 680; Jer. 17:22). "..., quam alias ceremonias fuisse umbras Christi venturi, in ipso esse solidum corpus."

¹⁰¹ CO 38. 226 (COR II 6/1. 602; Jer. 15:16). "Cum dicimur comedere Christum, certe hoc refertur ad conjunctionem, quae nobis est cum ipso, quoniam sumus unum corpus et unus Spiritus: ..."

who become one body with Christ share one spirit with Him.¹⁰² It means that Christ is always with them.¹⁰³ In other words, through communicating with Christ as their head they experience His presence every day, thereby becoming one with Christ. Likewise, those who become one body and one spirit with Christ also become reconciled with God and become atoned for completely by Christ.¹⁰⁴ Then they are able truly to worship God in spirit. In his sermons Calvin also states that God reveals Himself through His word in Christ. This is also a benefit that union with Christ provides. Christ is true life from the beginning of the world, and provider of various blessings, so through Christ His body can receive everything from Him. According to Calvin, all good things come from the divine word through Christ.¹⁰⁵ Thus, those who are separated from Christ cannot understand the divine word, but only those united with Christ can enjoy the word.¹⁰⁶ In particular, Calvin argues that those who want to have God as their righteousness must seek Christ because divine righteousness cannot be found anywhere but in Christ.¹⁰⁷ So those united with Christ can be called righteous. These righteous people are required to be diligent and to persevere in this world until they receive everlasting life.¹⁰⁸ They cannot help being in a perpetual struggle until God ultimately saves them. Thus, their fight against the devil is inevitable.¹⁰⁹ Various troubles await them but they should not be submit to them because God will always help them. Calvin emphasizes the fact that God always protects His people and that He is always ready to help whenever they are in need. His people must trust the constancy of His help.¹¹⁰ Believers are part of the body having Christ as its head and they

¹⁰² “The Spirit of God flows through Christ unto the whole Church, and therefore God gives His Spirit to the elect.” Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 59; “Where the *Spiritus Christi* is, there is the *corpus Christi*.” Milner, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Church*, 180.

¹⁰³ Parker, *Calvin An Introduction*, 131.

¹⁰⁴ CO 37. 690 (COR II 6/1. 294; Jer. 7:22). “... deinde sacrificia erant vivae Christi imagines: erant certa pignora expiationis, ut homines reconciliarentur cum Deo, ... et erant instituta ut homines adducerent ad poenitentiam.”

¹⁰⁵ Calvin, *Sermons*, 118 (Sermon 17 on Jer. 17:11-14). “... car, qui est celluy qui pourra monter à Dieu pour le trouver en sa majesté glorieuse? Mais quoy? il se monstre à nous en Jesucrist. Voila pourquoy il est dict qu’il est dès le commencement la vie et qu’il a plenitude de tous biens, affin que nous prenions tous de luy grace pour grace. Aprenons que comme Dieu s’est tousjours manifesté par sa parole, maintenant qu’il s’est apparu à nous par Jesucrist, ...”; Zachman, *Reconsidering John Calvin*, 110.

¹⁰⁶ Latini, “The Church as Mother:,” 195.

¹⁰⁷ CO 38. 413 (COR II 6/1. 843; Jer. 23:6). “Si ergo cupimus Deum habere justitiam nostram, Christus nobis quaerendus est, quia hoc non nisi in ipso completur. Ergo Dei justitia nobis exhibita fuit in Christo, ...”

¹⁰⁸ CO 39. 46 (COR II 6/2. 1268; Jer. 32:41). “Ideo *per totum cor et per totam animam* intelligit constantiam, quae semper habebit suum effectum usque dum fideles ad vitam aeternam perveniant.”

¹⁰⁹ CO 39. 68 (COR II 6/2. 1295; Jer. 33:16). “Se enim nimium fallunt qui imaginantur hic quietem, quia necesse est defungi perpetua militia, ut tandem colligat nos Deus in fruitionem beatae quietis. Certandum igitur est in hoc mundo.”

¹¹⁰ CO 39. 68 (COR II 6/2. 1295; Jer. 33:16). “... Deum gerere curam salutis nostrae ita ut nos protegat virtute sua, ut auxilium ejus semper nobis praesto futurum sit quoties opus erit.”

become righteous by union with Christ and persevere in holiness through participation in the church.

Moreover, Calvin assures readers that union with Christ is deeply related to the life of believers.

Hence the truth, the reality, is to be sought in no other but in Christ. And we hence learn that the Church is dead, and is like a maimed body, when separated from its head. If, then, we desire to live before God, we must come to Christ, who is really the spirit or the breath of our nostrils;¹¹¹

By emphasizing union with Christ, Calvin argues that separation from Christ is death. For him, it is to gain life that Christ and believers become one body and one community. In other words, those who are separated from Christ or those who want to be separated are dead. Calvin states that those united with Christ are living in Christ although their life is hidden therein. He argues that even if they die physically, their life is still in heaven.¹¹² Likewise, the union between the people of God and Christ gives His people everlasting life. Such union abounds in divine comfort which believers united with Christ enjoy. By ensuring this, the believers can have hope for salvation.¹¹³

In his exposition of Jeremiah dealing with the characteristics of the church as the body of Christ, Calvin focuses on the doctrines of the divine presence and salvation in the relationship between God and His people. For the Israelites during the era of Jeremiah, their return and the restoration of their temple in Jerusalem were more important than anything else. This shows that Calvin's interpretation is confined to and dependent on the context of the text. In fact, in his *Institutes* of 1559, Calvin deals with the benefits believers enjoy in relationships in church, as well as the relationship between God and themselves.¹¹⁴

14.8 Conclusion

¹¹¹ CO 39. 625 (COR II 7. 403; Lam. 4:20). "Ergo veritas non alibi quam in Christo quaerenda est. Et hinc colligimus Ecclesiam esse mortuam, et similem corpori trunco ubi a suo capite divellitur. Ergo si cupimus coram Deo vivere, ad Christum veniendum est, qui vere est spiritus, vel anhelitus narium nostrarum."; Cf. Calvin, *Commentaries on Jeremiah*, vol. 5, 485.

¹¹² CO 39. 625 (COR II 7. 403; Lam. 4:20). "Contra quamdiu viget inter ipsum et nos sacra conjunctio, etiam si vita nostra sit abscondita et simus mortui, tamen in ipso vivimus: et quamvis mortui simus mundo, vita tamen nostra est in coelis, ..."

¹¹³ CO 2. 748 (*Inst.* 4.1.3). "In ipso quoque nomine communionis plurimum est consolationis: quod dum ad nos pertinere fixum est, quidquid membrum suis ac nostris largitur Dominus, omnibus eorum bonis spes nostra confirmatur."

¹¹⁴ See *Inst.* 4.1.3-5.

In this chapter we have dealt with Calvin's ecclesiology, and focused on the second Person of the Trinity. In his ecclesiology, 'Christ' plays an important role: God placed Christ in the center, as He newly chose (again) His people. There is a clear difference between the church which has Christ as its center and the church with a Pope as its center. Discussing such churches in his interpretation of Jeremiah seems to be central to Calvin's attempt to draw connections between the church of the Old Testament and the church of 16th century. His connections do justice to the complexity of the comparison. Moreover, by saying that all the covenants are built upon Christ, Calvin notes that all the Christ-centered churches are based on the same covenant. Upon this, Calvin reveals the characteristics of the church through the analogy of 'the Kingdom of Christ' and 'the body of Christ' while explaining the two offices of Christ: 'King' and 'Priest.' Through this simile Calvin reveals the characteristics of the church, in particular that the church is a community of spirit. And its spiritual character shows the stability and perpetuity of the church. Christ-centered churches are spiritual, perpetual and stable. Moreover, it is apparent that the church, as the Kingdom of Christ, has existed and will exist until the time God determines to conclude it. This means that a church is a dynamic community gradually moving towards the time all the people of God are saved. That is to say, a church is a dynamic community in the course of the *Ordo Salutis*. Calvin's ecclesiology suggests that all churches are one by *Unio cum Christo*. Therefore, it can be said that his ecclesiology has elements of both christology and soteriology. Calvin's Christ-centered ecclesiology speaks plainly of his hope for the church.

Chapter XV. Oecolampadius (1482-1531) and His Jeremiah Commentary

15.1 Introduction

Some scholars argue that Calvin was influenced not only by Bucer and Luther, but also by Oecolampadius, the theologian of Basel.¹ Specifically, the hermeneutics and preaching of Oecolampadius had a great effect on Calvin's hermeneutics.² Calvin praised him in a letter to Viret in 1540: "No one, as I think, has hitherto more diligently applied himself to this pursuit than Oecolampadius, who has not always, however, reached the full scope or meaning."³ This tells us that Calvin had read the books of Oecolampadius in the early stage of his ministry,⁴ and that Calvin was aware of Oecolampadius' endeavors to find the true meaning of the Bible.

The purpose of this chapter is to compare Calvin's interpretation of Jeremiah with that of Oecolampadius. Through this comparison we find similarities and differences in the ecclesiology of Calvin and Oecolampadius. However, there is a clear limitation in this chapter: we cannot do a comprehensive study of the extensive works of Oecolampadius. So, based on Calvin's ecclesiology (Part II above), we will deal with excerpts in this study.⁵

15.2 Understanding Oecolampadius

15.2.1 Biographical Summary

Luther praised Oecolampadius, saying that he was a faithful and candid Christian, and a man of excellent theological knowledge.⁶ Oecolampadius was a pastor and theologian of Basel having a

¹ Poythress, *Reformer of Basel*, 55; Kuhr, "Calvin and Basel:," 19-33; Byars, "Eucharistic Prayer in the Reformed tradition," 114-132.

² Brashler, "From Erasmus to Calvin," 165-6; "... proving that John Calvin used Oecolampadius' commentary, at least late in his life." Boer, *John Calvin on the Visions*, 83; Burnett, *Teaching the Reformation*, 58-9; Muller, "The Hermeneutic of Promise," 79-80; Fisher, *A Christoscopic Reading of Scripture*, 46-51.

³ Calvin, *Letters of Calvin*, 64.

⁴ Ganoczy, *Jeune Calvin*, 178.

⁵ From the Oecolampadius' work, the researcher looked into all the biblical verses that are studied in Part II. In some verses, Oecolampadius' interpretation does not contain anything related to church. So, this chapter examines the selected verses suitable to the ecclesiology and compares to the interpretation of Calvin.

⁶ LW 48. 255, 258.

good reputation.⁷ He was born in Weinsberg in 1482 and died in November 1531, forty days after the death of Zwingli.⁸ He was educated at the Latin school in Heilbronn, and then studied theology and the classical languages at Heidelberg University from 1499 to 1503.⁹ After that, he was ordained as a Catholic priest and served as a preacher at St. John's Church in Weinsberg in 1510. Three years later he began his studies at the University of Tübingen. There he became a friend of Phillip Melanchthon and became skilled at Greek, Hebrew and Latin.¹⁰ In September 1515, Erasmus was making the first edition of the *Novum Instrumentum* at the famous publisher of Basel, Froben.¹¹ At that time, Oecolampadius worked as an editorial assistant to Erasmus.¹² He also studied at the University of Basel, and received a doctorate of theology in 1518. Meanwhile, he was appointed as the confessor priest at the cathedral of Basel. During that period, he completed a Greek grammar, and became renowned as a patristic scholar.¹³ Near the end of 1518 he was called to be the cathedral preacher in Augsburg. During this time, Oecolampadius read the writings of Luther. It seems that that reading precipitated a crisis for his faith in the Catholic Church. After that, he went to the Brigittine monastery at Altomünster in April 1520 in order to resolve his religious questions on Luther's arguments.¹⁴ There, Oecolampadius translated some of the writings of a few Church Fathers, and wrote about not only Holy Communion and the Virgin Mary, but also the teachings of Luther. Later, in 1522 he went to Basel and remained there for the rest of his life. He became friends with Zwingli at that time, and was converted to his Reformed faith.¹⁵ Soon, he became a preacher at the St. Martin church and taught at the University of Basel. In Basel Oecolampadius invested his remaining years in preaching, lecturing and translating the Church Fathers.

⁷ Fudge, "Icarus of Basel?," 268 citing for example, *Erasmi Epistolae*, 2:168. Erasmus also called him as a "true theologian,"; Cf. Sime, *Life of Ulrichus Zuinglius*, 136. Zwingli mentioned Oecolampadius as a "model of piety and erudition."

⁸ Poythress, *Reformer of Basel*, 33-4.

⁹ Poythress, *Reformer of Basel*, 2.

¹⁰ Brashler, "From Erasmus to Calvin," 163; Poythress, *Reformer of Basel*, 4-5.

¹¹ Fisher, *The Old Testament Editor*, 39. The *Novum Instrumentum* is over 1000 pages with 27 pages of prefaces: a letter from the printer, a dedication to Pope Leo X, the *Paraclesis* (exhortation to the reader to study Scripture), the *Methodus* (a program of theological studies), and the *Apologia* (a defense of the purpose of the work and reasons for changes in the text).

¹² "Erasmus hired Oecolampadius to help with the Hebrew of the OT quotations in his publication of the Greek NT. In this role Oecolampadius functioned as a *castigator*, a term that can describe a wide range of editorial activities from basic proofreading and copy editing to actually making decisions about the correct reading of a manuscript and even to deciding what to include in a volume." Brashler, "From Erasmus to Calvin," 163.

¹³ Fisher, *A Christoscopic Reading*, 16-17.

¹⁴ Brashler, "From Erasmus to Calvin," 164.

¹⁵ Fisher, *A Christoscopic Reading*, 17.

This theologian of Basel endeavored to establish the reformed church in the city. In December 1528 radicals, including hundred guildsmen, undertook a forced iconoclasm.¹⁶ As a result, a new *Reformationsordnung* (Church Order) was issued by the city council on April 1, 1529. Consequently, Oecolampadius became the head pastor of the Münster, and had outstanding success as a religious leader in Basel.¹⁷ However, his influence did not last long. Not long after Zwingli passed away at the Battle of Kappel in October 1531, Oecolampadius also died of the plague in November 1531. He was 49 years old.¹⁸ He once belonged to the Catholic Church, but he had lived as a professor, reformed pastor, and writer of many reformed books in Basel since 1522. Furthermore, his commentaries were often mentioned and quoted by theologians and commentators of later times.¹⁹ Calvin is certainly one of the reformers who used Oecolampadius' commentaries.²⁰

15.2.2 Commentary on the Book of Jeremiah

Oecolampadius taught theology at the University of Basel from 1523 until he died in 1531. According to Fisher, there is an important difference between his lectures and sermons: “the sermons had more general exposition and application organized around a theme or topic whereas the lectures proceeded verse-by-verse and included more philological issues.”²¹ Oecolampadius' sermon style and theology became important for preachers in Basel because they had to deliver evangelical messages in their preaching.²² He tried, in his preaching, to clarify the genuine meaning of authors of the Bible through exegesis. So he referred to the writings of Church Fathers, the commentaries of Jewish

¹⁶ Fudge, “Icarus of Basel?,” 277.

¹⁷ Fisher, *A Christoscopic Reading*, 20; Fudge, “Icarus of Basel?,” 280.

¹⁸ Fudge, “Icarus of Basel?,” 282. The news of Zwingli's defeat and death caused Oecolampadius to fall ill. He did not recover.

¹⁹ Muller, “Biblical Interpretation in the Sixteenth,” 142.

²⁰ de Boer, *the Visions of Ezekiel*, 80-84.

²¹ Fisher, *A Christoscopic Reading*, 71; Burnett, *Teaching the Reformation*, 58-9. According to Burnett, in Basel, there were two forms of sermon. “The older model was the patristic homily, in which the preacher expounded a section of Scripture phrase by phrase or verse by verse. ... The other model was that of classical oratory, which Protestant humanist like Melancthon adapted to the demands of the pulpit. In this style, the contents of the sermons were arranged according to theological *loci* or *topics* draw from the Scripture text. Oecolampadius' earliest printed sermons, preached while he was in Augsburg, were more closely tied to the church festival on which they were preached than to a specific Scripture text. By contrast, the sermons preached in Basel, particularly those preached serially, were concerned with explaining the contents of Scripture passage by passage.”

²² Burnett, *Teaching the Reformation*, 61. Because all of Basel's clergies were required to attend the daily lectures in the cathedral, they had ample opportunity to hear Oecolampadius' teaching, which they could then use for their own sermons.

Rabbis, and Latin medieval exegetes in order to discover the true meaning of the Bible.²³ His interpretation contained considerations of historical data, information about customs and social habits of not only biblical times, but also his era.²⁴

The Bible was necessary for Oecolampadius to edify his congregation. Thus, he thought that the prophets' words can literally point to the historical situations of their own times, and at the same time the theological dimension of the words can be extended to the churches of all time.²⁵ His lectures and sermons resulted in 16 commentaries in 39 editions. They dealt with at least sections of 23 books of the Bible. He lectured on the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations from 1526 to 1527, and these lectures were first published posthumously as a set of 3 books in Strasbourg in 1533.²⁶ Later on the commentaries on Jeremiah and Lamentations were republished three times in Geneva in 1558, 1577, and 1578 along with commentaries on Job and the Prophets.²⁷ Oecolampadius' commentaries on Jeremiah were first published in Geneva in 1558 and Calvin lectured on the book of Jeremiah at Geneva Academy in 1560. Therefore, there is a high likelihood that Calvin consulted Oecolampadius' commentaries when he lectured on the book of Jeremiah.²⁸

15.2.3 Calvin and Oecolampadius

Calvin did not meet Oecolampadius in person. However, in 1534, Calvin wrote parts of and preface to the *Institutes* of 1536 while in Basel.²⁹ This was three years after Oecolampadius had died. Reformed theology in Basel was maintained by Myconius who was the successor of Oecolampadius. Therefore, although the reformer Oecolampadius did not live in Basel, his theological teachings and reformed faith remained influential there.³⁰ So, Calvin may have observed Oecolampadius' abiding influence while in Basel.

²³ Fisher, *A Christoscopic Reading*, 73-74.

²⁴ Poythress, *Reformer of Basel*, 70-1.

²⁵ Brashler, "From Erasmus to Calvin," 165.

²⁶ Fisher, *A Christoscopic Reading*, 75.

²⁷ Poythress, *Reformer of Basel*, 167-8. The preface of the edition 1558 was written by Bullinger. He said there that Oecolampadius' teaching is vindicated and that he is a most pious and learned man (*Ioannis Oecolampadii viri piissimi et doctissimi*).

²⁸ Muller, "The Hermeneutic of Promise," 79-80; de Boer, *John Calvin on the Visions of Ezekiel*, 83.

²⁹ Selderhuis, *John Calvin*, 44-5; Brashler, "From Erasmus to Calvin," 164.

³⁰ Demura, "Two Commentaries," 165-6; Poythress, *Reformer of Basel*, 46-7; Fisher, *A Christoscopic Reading*, 21-2.

Research on Oecolampadius' influences on Calvin has often been undertaken. Some scholars argue that the Genevan order of ecclesiastical discipline is on the same line as Basel's church order.³¹ There is also the suggestion of similarity between Oecolampadius and Calvin on their understanding of election in the covenantal plan.³² Some scholars also argue that Calvin's thoughts on Holy Communion had something to do with that of Oecolampadius'.³³ Furthermore, some do not ignore Oecolampadius' contribution to Calvin's commentaries and lectures.³⁴ In particular, Muller states that the republication of Oecolampadius' commentaries in Geneva during Calvin's lectures on the Minor Prophets is definite evidence of Oecolampadius' influence on Calvin's exegesis.³⁵ Calvin regarded Oecolampadius' commentaries highly and often referred to them.³⁶ There seem to be numerous similarities between Calvin and Oecolampadius. They were both interested in the biblical languages,³⁷ and both tried to find the authentic intentions of the biblical authors. Even though they sometimes interpreted allegorically, they tried to interpret the Bible literally and historically.³⁸ They also endeavored to apply biblical texts to the churches of their ages.³⁹ Above all, their biblical interpretations were Christ-centered.⁴⁰

In sum, their hermeneutics adhere to the biblical texts, and was practiced for their churches. Moreover, their hermeneutics were Christ-centered. In the next section, these points will be dealt with by comparing their interpretations of the book of Jeremiah.

³¹ For more, see Kuhr, "Calvin and Basel," 19-33 and Kuhr, "Die Macht des Bannes und der Busse: Kirchenzucht und Erneuerung der Kirche bei Johannes Oekolampad (1482-1531) (Bern: Lang, 1999); Also see Akira Demura, "Church Discipline According to Johannes Oecolampadius in the Setting of His Life and Thought," (PhD diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1964); Poythress, *Reformer of Basel*, 47-8.

³² Poythress, *Reformer of Basel*, 49-50.

³³ Brashler, "Oecolampadius, Johannes (1482-1531)," 782; Duke, *Reformation and Revolt*, 44, 57; Byars, "Eucharistic Prayer in the Reformed Tradition," 114-132; Hughes Oliphant Old, *Worship: Reformed According to Scripture* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 129-134.

³⁴ Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, 109; de Boer, *John Calvin on the Visions of Ezekiel*, 81-3; Brashler, "From Erasmus to Calvin," 164-6.

³⁵ Muller, "The Hermeneutic of Promise and Fulfillment," 79-80.

³⁶ Fisher, *A Christoscopic Reading*, 24, 226. According to Fisher, the similar wording of this reminder in the same location repeatedly indicates the parallel concerns and approaches of Calvin and Oecolampadius; Brashler, "From Erasmus to Calvin," 165.

³⁷ "When he chose Oecolampadius to assist him, Erasmus said that he invited "a man not only distinguished in piety, but truly also with distinguished expertise of the three languages, that is the true theologian, Johannes Oecolampadius of Weinsberg." Fisher, "The Old Testament Editor," 41.

³⁸ Opitz, "The Exegetical and Hermeneutical Work," 410-1; Fisher, *A Christoscopic Reading*, 74, 111; Brashler, "From Erasmus to Calvin," 165.

³⁹ Brashler, "From Erasmus to Calvin," 166; Opitz, "The Exegetical and Hermeneutical Work," 410-2.

⁴⁰ Muller, "The Hermeneutic of Promise and Fulfillment," 81.

15.3 Oecolampadius' Exegesis of the Book of Jeremiah

The purpose of this chapter is to compare the ecclesiology of Calvin with that of Oecolampadius as it appeared in their exegesis on the book of Jeremiah. In Part II, we investigated Calvin's ecclesiology through the following five themes: the motif of *meus populus*, the foundation of the church, the fall of the church, the preservation of the church, and the restoration of the church. Based on previous research, we will now look into Oecolampadius' thought on the church by looking at his comments on a few excerpts from Jeremiah - some of the verses used for each theme in the Part II - in this chapter. As noted before, it is not the aim of this chapter to study the whole commentary on Jeremiah of Oecolampadius. But we will treat some portions of the text in order to compare Oecolampadius' thought with that of Calvin.

15.3.1 Covenant as the Motif of God's People

Calvin thinks that the Israelites as the chosen people of God are related to the church, and that their covenant with God is still available for the church.⁴¹ He accepts the idea of a historical continuity between the church of his day and the Israel of the Old Testament.⁴² This caused him to apply the divine word to ancient Israel and to his church in his lectures and sermons. Similarly, Oecolampadius applied the Israelite covenant to the church of his day.

The covenant of Abraham, the covenant of Moses, and the covenant of Christ are by nature very diverse among themselves, and they are affirmed to be different through Scripture. Our Lord God planted the covenant in us at Horeb. He did not plant this covenant in our Fathers, but in you all.⁴³

He first acknowledges the variety of covenants which appear in the Bible. These covenants that were made in diverse situations are subject to the circumstances that the Israelites experienced. Moreover, Oecolampadius taught that God had planted the covenant in not only the ancestors, but

⁴¹ CO 39. 75 (COR II 6/2. 1303; Jer. 33:25-6).

⁴² McGrath, *John Calvin*, 69-70.

⁴³ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 2:162a (Jer. 31:33). "Unde Abrahae foedus, Mosi foedus, Christi foedus, natura inter se diversissima sunt, & adfirmant diversa esse per scripturā. Dominus Deus noster pepigit nobiscū foedus in Horeb, nō cū patribus nostris pepigit Dominus foedus hoc sed vobiscum."; All translations of Oecolampadius' herein are my own.

also in the congregation of his church. In other words, he argued that the believers in the congregation of his church were the same covenanters as the ancient Israelites during his lectures on Jeremiah in Basel in 1526. Oecolampadius clearly stated the continuity of such a covenant: “In God’s view, there is one covenant that is everlasting which was ordained diversely for different times.”⁴⁴ The divine covenants have been made in various times, but the covenant is one and only one and will last forever. He thought that the biblical covenants of various forms are fundamentally the same. This idea is similar to Calvin’s. This one and only covenant was inscribed in the heart of believers by the Holy Spirit during the time of the apostles.⁴⁵ Oecolampadius suggests in his remarks about Jer. 31:33 that there the work of Holy Spirit is in the center of the covenant. The new covenant settles in the heart of believers, which is only possible by the work of Holy Spirit, Oecolampadius states.

You see here that this covenant is new, everlasting and the same. Also, the Holy Spirit and the word of God are not independent (from the covenant). This is because there is no place for the Holy Spirit if it is not the heart of the elect, which is willing to accept the Holy Spirit.⁴⁶

Here, Oecolampadius teaches that the new covenant is inscribed in the heart of the elect. God does not give the new covenant indiscriminately. He writes it down through the Holy Spirit in the heart of the elect. While the old covenant had limitations, since it was given only to the Israelites, the new covenant has a different kind of limitation, since it is given only to the elect regardless of race. It is clear that there is no hurdle of race or nationality in divine election. God has inscribed the new covenant in anyone elected, including the circumcised or the uncircumcised. In other words, He has chosen His people from not only Israel but also from other nations. Otherwise, Oecolampadius’ previous statement, which is that the divine covenant is inscribed on the members of his church, does not make sense.

⁴⁴ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 2:162a (Jer. 31:33). “Apud Deum unum est foedus illud aeternum, quod pro diversitate temporum varie disponitur.”

⁴⁵ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 2: 163a (Jer. 31:33).

⁴⁶ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 2: 163a (Jer. 31:33). “Vides hic novum & aeternum idem esse, & ex eo aeternum, quod spiritus & verba Dei nunquam auferentur. Neque enim spiritui locus est, nisi in cordibus electorum, ut in his locis spiritus accipitur.”

Oecolampadius sees the new covenant fundamentally the same as the previous covenants. He thinks that the new covenant will be everlasting because the Holy Spirit has inscribed it in the hearts of the elect. Moreover, he clearly states that the members of his church could receive the covenant. Through it, like Calvin, he teaches in his exegesis of Jeremiah that the church is established based on the covenant.

15.3.2 Word and Worship as the Foundation of the Church

Calvin takes the proclamation of the word as so important that it is the very sign of the church. According to him, God is present to His people through His word and communicates with them. So, the church could not exist without the proclamation of His word, he argues.⁴⁷ In order to focus on the importance of the word at church, Calvin describes the situation of Israel, which lost the books of the Law, in his interpretation of Jer. 1:1. Due to the absence of God's word, the Israelites during Jeremiah's era could not seek the true knowledge of God, and therefore found it difficult to worship God properly.⁴⁸

Having interpreted the same verse, Oecolampadius states that the word of God given through His prophets was absent among them for a long time.⁴⁹ He also points out that during not only the time of the prophets but also in previous times of the Old Testament, the Israelites had not listened to the divine word, but instead committed more sins even though God had shown them miracles.⁵⁰ God sent them His prophets, and Jeremiah was one of those called to proclaim the word of God.

The purpose of the prophet, Jeremiah, is not to foretell the Babylonian captivity of the Israelites, but to proclaim the hope of restoration by divine mercy amid their prolonged captivity.⁵¹

⁴⁷ See the conclusion of Chapter 7.

⁴⁸ CO 37. 472 (COR II 6/1. 19; Jer. 1:1).

⁴⁹ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 1: 1 (Jer. 1:1). "... , Non est verbum, quod dominus non locutus est per prophetas suos,"

⁵⁰ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 1:1 (Jer. 1.1). "... Sed eo miraculo soli hi conspicui erat, qui beneficiorum dei alijs testes ordinati fuerant, tametsi maior hominū ad peccandum tum esset proclivitas, quam ut sancte monentibus aures preberent."

⁵¹ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 1:2 (Jer. 1.1). "Et quoniā scopus prophetae huius est, ut praemoneat ne in captivitatē abigamur, vel, ut in captivitate detentis, spes sit ad libertatem redituram posteritateē per divinam misericordiā."

In the quote above, Oecolampadius emphasizes the mercy of God. The prophet was chosen in order to proclaim the restoration of Judah through divine mercy. The Israelites have continued to ignore the word of God, but God has continued to send them prophets who proclaim His word. God really wanted to communicate with His people. In other words, during Jeremiah's era, the problem was not that the word of God did not reach the Israelites, but that they did not listen to the word of God. Due to the Israelites' stubbornness in listening to God, the divine word could not find a place in them. In his interpretation of Jer. 1:1, Calvin emphasizes that Israel lost the books of the Law. Yet, Oecolampadius points out that the Israelites did not listen to the prophet's proclamation. Nonetheless, their depictions of the situation in Judah were the same. By the absence of the word of God, the Israelites could not possess the knowledge of God as well as the worship of God.

In addition, in his interpretation of Jer. 7:22, Calvin warns that if the light of the divine word does not shine in the hearts of the believers, faith does not grow but superstition and hypocrisy take up residence in the believers.⁵² Those who listen to the divine word and obey God can worship Him in a right way. That is, it is difficult to worship God rightly unless the word of God is delivered to and received them. From this perspective Oecolampadius teaches that unless worshippers first deny themselves and worship God, their worship is meaningless.⁵³ In other words, he thinks that believers cannot worship God properly if they do not have the knowledge of God and true faith in Him through the divine word. It is clear that this true knowledge is gained through Christ, Oecolampadius argues; Christ is the only sacrifice.⁵⁴ He also states:

In John 6[6:28-9], the work of God is to make you believe the Son whom He sent. It is that Christ who is the word and voice of God the Father is to be heard. And, in it the confirmed covenant is to be shown.⁵⁵

⁵² CO 37. 692 (COR II 6/1. 296; Jer. 7:22). "Nisi enim praeleceat nobis Deus verbo suo, nulla eat pietas, sed mera simulatio et superstitio duntaxat: ..."; Millet, "*Docere/Movere*," 50-51.

⁵³ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 1:51a (Jer. 7:22). "Itaque ad cognitionem Dei, hoc est, fidei & ad charitatē docendam, quae pura non est, nisi ex abnegatione sui fluat, huiusmodi caeremoniae praeasriptae sunt."

⁵⁴ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 1:51a (Jer. 7:22). "..., quam ut praemonstrarent Christum unicum sacrificium."

⁵⁵ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 1:51a (Jer. 7:22). "Ioan. vi. Opus Dei est, ut credatis filio, quem misit pater. Hoc enim fuerit Christum audire, quia Christus est verbum & vox partis, & in hoc erit, confirmatio pacti praedicta."

Oecolampadius asserts that listening to Christ, who is the word and voice of God, is to believe in Christ. He naturally connects Christ to the worship of the people of God. Only those who listen to Christ are able to know God well and to worship Him rightly. It is important for the people of God to listen to the divine word. The Israelites who ignored it were ultimately sent to Babylon as captives. Oecolampadius applies this disastrous situation of Israel to his church. According to him, the church which deserts the word of God and hires impious ministers, and becomes ridiculed by many secular people will be mocked by all of the demons as well.⁵⁶ Ignoring the word of God and the proclamation of impious knowledge by false pastors in the church are directly connected to the suffering of the church.

As a result, like Calvin, Oecolampadius emphasizes the importance of worship connected with the true word in Christ, while criticizing impious worship filled with false knowledge and carried out with the inclination of neglecting the divine word.

15.3.3 Total Depravity and Repentance as the Fall of the Church

God accepted the Israelites as His people on the condition that they should be holy and chaste before Him.⁵⁷ He taught them that they have to be holy because He is holy. This does not mean that He accepted them as His people due to their holiness. God wanted them to be holy for them, but they did not listen to Him.

Oecolampadius also asserts, with Calvin: “From youth, Israel has inclined to evil continuously. The people did not listen to [the word of God] nor inclined their ear to hear. Israel did not pay attention perfectly and understand.”⁵⁸ The Israelites who boasted of being the people of God had not listened to the word of God for a long time nor inclined their ear to hear. As a result, they could not understand the divine word nor become holy before God. Their situation only got worse. They could not preserve the Temple that represented their religion because God destroyed the city of

⁵⁶ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 1:72b (Jer. 12:10). “Haec semper licet aptare ad ecclesias, quae destitutae verbo Dei, quae propter hypocrisin merentur accipere doctores impios, ut omnibus daemonibus sint ludibrio.”

⁵⁷ CO 37. 636 (COR II 6/1. 227; Jer. 5:26). “Nam hac lege populum illum Deus sibi adoptaverat, ut regnaret in eo sanctimonia et puritas vitae.”

⁵⁸ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 1:51b (Jer. 7:24). “Omnis enim aetas hominis ab adolescentia in malum propensa est, adeo ut non audiat & non inclinet aurem, id est, non det operam, ut audiat perfecte ac intelligat.”

Jerusalem and its temple. Moreover, while they were captive in Babylon they would suffer there. In their suffering, they would face the trial of idolatry.⁵⁹ Similarly, according to Calvin, idolatry is one of signs of impiety found in the church and the lives of believers in his time.⁶⁰

Then is there any holiness in such wicked people? Is it impossible for them to recover if the people of God are so corrupted? In his interpretation of Jer. 13:23, Oecolampadius describes the corruption of the Israelites as follows:

Why do you ask me about what happened? You are so addicted to evil that you are inclined to commit sins. Then, you ask me for mercy. Like Ethiopians born with dark skin or leopards with spots, your previous wickedness will not be erased or be corrected. Therefore, a man cannot recover from evil by his strength, contrary to the sophists: However, God is able to do what is impossible for man.⁶¹

First, Oecolampadius depicts the corruption of sinful men. They are so comfortable with their sinful life that they follow evil and commit sin. At the same time, they hypocritically ask God for forgiveness. In Oecolampadius' view, the Israelites were born to be wicked, walk in a wicked way, and had no desire to change their life. Oecolampadius understands their wickedness to be natural, just like the dark skin of the Ethiopians' and the spots of the leopards. Calvin had a similar idea in his exegesis of the same verse. Men became more wicked than they were at birth, so they could not repent of their sins. Sin became second nature. In a word, men reached a state of being irrecoverable.⁶² In this way, both Calvin and Oecolampadius argue that the fallen state of men could not be recovered. Their opinion opposed the Catholic Church which denied total depravity and supported the idea of men's ability to gain their own salvation.⁶³ In the quote above, Oecolampadius states that it is impossible for corrupted men to return to God by themselves, but God is able to make

⁵⁹ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 1:64a (Jer. 10:11). "Versus ille Chaldaice scriptus est, ut annunciaretur Judaeis, qui inter Chaldaeos agebāt in confusionem gentium. Quo facto, docet confusionem idolorum minime silendam."

⁶⁰ See Chap. 9.5.

⁶¹ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 1:77a (Jer. 13:23). "Quid quaeris evenit, Tu adsuevisti malis, & malam consuetudinē habes, quare tibi parcerem. Tam nō abolebis, & in melius corriges vitam pristinam, quam nigrorem natium Aethiops, vel Pardus maculas non solet cōmutare, Igitur homo suis viribus non potest respiscere, contra sophistas: sed quod homini impossibile, Deo possibile est."

⁶² CO 38. 172 (COR II 6/1. 532; Jer. 13:23). "Jeremias ergo hic non respicit quae sit hominum natura, vel quid afferant ex utero: sed invehitur adversus Judaeos, qui contraxerant talem habitum ex longo peccandi usu. Quoniam enim obduruerant ad male agendum, dicit non posse respiscere, et ita haerere, vel infixam esse malitiam in ipsorum cordibus: ... denique ut sint prorsus incurabiles: ..."

⁶³ Calvin, *Sermons*, 109-110 (Sermon 16 on Jer. 17:9-11).

them return. The following confession teaches that men's repentance is totally of God (cf. Jer. 31:18-19):

Therefore, accept me now in repentance. Turn to me [toward You] and pour out on me Your Spirit. This is not man's work, but is done by Your gift. It is because repentance begins with the Lord.⁶⁴

Oecolampadius knows that turning to God is not man's work, but is possible when God gives it to a man as a gift. What is impossible for men is possible with God. Here, he makes clear that repentance originates with God. Repentance is impossible by men's own will and power. Thus, for Oecolampadius, true repentance means that men are aware of their nothingness, acknowledge themselves to be sinners, and glorify God.⁶⁵ Working in His people, God disciplines them to be humble and leads them to repent. What the people of God can do is to feel shame for their previous shameful behavior and obey God by listening to Him humbly.⁶⁶ In his interpretation on the same verse, Calvin also clarifies that repentance is the work of the Holy Spirit. In other words, repentance and turning to God are not within men's abilities, but only happens by the power of the Holy Spirit, who turns their hearts to God.⁶⁷

In sum, both Oecolampadius and Calvin have the same thought on men's sinful state and the way to escape from that miserable state. They teach that men are totally depraved, and the only way to escape from that state is through repentance, which is only possible by the divine will.

15.3.4 Sufferings and Church Offices as the Preservation of the Church

Calvin argues that even the people of God cannot avoid difficulties and adversities. He also experienced religious oppression and went through hardship in his ministry in Geneva. Hence, he

⁶⁴ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 2:161b (Jer. 31:18). "Proinde nūc suscipe me in poenitentia, converte me & da mihi spiritū tuū. Necquem hoc hominis fuerit sibi praestare, quae ex dono tuo unius sunt. Initium enim poenitentiae à Domino est, ..."

⁶⁵ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 2:161b (Jer. 31:19). "Vera poenitentia est qua homo se nihil esse, & peccatorem agnoscit, & ubique Deo dat gloriam."

⁶⁶ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 2:161b (Jer. 31:19).

⁶⁷ CO 38. 671 (COR II 6/2. 1168; Jer. 31:19). "Nam sub nomine populi primum fatetur utilem fuisse poenam, quae divinitus fuerat inflictā: deinde adjungit hoc non factum esse hominum virtute, quia sponte redierint ad sanam mentem, sed Deum spiritu suo flexisse eorum corda, ut non obdurescerent ad poenas, neque contumaciter resisterent, ut plerumque fieri solet. Hinc ergo colligimus poenitentiam esse Spiritus Sancti opus."

could not overlook the theme of suffering. He makes clear: “we [believers] are by no means so exposed to the will of the wicked that they can do what they please with us; for God restrains them by a hidden bridle, and rules their hands and their hearts. This truth ought ever to remain unalterable, that our life is under the custody and protection of God.”⁶⁸ Furthermore, Calvin includes the concept of providence while explaining the suffering of God’s people. According to him, all the calamities of the world occur by divine righteous providence.⁶⁹

This thought can also be found in Oecolampadius’ exposition of Jer. 1:1: if prosperity or suffering seem meaningless, what the merciful God has said through the prophets and pious men has not been delivered to His people.⁷⁰ In the exposition, Oecolampadius did not use the word “providence.” But, he implied that prosperity and adversity did not happen accidentally but were declared by the prophets of God. Thus he argues that prosperity and suffering happen according to God’s will. About suffering, Calvin mentions Jeremiah’s proclamation in Jer. 12:12 implying that the calamities of the Israelites are caused by God.⁷¹ However, Oecolampadius does not mention suffering as being caused by God in his exposition of the same verse. He emphasizes that the wickedness of the Israelites and the external attacks of Satan were the cause for the Israelites’ calamities.⁷² However, he asserts that the Holy Spirit exhorted the Israelites in their suffering to fear God so that they should not be corrupted because of carelessness. Moreover, he argues that the people of God should overcome their difficulties to return to God because they know Him. Then he wants them to live innocently and piously.⁷³ Therefore he teaches that if the people of God seek for and call on the Lord in order to be rid of difficulties in their hearts He will turn those difficulties into blessing.⁷⁴ Thus, according to Oecolampadius, the church should guide believers in their suffering to seek God and lead them to a

⁶⁸ CO 38. 526-7 (COR II 6/1. 986; Jer. 26:14). “Interea tenendum est, nos minime esse expositos improborum libidini, ut statuam de nobis quidquid visum fuerit. Deus enim illos occulto fraeno regit, et manus eorum et animos gubernat: et sententia illa manere fixa debet, vitam scilicet nostram esse in fide et custodia Dei.”

⁶⁹ CO 39. 214 (COR II 6/2. 1483; Jer. 41:10). “... neque vero haec calamitas accidit nisi justa Dei providentia.”

⁷⁰ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 1:1 (Jer. 1:1). “Misericors deus, suam erga humanū genus dedarans charitatē, si quando maior rerūciel prosperitas vel adversitas mortalibus obventura esset, nullis nō seculis per prophetas & pios homines eam praedicere dignatus est, ...”

⁷¹ CO 38.144 (COR II 6/1. 496; Jer. 12:12). “Simul etiam admonet, omnium cladum Deum fore autorem: ...”

⁷² Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 1:99b-100 (Jer. 18:13).

⁷³ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 1:99a (Jer. 18:11). “... attamen adhortatur spiritus Domini, ut quisque sibi timeat, ne quando excidat per incuriam. Deinde qui sentit vivā super se maledictionem, ut ad Dominum redeat, hoc est, per cognitionem Dei, que est per fidem innocenter & pie, ...”

⁷⁴ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 1:99a (Jer. 18:11). “... semper tamen invocādo Dominū, ut maledictionem cordis deleat, tum est versurus maledictionem in benedictionem: ...”

pious life.⁷⁵ For this God has given His servants gifts to preserve the church. This is why there should be church office holders. Oecolampadius depicts them as following.

Pastors are the followers of the divine heart, and they teach [the people of God] to follow the word and the Spirit of God, leading [them] to spiritual things and to glorify God; [...] teachers will teach, on the one hand, [the people of God] to reach out to God and, on the other hand, to know and recognize God well.⁷⁶

First of all, according to Oecolampadius, pastors lead believers to follow the word and the Spirit of God. And, teachers teach them to know who God is and help them to recognize God. In the quote above, Oecolampadius distinguishes between pastors and teachers. He argues that while pastors lead the people of God to follow God, teachers focus on teaching them about God. Such a distinction can be found in Calvin's works. Since Oecolampadius is Calvin's predecessor in the reformed tradition we can assume that Calvin was influenced by Oecolampadius. In his interpretation of Jer. 3:15, Calvin argues that the church is formed and nurtured by holy and sincere pastors so the church would be maintained to the end.⁷⁷ Such a role of the church office holder is always important, but it became more important to the faithful who went through difficulties because of religious oppression during Calvin's era.

15.3.5 Election and Christ as the Restoration of the Church

The book of Jeremiah describes the corrupt Israelites who will be exiled to Babylon as well as their future status as returnees to Canaan. However, Calvin asserts restoration does not belong to all Israelites because God would restore only those He chose.⁷⁸ Such is the will of God concerning the elect and the reprobate, and this is revealed in Jer. 24. The prophet Jeremiah taught about the chosen people of God in the parable of the good figs and the bad.

⁷⁵ Baker, "Church Discipline or Civil punishment:," 7-9. To do this, Oecolampadius focused on Church discipline, and argued that the ecclesiastical tribunal separate from magisterial jurisdiction should be established in the church.

⁷⁶ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 1:29a (Jer. 3:15). "Pastores secundum cor Dei sunt, qui secundum spiritum et verbum Dei docent, & ut Deo placent, inducentes ad spiritualia: ... Docebunt igitur doctores, ut populus Deo, tum afficiatur, tum certo eum sciat & cognoscat, ..."

⁷⁷ CO 37. 563 (COR II 6/1. 134; Jer. 3:15). "Sequitur ergo Ecclesiam Dei non tantum gigni opera sanctorum et piorum Pastorum, sed etiam foveri, et ali, et confirmari etiam ejus vitam usque ad extremum."

⁷⁸ CO 39. 24 (COR II 6/2. 1240; Jer. 32: 28). "Postea adjungit se tandem propitium fore exulibus: sed restringitur gratia illa ad solos electos et fideles."

Interpreting Jeremiah 24, Oecolampadius does not use the word, ‘election’, explicitly. He instead states that “the faithful have eternal life, [and] the unfaithful have eternal damnation.”⁷⁹ Oecolampadius argues that the condition of having eternal life depends on whether one has faith or not. Furthermore, he notes that there are two kinds of life according to this condition. Also, he asserts in his interpretation of Jer. 18:11 that the elect are saved in plain sight and that Israel is the seed of the chosen people.⁸⁰ In the matter of election he emphasizes that everything depends on God:⁸¹ “We are unable to understand the word of God. But if someone asks why God chose Jacob and deserted Esau, one should answer that God is the creator of all the things, and righteous, so He would not condemn the innocent.”⁸² Likewise, Oecolampadius acknowledges the will of God regarding His election. However, he does not mention the doctrine of predestination in the context of election as Calvin does.

In interpreting Jer. 24:6, Oecolampadius states that believers will reestablish their homes where they used to live, and be re-rooted to bear fruit again. In addition, he argues that their suffering makes them more stable, leads them not to sin, and helps them to correct their wrongdoings.⁸³ In other words, their suffering will benefit them. Moreover, Oecolampadius clarifies the reason for such divine works in his interpretation of Jer. 24:7.

In a word, the work of God is to make us acknowledge His lordship and glorify Him in the blessed place. The covenant will be certain. Because God is a protector and shepherd, those who hear Him are His people. And, those who pay attention to His voice are (His) sheep.⁸⁴

Oecolampadius clarifies the divine purpose of calling the elect back to Canaan. It is so that the people of God acknowledge Him as their lord and to glorify Him. God is their shepherd and protector. His

⁷⁹ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 2:130a (Jer. 24:2). “Qui credit, habet vitam aeternam, qui non credit, iam condemnatus est.”

⁸⁰ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 1:99a (Jer. 18:11). “Certum est, ab electione salus dependet, & electrū semen est Israēl, ...”

⁸¹ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 1:98b (Jer. 18:6). “Nempe creaturam ita esse in manu Dei, sicut lutum in manu siguli.”

⁸² Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 1:98b-99 (Jer. 18:6). “... ita qui ex nobis nō sunt capaces verbi Dei, reijciunt. Si quis ergo rogat, quare Iacob elegit, Esau reiecit. Responde, Deus est Dominus, in potestate lutum habet, Ipse est justus, non punit innocentes.”

⁸³ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 2:130b (Jer. 24:6). “In bonum, ad placādum, placabor eis & sicut afflixi, ita aedificabo, ut iterum sit domus in qua inhabitem, & plantabo ut iterum sint vinea, proderitque eis casus, ut firmius stent, et non peccent ultra, correcto per poenam priore peccato.”

⁸⁴ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 2:130b (Jer. 24:7). “Summa operum Dei est, ut agnoscamus ipsum Dominum, & demus ei gloriam ubi beneficia agnoverimus. Firmabit foedus, quia ipse Deus, hoc est, protector & pastor, illi vero populus, hoc est, audientes dicto, & oves audientes vocem eius.”

people are to hear the voice of God and follow Him. In other words, as the Holy Spirit comes to those who hear and follow the voice of God, they worship God “through Christ.” They can return to their homeland and resume the true worship of God there.⁸⁵ While explaining the restoration of the elect, Oecolampadius does not overlook Christ.

According to Calvin, even though the prophets begin with the return of the Babylonian captives, they set Christ in the center of the people so that the believers might see the meaning of their return as a glimpse of the fullness of grace.⁸⁶ Through this Calvin implies that when God adopts us as His children and places us in the church, He sets Christ at the center.⁸⁷ Furthermore, Oecolampadius connects Christ to the church by saying that what God promised is realized through Christ, and the day of the comfort of the church is coming.⁸⁸

As declared in chapter 23, the best work is to make the righteous branch of David sprout. This verse is directed towards the Messiah which the Israelites desire. As many seeds and branches grow in a field, David springs forth into Christ. [...] There will be righteousness and judgment. He (Christ) is a good shepherd who protects the sheep from the wolves. And, those who sit with the wicked will not live under His governance.⁸⁹

According to Oecolampadius, the best thing about the church is that Christ becomes its good shepherd, judging things righteously and helping His people live under Christ’s governance absent the wicked. Oecolampadius says that Christ is a high priest and a king with an eternal kingship. He reigns over this world to the end, and protects all who belong to Him forever. He even now rules in the body

⁸⁵ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 2:130b (Jer. 24:7). “Exponit enim quid sit reducere in terram, est reducere in verum Dei cultum, id spiritualiter contingit, si mente per Christum patrem adoramus.”

⁸⁶ CO 39. 46 (COR II 6/2. 1267; Jer. 32:41). “Atqui Prophetae, quemadmodum dixi, incipiunt a reditu populi: sed statuunt simul Christum in medio, ut cognoscant fideles reditum illum fuisse tenuem duntaxat gustum plenae gratiae, quae a Christo demum expectanda erat.”

⁸⁷ CO 39. 46 (COR II 6/2. 1267; Jer. 32:41). “Dicimur autem inseri in Christum et plantari, cum Deus in Ecclesiam suam nos adoptat: ...”

⁸⁸ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 2:174a (Jer. 33:14). “Magna sunt quae promitto & ferme fidem excedentia, sed appropinquant dies, ut eveniant ea quae praedixi, quibus consolabor ecclesia Dei, ne dubites igitur nō iacebunt verba mea.”; Cf. Demura, “Two Commentaries,” 184.

⁸⁹ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 2:174a-174b (Jer. 33:14). “Erit autem hoc potissimum quia germinare faciam David germen iustitiae, sicut supra dictum cap. xxiii. Consentientibus enim Iudaeis hic locus ad Messiam pertinent, & multiplicabitur numerus iustorum sicut germen & gramem in agris, appellaturque Christus David. ... Et faciet iudicium & iustitiam. Ipse pastor bonus suos tuebicur à lupis & concedet ut numo non in regno suo iuste vivat, cessabunt enim peccatores.”

of His elect, those chosen by the Holy Spirit.⁹⁰ On the ruling of Christ, Oecolampadius notes in detail; “parishes are not ruled by either a pope or someone else, but by the one and only shepherd, Christ. He sets His ministers over the parishes and they shepherd the parishes.”⁹¹ Through this statement, Oecolampadius makes clear that the true shepherd of the church is not a pope but Christ. Christ reigns over the churches through His ministers whom He set over the churches. In other words, on the surface, churches seem to be maintained by the endeavor of their ministers, but in reality Jesus Himself rules and shepherds the people of God within the churches.

Like Calvin, Oecolampadius discusses the recovery of God’s people and clarifies the idea that the participants in that recovery are the true elect of God. Also, he argues that Christ is the center of the restoration of the church, and through His reign the people of God will be preserved forever.

15.4 Conclusion

Oecolampadius’ thought on the church appeared in his exposition of the book of Jeremiah can be summarized after having compared it to Calvin’s ecclesiology.

First, Oecolampadius argues that there is continuity between the church of his era and the Israel of the Old Testament. This is because even though the covenant between God and His people was diverse in form, its essence is exactly the same. In addition, he asserted that the covenant was written on the hearts of God’s people; those chosen by God. So, he argues, churches could be established in every nation. Likewise, Calvin also states that since a church is established within the people of God based on the divine covenant, the birth of a church manifests the will of God who chose His people from among all tribes.

Second, Oecolampadius emphasizes hearing the word of God. The absence of the word in church results in the absence of knowledge and faith in God. Therefore, the members of the church cannot worship God in this condition. So, Oecolampadius takes it as important that the church hears

⁹⁰ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 2:174b (Jer. 33:17). “Christus noster, perpetui regni & sacerdotij rex & sacerdos est. Semper regnabit & manebit usque ad consummationē seculi cum suis. Regnat autē in cordibus electorū per spiritū, ceu membris.”

⁹¹ Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 2:174b (Jer. 33:17). “Sicut potestas secularis, neque papae, neque cuiquam alteri hic promittitur, in quibus unus ille pastor regnat, ut supra cap. xxiii. Suscitabo super eos pastores, & pascent eos.”; Cf. Burnett, *Teaching the Reformation*, 59-60. Oecolampadius was also against the Catholic hierarchy of orders and the errors of the Catholic clergy.

Christ who is the word and voice of God. This is the same opinion as Calvin's. It emphasizes that a church without the life-giving divine word is a false church without true worship.

Third, Oecolampadius points out that as people have been wicked for a long time, they are full of idols. The fall of men is irrecoverable, so they can be recovered only by divine power. His idea is the same as Calvin's, but opposes the Catholic Church that supports the idea that men can save themselves.

Fourth, Like Calvin, Oecolampadius thought that the people of God could also suffer, and that this suffering does not happen accidentally. However, he did not believe that the direct author of their calamities is God. In this he differs from Calvin. Furthermore, Oecolampadius states that the people of God, in their suffering, should continue to be pious and live in faith. For this, the churches need church office holders. Oecolampadius distinguishes a pastor from a teacher. But he does not mention elders or deacons in this context.

Finally, Oecolampadius also knew that if believers are truly the people of God, they are the elect, chosen by God. However, his idea of election does not follow the doctrine of predestination like Calvin. Oecolampadius took it to be the best thing for the elect to live under the reign of Christ as they accept Christ as their shepherd. Therefore, he emphasizes that the church will be ruled by Christ, not by a pope.

This comparative study shows that Oecolampadius connects his church with ancient Israel during the era of Jeremiah in the perspective of the covenant. His explanation indicates various periods of the church, just as Calvin does: the beginning of the church, a time of suffering due to its sins, its preservation by God, and its expectation of restoration in Christ.⁹² So, the church is a living organism. Through these periods, God cares for the church and is with it. Oecolampadius' arguments are fundamentally in line with those of Calvin. The publication of many of the commentaries of Oecolampadius in Geneva before Calvin lectured on the book of Jeremiah proves that Calvin's interpretation on Jeremiah is relevant to the interpretation of Oecolampadius.⁹³

⁹² Cf. Wilcox, "The progress of the Kingdom of Christ," 320.

⁹³ Demura, "Two Commentaries," 167.

Chapter XVI. Bullinger (1504-1575) and His Theological Thoughts on Jeremiah

16.1 Introduction

Unlike Oecolampadius (who we examined in the previous chapter), Heinrich Bullinger had personal contact with Calvin over a long period of time. Calvin saw Bullinger as a major commentator on the Bible. According to Calvin, Bullinger explained theological ideas with an ease of expression; thus his interpretations were widely quoted.¹ After Calvin and Bullinger wrote the *Consensus Tigurinus* together in 1549, they shared views on many issues concerning the churches and reached various agreements. Calvin quoted Bullinger regularly in his biblical interpretations more than many of his contemporaries.² Thus, it is useful to analyze and summarize the biblical interpretations of these two theologians. This chapter does not deal with all of Bullinger's sermons on Jeremiah. Only the parts that reveal Bullinger's thought on the church will be excerpted and used as references.

16.2 Understanding Heinrich Bullinger

16.2.1 A Short Biographical Summary

Bullinger was born in Bremgarten near Zurich on July 18, 1504. Even though his father was a Catholic priest, he married Anna Wiederkehr in 1495. The official stance of the Catholic Church was priestly celibacy at that time, but numerous priests had their own families.³ In 1519, Bullinger studied Scholastic theology at the Artes liberales faculty of the Cologne University.⁴ During that time, he became interested in the Reformation in Wittenberg. This caused him to examine his theology.⁵

¹ Kok, "The Model for Calvin?," 241.

² Büsser, "Bullinger as Calvin's Model," 70. Around 1560, when Calvin taught the book of Jeremiah, Bullinger's sermons on Jeremiah were being published in 4 volumes from 1557 to 1561, and his sermons on Lamentations were published on 1561.

³ McKim and West, *Heinrich Bullinger*, 2; Müller, *Heinrich Bullinger*, 22.

⁴ Blanke, *Der junges Bullinger*, 42-4.

⁵ Müller, *Heinrich Bullinger*, 19-20; McKim and West, *Heinrich Bullinger*, 5. As was the case with Zwingli and Luther as well as with Calvin, the "conversion" of Bullinger to an "evangelical" faith was a progressive, slow, measured, steady departure rather than a sudden, dramatic, fiery break; Rüetschi, "Bullinger and the Schools," 218. He gained new ideas while reading the *Loci Communes* of Melancton published in 1521 and the commentaries of Jerome.

Bullinger gave up becoming a monk at the Carthusian Order and returned to his home in 1522 as a humanist equipped with reformation ideas. Not long after his return, he became a teacher at a Cistercian Monastery in Kappel am Albis in 1523. There Bullinger taught students according to the educational method of humanism.⁶ In 1523, Zurich became the first reformed city. In 1525, Bremgarten and Kappel also accepted the reformation. From June to November in 1527, Bullinger had a chance to study theology at the famous *Prophezei*, the institute of theology in Zurich. During that time, he rubbed shoulders with various celebrities in Zurich. In 1528, Bullinger took part in the Bern disputation at the recommendation of Zwingli. Bullinger became a reformed pastor after the first assembly of the Zurich church in April 21, 1528. In 1529, he was called to be a pastor in Bremgarten. Bullinger was thereafter a preacher for 47 years.⁷

At the second battle of Kappel, on October 11, 1531, Zwingli was killed while he served as the chaplain of the Zurich troops which lost the battle against the Catholic troops. As a result, Bremgarten returned to the Catholic faith. So, Bullinger moved to Zurich. On December 9 he was elected to be the minister of the Grossmünster by the senate of Zurich.⁸ Bullinger endeavored to continue the reformation, reorganize the church and pursue social stability.⁹ During his tenure, Bullinger wrote extensively as well as performing his ministry, writing correspondence, and conducting lectures at the *Prophezei*. He published 124 books and preached more than 7,000 times.¹⁰ Moreover, Bullinger exchanged more than 12,000 letters with theologians, pastors and laymen all over Europe.¹¹ Such activity continued until his death, September 17, 1575.¹²

⁶ Müller, *Heirich Bullinger*, 22. Even before the establishment of the *Prophezi* which was the theological institute of Zwingli in Zurich, Bullinger had already laid the foundation for the first reformed theological education in Kappel am Albis.

⁷ McKim and West, *Heinrich Bullinger*, 7.

⁸ Müller, *Heinrich Bullinger*, 10-11; McKim and West, *Heinrich Bullinger*, 8.

⁹ Gordon, "Heinrich bullinger," 171. Bullinger, even as he began negotiations to take the office of chief minister in Zurich in 1531, would not accept the subjugation of God's word to temporal interests. He was, however, shrewd enough to recognize that the survival of the Reformed church lay in the hands of men whose primary interests were not spiritual. He grasped the necessity of compromise, but he wanted that compromise to work for the benefit of the church; Engeler and Opitz, "Zürich," 439.

¹⁰ Müller, *Heinrich Bullinger*, 39.

¹¹ Müller, *Heinrich Bullinger*, 50. These letters still exist. Among them, 2000 letters were written by Bullinger and 10000 were sent to him. This correspondence proves that Bullinger had various friends all over Europe; Engeler and Opitz, "Zürich," 496.

¹² Campi, *seine Zeit*, 35.

16.2.2 The Relationship between Calvin and Bullinger

The first meeting of the two reformers was held in Basel in January, 1536. At that time, due to the persecution of the French Catholic Church, Calvin stayed in Basel as a refugee. During his stay in Basel, all the reformers of Switzerland gathered in Basel in order to write the “*Confessio Helvetica Prior*.”¹³ Bullinger participated in the gathering and met Calvin. After that, their lifelong friendship began.¹⁴ Calvin, while in Geneva corresponded on the Trinity with the pastors of Geneva and Zurich, most particularly on September 3, 1537.¹⁵ The answer to these letters was delivered on November 1, 1537 by Farel and Calvin (*Bullingerus Farello et Calvino*).¹⁶ From then until Calvin’s death, these two exchanged about 285 letters over 27 years.¹⁷

Their correspondences played an important role in the churches of the two cities. First of all, when Calvin resided in Strasbourg after being expelled from Geneva, the city council of Geneva sought help from various reformed churches in Switzerland. At that time, Zurich sent letters asking for the return of Calvin to Geneva both to the pastors in Strasbourg¹⁸ and to Calvin.¹⁹ Another positive example of this correspondence appears in the process of the writing of the *Consensus Tigurinus* (1549). For this, Calvin continued to correspond with Bullinger. In March, 1548, their correspondence brought about an important agreement between the two cities.²⁰ Moreover, on June 26 Calvin wrote his view of the Holy Supper quite carefully to Bullinger, which bridged the gap in their understanding of the issue.²¹ In 1549, Calvin managed to make about an important agreement with Bullinger on the Supper through a two-hour long discussion.²² This agreement was called officially “the agreement of Zurich” and became the milestone for non-Lutheran Protestants’ interactions on the Holy Supper.²³

¹³ Saxer, ed., “Confessio Helvetica Prior von 1536,” 33-68. At Basel, many reformers besides Bullinger gathered: Leo Jud of Zurich, Kasper Megandar of Bern, and other representatives from St. Gallen, Schaffhausen, Biel, Muehlhausen, Konstanz, etc.

¹⁴ McKim and West, *Heinrich Bullinger*, 9.

¹⁵ CO 10. 119-123 (EPISTOLAE 74).

¹⁶ CO 10. 127-8 (EPISTOLAE 80. Bullingerus Farello et Calvino).

¹⁷ On April 6, 1564, the last letter of Calvin was delivered to Bullinger. CO 20. 282 (EPISTOLAE 4092, Calvinus Bullingeri).

¹⁸ CO 11. 183-185 (EPISTOLAE 293).

¹⁹ CO 11. 185-188 (EPISTOLAE 294).

²⁰ CO 12. 665-7.

²¹ Opitz, *Leben und Werk*, 123-4.

²² Opitz, *Leben und Werk*, 125; Selderhuis, *Calvin*, 155; Mühlhling, “Swiss Confeseration,” 72.

²³ den Berg, *Friends of Calvin*, 224; McKim and West, *Heinrich Bullinger*, 10.

Aside from such issues, they exchanged their opinions on doctrine through letters,²⁴ and shared not only their personal matters and their struggles, but also the situation in France and issues in various other regions.²⁵ Calvin and Bullinger also used to discuss church issues together, and their churches approached the solution to problems together.²⁶

16.2.3 Bullinger's Interpretation of Sermons on Jeremiah

According to Bullinger, the church has the responsibility of preserving and witnessing to the Bible. So, the church should publish the Bible, distinguish the true words from the false when it is discussed, and do justice to its interpretation.²⁷ He did not study theology at University. However, he read the works of the Church Fathers and contemporary scholars such as Luther, Melancthon, and Erasmus, etc, so he consulted their works and referenced them in his writings.²⁸ In his biblical hermeneutics, Bullinger maintained that the Bible should be interpreted by itself.²⁹ Thus, to understand the Bible properly, the biblical languages should be learned. Also, through rhetorical evaluation, the biblical texts should be analyzed, clarified and understood.³⁰ To Bullinger, the authority of the Bible comes from God, so the Bible itself is enough.³¹ Furthermore, Bullinger argues that the Bible includes the language of daily life, so it moves the hearts of believers and guides them to change their lives.³²

The most outstanding work of Bullinger is his *Decades* (1549). From 1549 to 1552, the *Decades* were published in five volumes. This work is a collection of his sermons (largely expanded), which played an important role in the spread of the reformed faith across Europe.³³ Bullinger delivered biblical messages through his sermons and writings which were based on his biblical

²⁴ Gordon, *Calvin*, 206, 245.

²⁵ Mühling, "Swiss Confederation," 69; Gordon, *Calvin*, 329.

²⁶ Mühling, "Swiss Confederation," 69, 73.

²⁷ McKim and West, *Heinrich Bullinger*, 24; Stephens, "The Authority of the Bible," 56.

²⁸ Stephens, "The Authority of the Bible," 38; Stephens, "The Interpretation of the Bible," 312-3.

²⁹ Stephens, "The Interpretation of the Bible," 317.

³⁰ Stephens, *The theology of Heinrich Bullinger*, 90-1.

³¹ den Belt, "Heinrich Bullinger and Jean Calvin," 315; Stephens, "The Authority of the Bible," 45, 56.

³² Stephens, "The Interpretation of the Bible," 327-8.

³³ Opitz, "Bullinger's *Decades*," 101-5. This volume was considered an essential possession for Reformed households; in the German and Dutch translations the *Decades* were termed a "house book" (*Hausbuch*) to be read in homes by families for instruction in piety and Christian conduct. ... The books were written in the form of fifty individual *loci* sermons on traditional Christian catechetical subjects: the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Apostle's Creed, and the two Protestant sacraments.

hermeneutics. His sermons (*lectio continua*) were then also eventually published. The collection of Bullinger's sermons were drawn mostly from the New Testament in the early days. In 1532 the sermons on 1 John and Hebrews were published. Afterwards the sermons on the New Testament were published with the exception of the book of Revelation. Old Testament sermons were published in the 1550's: the sermons on the book of Jeremiah were published in four volumes from 1557 to 1561. Next Lamentations' sermons were published in 1561. Moreover, the book of Daniel (1565) and Isaiah (1567) were published.³⁴ Sermons preached at the Grossmünster were the chief ministry of Bullinger during his time in Zurich. After his death about 600 of his sermons were used as pastoral tools for many students, pastors and educated laymen all across Europe.³⁵

16.3 Bullinger's Sermons on the Book of Jeremiah

In this section we will deal with Bullinger's sermons on Jeremiah as found in the book published in Zurich in 1575 (*Jeremias fidelissimus et laboriosissimus Dei Propheta: concionibus CLXX expositus*). Bullinger thought that the prophecy of Jeremiah was intended for his contemporaries but had relevance as well for Bullinger's own period. So he wanted to do justice to the interpretation of Jeremiah and preach it for the benefit of the church. To him, the book of Jeremiah was one of the most useful Scriptures, for both listeners and preachers.³⁶

16.3.1 Covenant as the Motif of God's People

The church of God is the meeting of the holy people. A Church should be born of the Holy Spirit with the word alone, preserved by His power and governed by His sovereignty. God ordered His servants, such as the prophets and apostles, to preach His word to those who are guided to life in the church.³⁷

³⁴ Bullinger, *The Decades*, vol. 5, xv-xxvii.

³⁵ Gordon, "Architect of Reformation," 25-6.

³⁶ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 1. "Cumque mirum in modum conveniat nostris temporibus & hominibus, Ieremiae prophetia, eam delegi exponenda vestrae charitati. Quapropter adhortor omnes, ut gratiam domini dei nostri fedulis precibus impetretis, um dicendi mihi, tum audiendi vobis doctrinam hanc saluberrima."

³⁷ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 1. "Ecclesia dei, quae est sanctorum communion, ut verbo dei solo, per spiritum sanctum nata est, ita eiusdem solius virtute conservatur, regimineque gubernatur. Unde dominus mandavit servis suis prophetis & apostolis, ut verbum suum, dei inquam, populis in ecclesiam adducendis, praedicarent."

The Church is the gathering of the pious. It is built, governed and maintained by the Holy Spirit so that God makes His servants proclaim His word in the church. The pious divine servants gather at the church. In the quote above, Bullinger calls the members of the church “*populis in ecclesiam adducendis*.” According to him, those who are gathered in the church form a pious gathering in one place through the guidance of God. This means that they have been chosen by God. Calvin also says that God calls His church Himself as He chooses His people.³⁸ In fact, this appears in the divine covenant.³⁹ Bullinger argues that the covenant between God and Israel is similar to a marriage covenant.⁴⁰ Calvin also finds this relationship similar to the marriage covenant.⁴¹ God took Israel as His bride. Bullinger argues that faith makes believers rejoice in God forever and that it is a gift of God to love and worship God through union with Him.⁴² However, the Israelites deserted the faith. According to Bullinger, the Israelites continued to show an insincere attitude toward their covenant with God by serving idols.⁴³ However, the book of Jeremiah talks about the new covenant. Jeremiah also foretells God recalling the Israelites and recovering the relationship with them. Having mentioned this, Bullinger says that God will restore His marriage with the Israelites.⁴⁴ God forgives His people and wants them to return to Him. That is, God wants them to abandon other idols, return to and seek and worship God alone. Moreover He asks them to live righteously according to the word of God.⁴⁵ Furthermore, God calls His people to the true church.⁴⁶ God chooses true believers and calls

³⁸ CO 38. 120 (COR II 6/1. 465; Jer. 11:16-7). “Ergo sicuti electos suos plantat Deus, ita etiam dum Ecclesiam aliquam sibi colligit externa specie, dicitur eam plantare.”

³⁹ McKim and West, *Heinrich Bullinger*, 83; Muller, *Christ and the Decree*, 43-44; Stephens, *The theology of Heinrich Bullinger*, 201. As elsewhere, Bullinger uses *testamentum*, *pactum*, and *foedus* almost indiscriminately.

⁴⁰ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 22 (Jer. 3:1-5). “Iam vero ex alijs Scripturae locis constat Coniugium & foedus contractum & pactum esse inter deum & hominem.”

⁴¹ This analogy is quoted in many verses in the Bible. Especially in that the relationship between God and His people is compared to a marriage in Isaiah 62:5, Matthew 25:1 and Revelation 21:21; CO 37. 555 (COR II 6/1. 124-5; Jer. 3:9). “... quoniam Deus conjunxerat populum illum sibi, ac devinxerat quasi sacro conjugio.”

⁴² Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 20 (Jer. 2:32-33). “Oportuerat autem deum esse virginis Israeliticae, oportuerat fidem in deum esse nobile munus sponsae Iudaicae veluti acceptum à sponso Meſſia deo, quo se oblectaret perpetuo, quodque iugi meditatione ver saret in animo, unum solum deum cognitans, solum amans atque colens: ...”; Stephens, *The theology of Heinrich Bullinger*, 221-222.

⁴³ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 139 (Jer. 22:8-9). “Quid autemque deferere vel violare foedus Domini, exponit per consequential, Adorarunt deos alienos, & fervierunt eis.”; Venema, *Heinrich Bullinger*, 28-29. It seems that Calvin and Bullinger had the same idea on the bilateral and unilateral aspects of covenants between God and His people.

⁴⁴ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 22 (Jer. 3:1-5). “... deus tamen non tantum repudia tam, sed adulteram & impudentissimam revocat ad pristinam consuetudinem & matrimonij dignitatem.”

⁴⁵ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 22 (Jer. 3:1-5). “... attamen condonabo tibi hanc foeditatem & hortor te ut ad me revertaris, Revertere, inquit, ad me. Quid vero est Reverti ad dominum? Relictis dijs, cultibus, & fiducijs extra deum omnibus, solum amplecti deum, solum adorare, invocare, colere, à solius verbo pendere, & ipsi infervire in iustitia.”

⁴⁶ On this, Calvin gives the same interpretation. CO 38. 464 (COR II 6/1. 906; Jer. 24:7). “Tametsi enim dominatur Deus toti mundo, asserit tamen se Deum esse ecclesiae: et fideles, quos adoptavit, dignatur hoc elogio quod sint ejus

them to the church. Bullinger says that God is the one and only author of all the things which He has said and done.⁴⁷ He is able to accomplish what He has said. God forms, establishes, preserves and completes everything.⁴⁸ Thus, the mighty God forms, establishes, preserves and guides the church as well. The church is born of the divine calling of God for His true people to assemble and that call is based in the covenant.

On this, Bullinger argues that men cannot comprehend the divine choice or the covenant, without divine revelation. God has called His people and been with them based on the covenant throughout history. Bullinger notes that God has established and preserved the church based on the new covenant. This is in line with Calvin. Calvin also argues that such a covenantal relationship is the basis for establishing and preserving the church.⁴⁹

16.3.2 Word and Worship as the Foundation of the Church

Prophetic and apostolic books are the word of God. Through this word, divine churches have been established, built, preserved and governed. This canon should be well interpreted within the community of believers in order for the church to be built and preserved. Each verse of the Book is useful for proper practice, so we should ask whether verses are suitably interpreted for their time and place and should explain the meaning of them to the churches to build up trust and obedience.⁵⁰

According to Bullinger, God ordered the prophets and disciples to deliver His word to His people. He also teaches that the Bible should be interpreted in a proper way because the church is built and preserved through the word. Such thought appears in his life. Through more than 7,000 sermons, by the principle of *lectio continua*, Bullinger preached every verse of the Bible to the

populus, ... cum exitus e Chaldaea promissus illis fuerit, et data libertas urbis aedificandae, sed simul futuri sint vera Dei Ecclesia.”

⁴⁷ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 198 (Jer. 33:1-3). “Significat autem Deus se esse authorem eorum, ...”

⁴⁸ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 198 (Jer. 33:1-3). “Dominus est, inquit, qui facit hoc, idem ille qui format, idemque qui stabilt & in esse conseruat, & in perfectionem producit. Addit his nomen omnipotentiae.”

⁴⁹ CO 39. 75 (COR II 6/2. 1303-4; Jer. 33:25). “Ego enim idem sum Deus, ... et qui percussi etiam foedus cum Ecclesia mea.

⁵⁰ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 1 (Jer. 1:1-4). “Libri prophetici & apostolici sunt ipsum verbum Dei. Ex his ergo est constituenda aut aedificanda, conservanda & gubernanda dei ecclesia: adeoque exponendi sunt libri canonici, pro constitvenda conservandaque ecclesia, in coetu fidelium. Omnes enim ac singuli libri ad eam rem perquam sunt idonei & utiles: ita tamen, ut pro ratione locorum, personarum & temporum congruentia inquiramus, & nobis commiſis ecclesijs exponendo applicemus.”

citizens of Zurich.⁵¹ During the era of Jeremiah no one listened to the divine prophecy through the prophet so they did not know the reason for their collapse.⁵² However, God has revealed His will to His people in many ways for a long time. Especially has God taught them law, wisdom and prophecy through His servants. Bullinger highlights the fact that God revealed His will through His son, and eventually, through the word through the disciples. The word has been translated into languages.⁵³ According to Bullinger, the Bible is the tool of the Holy Spirit and a sacred book. It is the everlasting record given by God in that faith, piety, worship and things pleasing to God are recorded.⁵⁴ However, the Israelites did not listen to nor follow the word of God. Bullinger applies such situation to the church of his time: “[t]hus Jeremiah was not able to make progress with these Jews, just as today we are not able to make progress with those infected by the papists’ leaven. So it is that our papists stray after their deities, just as the Israelites walked after the Baalim.”⁵⁵ By criticizing the Catholic Church, Bullinger points out that it is similar to the Jews who listened to other idols. He argues that pious reform happens through the proclamation of the gospel. However, the hypocrites and idolaters argue that these reforming words will be criticized by the councils or the papists.⁵⁶ Calvin also rebukes the fact that the Catholic Church follows their own decisions more than the word of God.⁵⁷ Bullinger states that believers become knowledgeable through the divine word and that they cannot excuse

⁵¹ Gordon, “*Heinrich Bullinger (1504-1575)*,” 173-4.

⁵² Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 71 (Jer. 9:12-4). “Caeterum nullus est sapere velit, aut ita praedicationem à Deo excipere, ut referrae aut possit aut velit veras interitus causas. Cuperem ergo Deum ipsum illas denuo nobis exponere.”

⁵³ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 71 (Jer. 9:12-4). “Promulgavit hanc per sapientissimos homines, per homines in toto orbe celebratissimos & miraculorum autoritate illustres, per Mosen, per Samuelem, per Heliam, per Isaiam, per Daniele & alios multos, adeoque per reges in mundo laudatissimos & gloriosissimos per Davidem, Solomonē, Iosaphat, Ezechiam & Iosiam. Misit praeterea filium suum unigentium, sapientiam suam, in mundum, qui eandem nobis tradidit ore proprio, deinde & per apostolos & discipulos suos in literas referre curavit, sed & mundo universo, in omnium gentium linguas conversam doctrinam proposuit.”

⁵⁴ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 71 (Jer. 9:12-4). “Et hoc est organum sancti spiritus, est hic codex facer & irrefragabilis, coelestis & divinus, utriusque videlicet Testamenti scriptura sacrosanta, omnem pietatem, omnem veram fidem, omnem Deo placentem verum cultum, & disciplinam justam omnemque perfectionem fidelium plenissime continens atque toti orbi clarissime exponens.”

⁵⁵ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 72 (Jer. 9:12-4). “Hoc autem à Iudaeis suis impetrare non potuit Ieremias, uti ne hodie quoque hoc ipsum à Papistico sermone infectis, impetrare possumus: inde est quod nostri post divos aberrant, sicuti & Israelitae ambulabant post Baalim.”; Cf. Bullinger, *Jeremiah, Lamentation* (Reformation Commentary on Scripture, OT XI), 98.

⁵⁶ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 1 (Jer. 1:1-4). “Ita ad praedicationem evangelij illustrem nostro seculo, in multis locis, reformatio ecclesiarum pia obtinuit: cui interim iniquissimi sunt cum hypocritae tum manifesti idololatrae & sperantes & minitantes, propediem illa omnia, vel Concilio generali condemnanda, vel gladio regum catholicorum, id est Papisantium, excindenda fore.”

⁵⁷ CO 37. 692 (COR II 6/1. 297; Jer. 7:22-23). “Et videmus etiam pertinaciter in hoc principio ipsos insistere, non standum esse, neque acquiescendum verbo Dei, quia nihil certum sit illic: ideo plures aestimant doctrinam Patrum et perpetuum consensum Ecclesiae Catholicae, ut vocant, quam et Legem, et Prophetas, et Evangelium.”

themselves for their wickedness. Bullinger, therefore, notes that it is beneficial and necessary for the Bible to be well interpreted and delivered.⁵⁸

Bullinger argues that not only the words but also the proper worship of the church is important. He had a negative view of rites carried out in the Catholic Church. First of all, in his sermon on Jeremiah 2:22-23, he points out the rites of the Israelites to cleanse their sins.

The Jews had their own expiations, ablutions, sacrifices, fasts, prayers, and laments, with which they strove to cleanse themselves of their sins. For all that, they were meanwhile destitute of true faith and clung to idolatry, which was worthless in atoning for their sins.⁵⁹

The Israelites had ceremonies or deeds to cleanse them from their sins. However as long as they worship idols, their efforts were meaningless. In fact, sins are forgiven by the blood of Christ only, then the life of repentance follows. In other words, one crucifies his old being, thereby his plans, words and behaviors are transformed in a new life. This is the way of forgiveness taught by the prophets and apostles.⁶⁰ Therefore, Bullinger preaches that any acts or ceremonies directed towards other divinities are meaningless. Worshipping other idols and God too was the biggest problem. The following is Bullinger's description of worship as it was carried out by the believers of his church.

If you truly believe that God is present everywhere, that the singular and only God is sufficient for all necessary things, even for the giving of salvation in the first place; if you worship this God alone with your whole heart, soul, and strength; and if you only pray to that one alone through Jesus Christ, if you adore this one and only God: Why do you seek to make supplications among Mary of Loreto, the Marian Queen of Bergamo, or Mary of Aquitaine? Why do you visit the thresholds of Peter and Paul? Why do you make pilgrimages to visit Saint James of Compostella in Spain, Saint Michael or Saint Jodocus in France? Finally, why do you sacrifice and consecrate your sons and daughters to those I do not know: Benedict,

⁵⁸ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 1 (Jer. 1:1-4). "Eodem modo nunc excitat evangelij praedicatores, imo excitat doctrinam hanc Ieremiae, quae iterum depraedicetur in ecclesia, ante iudicium magnum, ne quis sit qui per ignorantiam pereat, vel iustam excusationem in sceleribus suis habeat. Ex quibus omnibus intelligit charitas vestra, quante utilitatis exposition libri huius, & quam necessaris futura sit."

⁵⁹ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 16 (Jer. 2:22-23). "Et quidem habuerunt Iudaeis suas expiationes, ablutiones, sacrificia, ieiunia, preces & lachrymas, quibus se à peccatis purgare nitebantur: caeterum cum vera interim destituerentur fide ac inhaererent idololatriae, inanis erat ipsorum expiatio."; Cf. Bullinger, *Jeremiah, Lamentation* (Reformation Commentary on Scripture, OT XI), 25.

⁶⁰ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 16 (Jer. 2:22-23). "Revera enim sanguine Christi per fidem expiamur, sequiturque expiatione protinus vita poenitens, qua abiectis drijis alienis, vero & uni Deo supplicamus, & à solo per omnia pendemus, ftudentes veterem crucifigere hominem, & iuxta novi hominis consilia omnia nostra dicta & facta instituire. Hac rationem purgandi docet nos universa scriptura prophetica & apostolica."

Dominic, Rupert, Francis, Claire, and other obscure gods whom I do not know? Your children are already consecrated to God at baptism.⁶¹

In this sermon, Bullinger rebukes the members of his church by saying that they are not satisfied with God alone but follow other gods. For example, they worshipped other saints, visited some places that were called pious, and gave their own children to unknown gods or saints. In the eyes of Bullinger, such behavior contaminated churches. Calvin's viewpoint on the worship at the Catholic Church is in line with Bullinger's. Calvin argues that the Catholic Church worshipped in their own way, not in the biblical one, and was filled with various idolatries.⁶² To Bullinger and Calvin, church is where the believers should praise and worship God alone. Such an idea appears in the description of Israel as it returned from the Babylonian captivity.

Where the duty of Christians is pointed out, there is woven in a rather rich enumeration of the benefits to be conferred by the Lord on the people of God. For these things also the godly give thanks while praising the generosity and boundless grace of the Lord in all things. The Israelites will come to the mountain and to lofty Zion; they will rejoice and praise the Lord. The mount of Zion was consecrated for the temple and worship of God, and so it was a type of the church of Christ. Thus the pious celebrated God, both in the place pointed out to them by God and in the church of the saints.⁶³

In the sermon above, God gave unbound grace and benefits to His people who returned from Babylon. They, the Christians in Bullinger's viewpoint, had a duty. That was to thank and praise God. So, the Israelites should come up to Mount Zion and worship God. Bullinger states that Mount Zion is "a type

⁶¹ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 17 (Jer. 2:22-23). "Si creditis vere Deum ubique praesentem unicum & solum vobis sufficere ad omnia necessaria, & ad salute in primis dandam: si hunc solum colitis, toto corde, tota anima, & totis viribus: si uni & soli supplicates per Irsu Christum: si unum & solum adoratis: quid obsecro quaeritis apud Mariam vel Lauretanam, Reginospurgen aut Aquetanam? Cur invisitis limina Petri & Pauli? Cur peregrinationis institutis in Hispanias ad Sanctum Iacobum Compostellanum, in Gallias ad Sanctum Michaelem & Iodocum? Denique cur imolatis ac consecrates filios ac filias vestras nescio cui Benedicto, Dominico, Ruperto, Francisco, Clarae item, & nescio quibus dijs obscuris? Consecrati fuerunt Deo per sanctum baptismum."; Cf. Bullinger, *Jeremiah, Lamentation* (Reformation Commentary on Scripture, OT XI), 25.

⁶² CO 37. 691 (COR II 6/1. 295-6; Jer. 7: 21-22). "Deum enim aestimant ex proprio ingenio, et tamen omnes ceremoniae papales sunt commentitiae: nullum enim habent testimonium ex Lege aut Evangelio.;" Maag, *Lifting Hearts to the Lord*, 54-5.

⁶³ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 182 (Jer. 31:10-14). "... ubi indicator officia Christianorum, attexiturque catalogus uberior beneficiorum, populo Dei à Domino conferrendorum: pro quibus etiam gratias agunt pij, laudantes in omnibus liberalitatem Domini & gratiam immensam. Venient Izraelite in montem vel in excelsum Sion, & iubilabunt vel laudabunt Dominum. Mons Zion fuit templo & cultui Dei consecrates, idem fuit & ecclesiae Christi typus. Deum itaque celebrarunt pij, & in loco sibi commonstrato à Deo, & in ecclesia sanctorum.;" Cf. Bullinger, *Jeremiah, Lamentation* (Reformation Commentary on Scripture, OT XI), 291-2.

of the church of Christ.” Likewise, the pious had to thank divine grace and praise God at the designated place by God or by the church. This is the duty of Christians who experience the grace of restoration.

In sum, Bullinger deals with the fundamental duties of God’s people at church. First of all, church is where the word of God should be correctly interpreted and proclaimed. And, thanking the divine grace, believers should gather to worship God alone. Therefore, the people of God should listen and follow the word of God, remembering the grace of God. This is in line with Calvin’s argument regarding the fundamental attitude of believers. However, this does not mean that they were dependent on each other. Like Calvin, Bullinger often mentions the wicked attitude of the Catholic Church while treating the fundamental attitude of the Reformed in his sermons.

16.3.3 Unholiness and Repentance as the Fall of the Church

Bullinger’s sermon shows how he applies the Israelites’ sins committed during Jeremiah’s era to the church of his time. Bullinger says that they suffer from idolatry and pagan ceremony. According to him, the most wicked sin of the Israelites was to worship unknown gods.⁶⁴ Calvin also mentions idolatry first among the sins to contaminate the church. Like Bullinger, Calvin notes the fault of idolaters in his exegesis of Jeremiah 44 by saying that they take the glory of God and give it to other gods, which is to rob God of his right.⁶⁵ God gave them a chance to turn from their wicked behavior. God sent Jeremiah and let the idolaters know of their wickedness. Bullinger calls this the divine remedy. But, the Israelites denied the remedy. So, their wickedness was widespread.⁶⁶

Such things are to be applied to us and to our own time, in which the same sins are to be found in the church of God. Therefore, since God is the same and does not change, he necessarily manages us with the same punishments or even worse ones.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 244 (Jer. Chap. 44). “Ea re irritarunt ac exasperarunt Deum. At turpissimum erae eos colere pro dijs, quos quales essent revera ignorabant. Et hodie coluntur multa, quae qualia revera sint, nesciuntur.”

⁶⁵ CO 39. 250 (COR II 6/2. 1529-30; Jer. 44:3). “Cum ergo offerrent suffitum idolis, hoc fuit verum Deum spoliare suo honore, et eligere novos deos, et illos ornare jure unius Dei.”

⁶⁶ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 14 (Jer. 2:14-19). “... & quod omnem medicinam Dei respuunt. Unique ergo commemorat & taxat ipsorum peccata.”

⁶⁷ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 14 (Jer. 2:14-19). “Applicanda haec sunt nostris quoque temporibus, quibus eadem in ecclesia Dei peccata reperiuntur. Ergo cum Deus idem sit & non mutetur, necessario ijsdem poenis aut etiam gravioribus afficit nos.”; Cf. Bullinger, *Jeremiah, Lamentation* (Reformation Commentary on Scripture, OT XI), 22.

According to Bullinger, the sins that the Israelites committed were found in the church in Zurich during the 16th century. God has taught the believers about their evil through preachers such as Bullinger, but they denied the divine remedy just like the Israelites had. The Israelites were the children of God, but they betrayed and resisted God.⁶⁸ God kept sending them prophets. Nonetheless, they did not accept Jeremiah, and instead they hurt him and even put him in jail in their resistance against the word of God.⁶⁹

Moreover, Bullinger points out their other fault: the Israelites followed false prophets and not the God-sent prophet. They listened to the false prophets and obeyed them. On them, Jeremiah remarks as follows. First, they give voice to the vanity or visions of their own heart. Second, they do not speak as commanded by the Lord; thus the things they say do not come from the mouth of the Lord, but from their own hearts.⁷⁰ Bullinger warns his congregation not to follow false lessons and words delivered by deceptive people. When believers trust deceptive priests, they cannot know God well nor worship Him. Rather, they follow idols and seek creatures instead of the Creator. That is blasphemy.⁷¹ Furthermore, Bullinger tells believers to be cautious about the teachings of the papists which encourage false worship and ceremonies fabricated by men.⁷² According to Bullinger when all is said and done the wickedness and failure of believers are due to their stubborn attitude in not listening to the word of God, just like the Israelites.

Then what does God want from wicked people? In his sermon on Jeremiah 2:14-19 Bullinger urges believers to be aware of the divine calling for their salvation through the gospel and to turn back

⁶⁸ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 19 (Jer. 2:29-31). "... vos autem pertinaces in peccatis vestris, emedari renuistis, neque ullam unquam recepistis, vel etiamnum recipitis disciplinam. ... Filij estis itaque rebelles, ac in aperta rebellione reperti & convicti."

⁶⁹ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 19 (Jer. 2:29-31). "Quid vero hi Strinxerunt ferrum in prophetas Dei, suspendio peremerunt eos, lapidibus adobruerunt, vel eiecerunt ex urbibus suis, condemnantes ipsos exilio, ..."

⁷⁰ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 147 (Jer. 23:16-17). "Principio enim, vanitatem vel visione cordis loquuntur. Deinde non ex ore Domini loquuntur: ergo quotquot non loquuntur ex ore Domini, sed ex proprio corde, illi audiendi non sunt. Visio cordis humani illud est, quod excogitatu in corde hominis, humano beneplacito profertur, absque autoritate & origine verbi Dei: ..."

⁷¹ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 148 (Jer. 23:16-17). "Ac revera irritant & provocant Deum ... qui abiecto verbo Domini sua sequuntur somnia, hoc est, qui non eo modo fidunt Deo, neque ita colunt ut ipse verbo suo requisivit: sed idola condunt, creaturas invocant, & inventiones proprias cultuum magni faciunt. Illi ipsi facto hoc suo Deum blasphemant."

⁷² Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 148 (Jer. 23:16-17). "An vero liaec non admonent quosuis doctrinae Papisticae, quae & ipsa promittit electitijs cultibus, & humanis inventionibus, remissionem peccatorum, gratiam & omnigenam felicitatem."

to God.⁷³ Calvin also argues in his sermon that what God wants is repentance.⁷⁴ However, the Israelites did not repent of their sins. Since they believed themselves to be the children of God, they thought that they would not be defeated nor become captives. Such an attitude, Bullinger argues, led the Israelites to destruction.⁷⁵ In other words, the reason for their fall was their disobedience and ignorance of the divine word, and such an attitude came from their assurance of being the children of God. This assurance caused them to have false faith that they would not be punished; this led them to abuse their privilege as the children of God. Bullinger applies this text to his church, and notes that some church members are prideful in being Christians. They believe that God will not abandon the church and He will not put them in the hands of their enemy. Bullinger rebukes their attitude.⁷⁶ Such an attitude will hinder them from following God, and they will not repent. Calvin also states that true belief is required in order for them to repent.⁷⁷ The Israelites had a false faith, so they could not repent. Furthermore, in his sermon on Jeremiah 37:5-10, Bullinger argues that the unrepentant will be punished at the end.⁷⁸ Therefore, if the people of God follow the vanity of their assurance of the divine love, they cannot abide in the truth. Believers have to repent of their wickedness and return to God when God guides them. This is in line with Calvin. These two theologians argue for the necessity of repentance.

16.3.4 Church Offices and Suffering as the Preservation of the Church

According to Bullinger, the most serious threat to the Israelites was that they would be defeated and become captives in Babylon.⁷⁹ In Jer. 50:6-8, Jeremiah prophesied the fall of Babylon.

⁷³ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 14 (Jer. 2:14-19). “Quia deservimus Deum verum & cum iam revocat in viam salutis per evangelium, obvertimus Deo dorsum, ...”

⁷⁴ Calvin, *Sermons*, 23 (Sermon 4 on Jer. 15:6b-10). “A quoy est ce que Dieu pretend? C’est que nous soyons reduictz à repentance.”

⁷⁵ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 14 (Jer. 2:14-19). “Et Iudaei quidem, quod se crederent & iactarent Dei filios esse, ... iactabant contra Dominum, non arbitrabantur mala illa super ipsos ventura, neque recte iudicabant de praesentibus etiam calamitatibus, quibus iam iam impliciti, affligenabatur: ...”

⁷⁶ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 14 (Jer. 2:14-19). “... sicuti & hodie de nomine Christiano temere & inaniter gloriamur, existimantes Deum ecclesiam (quae tamen nihil minus est, quam quod videri vult) neque derelictum, neque daturum in manus Turcarū aut aliorum infidelium tyrānorum.”

⁷⁷ CO 38. 61 (COR II 6/1. 389; Jer. 10:2).

⁷⁸ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 218 (Jer. 37:5-10). “... oportet omnino puniri impenitentes, verbi Dei persecutores, idololatrās & impios homines.”

⁷⁹ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 244 (Jer. 44:11-14). “Tertia & ultima orationis parte gravissimas Dei minas recitat contra Iudaeos, praedicens eis, ob idololatriam admissam, excidium certissimum.”

On this Bullinger expresses the notion that Babylon is a type of the kingdom of the anti-Christ. Moreover, he states that believers should leave aside the contaminated world.⁸⁰ As God punished the Israelites, his congregation will be punished because of their sins. It was important for the reformed churches to depart from the Catholic Church of the 16th century. Bullinger states that the papists boast of their doctrine and governance, but they were really expressing wickedness.⁸¹ Thus, according to Bullinger, just as God sent the prophet to Israel He sends prophets or preachers to His church. So, God told believers of His imminent punishment and corrected their habits and behaviors.⁸² In particular, God wanted to correct them through His word.⁸³ So God sent Jeremiah as His public crier. Through him, God made unbelievers fearful of punishment and led believers to repent before destruction. As he applies this to his church, Bullinger preaches that God put preachers in churches so that anyone in the congregation would not suffer due to ignorance and then beg for forgiveness of their sins.⁸⁴ God made Jeremiah the prophet in His providence and taught him what to do.⁸⁵ What we learn from this text is that a church needs a proper servant who has a calling from God.⁸⁶ From the same text in Jeremiah, Calvin argues that God has called His servants, taught them and made them ready for ministry. Furthermore servants are required to be obedient if called.⁸⁷ Calvin writes about the four offices of the church in his *Institutes*, but in his interpretation of Jeremiah he explains pastors

⁸⁰ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 267 (Jer. 50:6-8). “Is vero clainat, Fugite ex Babylone. Et quoniam praetulit Babylon typum regno Antichristi & mundo, ... Caueamus vero nobis ab ijs, quae fugam ex mundo & pseudoeclesia impediunt, cuiusmodi sunt affectiones humanae, metus, & spes, voluptates item, amicitia hominum, sacultatum stadium, &c.”

⁸¹ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 1 (Jer. 1:1-4). “Eodem vero modo dum Papistae sublatis multis viris bonis & oppressa pene doctrina syncera, sibi iam regnare securi, & triumphare videvntur, de repente opprimet eos malum extremum.”

⁸² Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 47 (Jer. 6:17-20). “Constitutuit enim in ecclesia sua Deus prophetas vel concionatores, veluti vigiles & speculatores, quippe qui populo praenuncient iram Domini venturam, per pestem, gladium, & famem: utque territus gravi denunciatione populus mutaret mores.”

⁸³ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 47 (Jer. 6:17-20). “Iraque opponuntur in praesenti ineffabilis Dei misericordia, peccatores sceleratos sanare verbo fatagentis.”

⁸⁴ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 1 (Jer. 1:1-4). “... misit Ieremiam praeconem suum, per quem impij terrentur, pij vero animarentur, priusquam Deus malis exquisitissimis attereret populum. Eodem modo nunc excitat evangelij praedicatores, imo excitat doctrinam hanc Ieremiae, quae iterum depraedicaretur in ecclesia, ante iudicium magnum, ne quis sit qui per ignorantiam pereat, vel iustam excusationem in sceleribus suis habeat.”

⁸⁵ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 3 (Jer. 1:4-10). “Nam sanctificavit vel segregavit providentia Dei Ieremiam muneri prophetandi. ... Exequitur ergo nunc consilium suum Deus, & quod dici solet, consilium in effectum producit, dum revelat prophetae suum consilium, & quid agat, indicat.”

⁸⁶ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 3 (Jer. 1:4-10). “Discimus enim ex his, ecclesiae semper opus fore ministris, quos vocatione & missione legitima ordinari oporteat.”

⁸⁷ CO 37. 478 (COR II 6/1. 28; Jer. 1:7). “Caeterum ubi Deus nos vocat, etiam si omnia nos deficiant, tamen obsequendum est.”

and how they are to deal with the word.⁸⁸ Like him, Bullinger mainly deals with pastors. In his sermon on Jeremiah 15:10, Bullinger speaks of the pain of Jeremiah as a prophet: “Since the Jewish people were perpetually unchanged and continued in their sins without repentance, the prophet could do nothing other than thunder away and preach every misfortune against them. Given the disposition of the ungodly, they only hated the prophet whom they also buried in wagons of abuse.”⁸⁹ Jeremiah could not help proclaiming divine punishment on the wickedness of the unrepentant. The Israelites did not repent of their sins, but instead were cruel to the prophet. Because of this Jeremiah complained to God. He even cursed his birth.⁹⁰ Not only in Jeremiah’s time but also in the time of Bullinger the ministers were quarrelers, seditious people and bringers of discord.⁹¹ Nonetheless, they still had to deliver the word of God even if they were disliked and harassed.⁹² Even if they could not understand what the word of God meant, they had to deliver the message.⁹³ Bullinger argues that ministers have to trust divine providence fully in every situation,⁹⁴ and look to God and not depend on people.⁹⁵ Calvin also had a similar idea of the role of church offices, especially pastors.⁹⁶

In the sermons of Bullinger there were still unrepentant people in his church. They had to go through divine punishment. There were also people who proclaimed repentance to the unrepentant. They also suffered in and out of the church, like Jeremiah. There were, accordingly, three types of people: the unrepentant, the repentant, and the pastors. In this way Bullinger shows the chief aspects of the militant church in his interpretation.

⁸⁸ In his interpretation of the book of Jeremiah Calvin bypassed explaining other offices. CO 38. 320 (COR II 6/1. 723; Jer. 19:2).

⁸⁹ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 196 (Jer. 15:10). “Cum populus Iudaicus perpetuò sui similis esset, ac in peccatis consuetis absque omni poenitentia pergeret, non potuit propheta aliud quam inconare contra ipsos, & omnia infelicia praedicere ipsis: ipsi vero pro ingenio impiorum non poterant non odisse prophetam, quem & operiebant conuitorū plaustris.”; Cf. Bullinger, *Jeremiah, Lamentation* (Reformation Commentary on Scripture, OT XI), 147.

⁹⁰ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 196 (Jer. 15:10). “Effundit certe animi sui aestum coram Domino Ieremias, ac exclamat miserum se esse, quē mater sua pepererit: quasi senserit feliciorē se fore, si nunquam fuisset natus.”

⁹¹ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 196 (Jer. 15:10). “Nam hodie quoque evangelij praecones appellantur a multis iurgatores, seditiosi & dissidia serentes.”

⁹² Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 198 (Jer. 33:1-3). “Sicuti autem Ieremias nihil muravit in genere doctrinae suae, sed eadem vinctus loquitur, quae liber & extra vincula suerat loquutus: ita eadem nobis veritas perpetuo annuncianda est, nihil derrahe dum aut immutandum propter adversarios & vincula.”

⁹³ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 198 (Jer. 33:1-3). “Ignoravit autem illa extra revelationem ex semetipso. Quantulum enim est quod intelligimus ex nobis ipsis? Nisi Dominus animos nostros illuminaverit, nulla est nostra intelligentia.”

⁹⁴ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 217 (Jer. 37:4). “... ac per omnia permittant se divinae providentiae, omnia recte ordinantis & gubernantis.”

⁹⁵ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 217 (Jer. 37:4). “Saepe hoc experiuntur fideles Christi & ecclesiarum ministri, spectantem in his casibus omnibus non ad homines, sed ad unicum Dominum omnium ministrirum fidelem & potentem conservatorē.”

⁹⁶ See on 11.5 in this dissertation.

16.3.5 Christ and Election as the Restoration of the Church

As we have seen in the previous section, the believers at Calvin's church are suffering. Calvin tells them to persevere in their suffering because God is with them in their suffering. So believers should trust God and try to understand what He wants to achieve through their suffering.⁹⁷ If it is normal that believers experience suffering, how do they persevere and keep faith? In other words, what do believers hope for and wait for in their suffering? From the prophecy of Jeremiah, the Israelites must wait for the time of recovery based on the divine promise. God promised that He would call the remnant and restore them to their land and temple. Then, who are the remnant that will return?

And since it is necessary for the judgment of God to be preached to the ungodly, and for the godly to be retained in office through learning, exhortation, and consolation, therefore our clement and merciful God desires fully that humanity be wholly saved and freed from destruction.⁹⁸

In his first sermon on Jeremiah, Bullinger explains two types of people by interpreting the prophecy about divine punishment. To the ungodly divine punishment will be proclaimed while salvation is for the godly. Divine punishment and the restoration of the people of Israel to their land will happen to two types of people: the ungodly and the godly. Calvin also teaches that it is not the whole body of Israelites who will return, but a few. Among them, the elect will return and become members of the community.⁹⁹ In his sermon on Jer. 30:21-24, Bullinger states that everlasting life will be granted to those who believe in the Son of God, while unbelievers will not have life.¹⁰⁰ Bullinger argues that when believers trust Christ truthfully divine punishment will bypass them. This is because divine

⁹⁷ CO 39. 589 (COR II 7. 283; Lam. 3:37-38). "Nulla enim erit fides, nulla invocatio, nulla patientia denique nulla prohibitas, nisi sciamus Deum ita gerere curam mundi, cujus est creator, ut nihil accidat nisi ejus certo et firmo decreto."

⁹⁸ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 1 (Jer. 1:1-4). "Et quoniam oportet impijs praedicari iudicium, & pios retineri in officio, per doctrinam, adhortationem & consolationem, adeoque Deus Clemens & misericoros omnino saluos cupit homines, eosque liberari ab interitu, ..."; Cf. Bullinger, *Jeremiah, Lamentation* (Reformation Commentary on Scripture, OT XI), 6.

⁹⁹ CO 39. 24 (COR II 6/2. 1240; Jer. 32: 28). "Postea adjungit se tandem propitium fore exulibus: sed restringitur gratia illa ad solos electos et fideles."

¹⁰⁰ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 180 (Jer. 30:21-24). "... Qui credit in filium, habet vitam eternam: qui vero non credit in filium, non videbit vitam: sed ira Dei manet super eum."; CO 39. 531 (COR II 7. 89; Lam. 1:20). "Nam his duabus notis discernitur Ecclesia ab incredulis, nempe poenitentia et fide."

punishment is borne by Christ.¹⁰¹ The only way to return without suffering divine punishment is to believe on Christ. This is the true return.

On the issue of restoration, Bullinger first notes the restoration of Jerusalem and the temple as it was fulfilled as recorded in Ezra and Nehemiah.¹⁰² And the people gathered together to praise God for His grace. What Bullinger emphasizes here is that God reestablished the fallen temple and set Christ as the foundation of the temple.¹⁰³ Believers will praise God's divine grace celebrating the Holy Supper, and through this God will glorify the church and expand it. They will look up to the one and only God through Christ and abide with Him.¹⁰⁴ Calvin also emphasizes the fact that Christ is the center of the return of Israel and the reestablishment of the church.¹⁰⁵ In returning Israel to their homeland from Babylon, Bullinger discusses the omnipotent God who makes the impossible possible.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, God not only restores them to their homeland, but also cares for them. God cares for His people as a shepherd cares for his sheep; He feeds His people with nutritious food, cures their illnesses and protects them from their enemies.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore Bullinger teaches in his sermon on Jer. 31:24-28 that except for God there is no other source of human happiness. God blesses His people with His perfect grace.¹⁰⁸ He also preaches that all the good things given by God to Israel have been adapted in the church. Therefore, the church, set free from various sins, death, and the devil, seeks righteousness and becomes a holy community. Since God has given the church grace, the

¹⁰¹ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 180 (Jer. 30:21-24). "Etenim si non recte credamus sinceraque fide complectamur Domium nostrum Iesum Christum, non poterit non certissima in nos Dei vindicta esse parata, utpote cum haec per solum Christum aboleatur."

¹⁰² Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 179 (Jer. 30:18-20). "Addit se & urbem & templum restitutum, ita ut moenia suis antiquis fundamentis, iam aceruis lapidum & ruderum adoperitis, rursus sint imponenda: id quod factum esse exponit Ezrae & Nehemiae liber."

¹⁰³ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 179 (Jer. 30:18-20). "Aedificat Dominus destructam per tyrannos ecclesiam, ac veterid est unico fundamento Christo imponit."

¹⁰⁴ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 179 (Jer. 30:18-20). "Ecclesia vero sacrificial laudis offert pro gratiarumactione, in coena Domini maximè, quae in hoc instituta est à Christo, & appellatur Eucharistia. Multiplicat item & honoratam reddit ecclesiam, cuius filij & coetus uni Deo adherent per Christum, ..."

¹⁰⁵ CO 39. 46 (COR II 6/2. 1267; Jer. 32:41). "Atqui Prophetæ, quemadmodum dixi, incipiunt a reditu populi: sed statuunt simul Christum in medio, ut cognoscant fideles reditum illum fuisse tenuem duntaxat gustum plenae gratiae, quae a Christo demum exspectanda erat. Tunc ergo Deus vere plantavit populum suum."

¹⁰⁶ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 182 (Jer. 31:10-14). "At subvertit eam Dominus, & quos voluit in Babylonem abduxit: impossibile item videbatur illis ipsis eos reduce, & Omnia restitui posse: sed restituit omnia Deus omnipotes."

¹⁰⁷ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 182 (Jer. 31:10-14). "Accedit his aliud beneficium ingens, quod praedicari Deus voluit inter Gentes, quod non tantum reducet & restitute populum suum Dominus, sed accuratissimam eius curam geret. Custodiet enim populum suum, inquit, sicut pastor gregem suum, cui cibum & potum salubrem & commodum suppeditat, quem item tuetur ne vel contagion & morbis, vel ferarum incursionibus pereat."

¹⁰⁸ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 186 (Jer. 31:24-28). "Omnis itaque hominum felicitas non est ab auctore alio, quàm ab unico Deo, qui ex mera sua gratia benefacit hominibus."

church is a special habitation of the righteous and their solemn abode. Such righteousness and holiness do not exist outside of the church.¹⁰⁹ Therefore the church becomes righteous by being freed from evil. Those who reside within the boundaries of the church must also be righteous and holy. Another feature of the church that Bullinger points out is that there are all kinds of social ranks of the people who are its members. Since God restores people completely, all kinds of people without any divisions gather in the church.¹¹⁰ The members of the church form one community because of their shared faith in Christ; therefore, they are not discriminated against in the church by their position or social rankings. Rather the people within the church should mingle together and care for each other with sincere love.¹¹¹ This is the true vision of the church community. Such a view is in line with Calvin's. Calvin also argues that God has gathered other nations through Christ besides the Jews and that such a gathering has continued through the providence of God from the church of the Old Testament.¹¹² Bullinger also argues that the restoration of the church does not end at the return of the Jews to Canaan.

“I myself will gather afresh those scattered into various lands due to my fury; I will lead them back into that place, into Jerusalem, I say, and into the Promised Land.” The histories of Ezra and Nehemiah teach that this was done. In truth, because Jerusalem is the church of God, and the Promised Land bears the symbol of the eternal country, for the reason that the Son of God came to earth from heaven and gathered again the children of God scattered throughout the whole world – just as a shepherd gathers his little sheep – into the oneness of the church. Then at the end of the age he will lead the gathered as one into their eternal homeland.¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 186 (Jer. 31:24-28). “Ista autem omnia accommodari debent Ecclesiae Christi, cui typum praetulit Zion & urbs Hierusalem. Liberata illa ex captivitate peccati, mortis, inferorum & diabolic, colit iustitiam & sanctitatis verae participes est: ... omnigenis benedicit ecclesiae suae. Et quidem ecclesia proprie est habitatio iustitiae & sanctitatis mons. Extra ecclesiam Christi nulla est vel iustitia vel sanctitas.”

¹¹⁰ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 186 (Jer. 31:24-28). “Addit autem omnis generis & ordinis homines iterū habituros ibi, ... Quibus significare videtur restituendum fore in integrum populum, habiturumque omnia quae pertinent ad perfectam rempub.”

¹¹¹ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 186 (Jer. 31:24-28). “Fides enim Christi haec non rejicit & damnat, quae ad vitae humanae necessitate pertinent: ... Sive ergo cuius aut opifex, sive rusticus sis, non excludit te haec tua profession ex ecclesia Christi & regno Dei. ... Denique concordēs isti omnes ecclesiam inhabitant, dilectione sincera se mutuum prosequentes.”

¹¹² CO 39. 389-90 (COR II 6/2. 1707; Jer. 49:39). “Et scimus has partes Christo tribui, quod Deus velit colligere sub ejus manu quidquid dissipatum est et in coelo, et in terra. ... et ita quodammodo tunc per Christum mediatorem manum illis porrexit Deus, et januam illis aperuit in spem salutis aeternae.”

¹¹³ Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 196 (Jer. 32:36-38). “Ipse eiectos in varias terrae partes in Furore meo, recolligā, & reducam in locum istum, in Hieruslaem inquam & in terram promissam. Id quod factum esse docet historia Ezrae & Hehemiae. Quia vero Hieruslaem ecclesiae Dei, & terra promissa aeternae patriae typum gessere, ideo venit Dei filius de coelo in terras, ac filios Dei per universum terrarum orbem disperses, ceu pastor ouiculas suas recolligit in unitatem ecclesiae, quos & in fine saeculi congregatos in unum inducet in aeternam patriam: ...”

In Bullinger's sermon on Jer. 32:36-8, the restoration reaches its apex in the salvation effected through Christ. As he said, the restoration of the temple in Canaan was completed by Ezra and Nehemiah. However, the revival that Jeremiah described is later than that period. To Bullinger, Jerusalem means the church of God and Canaan means everlasting heaven. Christ came into this world and gathered the people of God into one church, and will lead the people of God to their everlasting home in heaven in the end. Therefore, Bullinger states that the church in this world is the gathering of God's people. This is in line with Calvin. According to Calvin, by the gospel of Christ the members of the church acknowledge Christ as king, and Christ will lead them into His kingdom, eventually.¹¹⁴ Salvation beyond this world is not achieved by any government or ruler, but only by the kingdom of Christ.¹¹⁵ The members of the church are assured of being with God forever. It is natural, then, to talk about salvation in Christ when talking about the church. In sum the people of God receive Him as their father, hope for the kingdom of God, and praise God in the church of Christ built by God until they reach the kingdom.

16.4 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter is to compare the ecclesiology of Bullinger as it appeared in his sermons on the book of Jeremiah, to the ecclesiology of Calvin. The result is that we have found that Bullinger's ecclesiology is similar to that of Calvin's. First of all Bullinger, in his exegesis, does not depict a church to be unchangeable. He says that a church has a beginning, sometimes suffers from various problems and sometimes stays calm, demonstrating its dynamic identity. This is in line with Calvin. Second, both Calvin and Bullinger are cautious of the impious reality of the lives of many in the church. Especially are they disturbed by the sins of the Catholic Church. The two emphasize that the church has only Christ at its center. Such an idea is connected to the reality of the one church, the church having Christ as its head. It is only right that the body of the church is called the Christian church. Such a church awaits revival; the members of the church wait for their salvation in the coming

¹¹⁴ Calvin, *Sermons*, 115 (Sermon 17 on Jer. 17:11-14). "..., mais c'est que par son Evangile on le congnoist le roy souverain; et puis le throsne du ciel respond à cela, quant nostre Seigneur nous monstre qu'il ne veult point que nous soyons icy fichez en la terre en nous donnant l'Evangile, mais il nous veult tirer en hault."

¹¹⁵ CO 39. 68 (COR II 6/2. 1294; Jer. 33:16).

of Christ. These two reformers proclaim repentance to their congregations. The church should be holy and blameless. The church in this world must be the militant church, and at the consummation this church will be the triumphant church. As reformed theologians, both Calvin and Bullinger show similarities in their exegesis of the book of Jeremiah, although their applications are different due to their differing contexts, and especially their different congregations.

Chapter XVII. Juan Maldonado (1533-1583) and His Theological Thought on Jeremiah

17.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the ecclesiology of the Catholic theologian, Juan Maldonado, and is based on his commentary on the book of Jeremiah comparing his interpretation with that of Calvin. Calvin's attitude towards the Catholic Church was a highly critical one. After Calvin experienced an unexpected conversion (*subita conversio*) in 1533, he left his homeland and lived as a religious refugee throughout the rest of his life.¹ In the eyes of Calvin, the Catholic Church was worse than the Israel of Jeroboam and the same as the Israel of Ahab. Moreover, the Catholic Church could not be called a church anymore because the church lacked truth.² So he thought that the Catholic Church had become an impious school³ where the divine word disappeared, sacraments were corrupted, and public worship services were full of idolatry. Calvin's stance can be found in his commentary on Jeremiah. However, in the view of the Catholic theologians, Calvin's Genevan church was heretical, differing from their church.⁴ Considering such differences, comparing the ecclesiology of Maldonado with that of Calvin seems appropriate. This chapter clearly has its limitations. This study cannot consider Maldonado's entire commentary on Jeremiah. Within Maldonado's commentary on Jeremiah, this chapter will study the texts from Jeremiah which Chapter 15 (above) dealt with.

17.2 Background Study of Maldonado

17.2.1 A Short Biography of Maldonado

¹ Selderhuis, *John Calvin*, 18-9. Calvin's unexpected conversion is recorded in the preface to his commentary on the Psalms. However, more details on his conversion are unknown. As Calvin experienced conversion, he broke away from the Catholic Church; Gordon, *Calvin*, 42.

² Jenkins, *Calvin's Tormentors*, 9.

³ Selderhuis, "Der Begriff 'Doctrina'," 416. Besides the Scriptures, Calvin also speaks of the Church as a school, and both are not an institution for the expansion of intellectual knowledge, but an institution in which people are formed.

⁴ "The Catholic Church held the council of Trent (*Concilium Tridentinum*) from 1545 to 1563 and totally denied the acceptance of the doctrines that the party of Protestants had suggested. So, this decision shows what the Catholic Church thought about the Protestants, including the Genevan church." Ozment, *the Age of Reform*, 407-9; "On April 20, 1548, the arch-polemicist, Johannes Cochlaeus, published an answer to Calvin's *Antidoto* ... In strong and often abusive language, Calvin is labelled a heretic of the worst sort." Casteel, "Calvin and Trent," 114.

Maldonado was a Jesuit writer, philosopher, and theologian. He was also an exegete.⁵ He was born to a noble family in à Las-Casas de la Reina in 1533. When he was 14 years old, he began to learn Latin, Greek and philosophy at the University of Salamanca in 1547.⁶ At first, he planned to study law, but changed to theology.⁷ Then, he moved to the Roman College (*Collège Romain*) and taught theology as a member of the Jesuit order (*la Compagnie de Jésus*).⁸ Not long after, he moved to Paris.⁹ In 1565, he resumed work as a theology professor at the Collège de Clermont.¹⁰ While he was living in Paris, he was involved in a conflict with *L'Université de Paris*, which was itself ill-disposed towards Jesuit College and contentious against Calvinists.¹¹ At that time, Calvinists were religiously influential not only among young people in Paris but also among many nobles. This situation seemed to call for caution in Maldonado's view.¹² Calvinists were absolutely heretical to him, and a threat to his religion.¹³ So he tried to convince those who followed Calvin to protect them from the heretic. Likewise during the religious war which broke out in France in the 1560s, Maldonado tried to overcome the difficulties caused by religious conflict.¹⁴ Meanwhile, Maldonado went to Poitou where the Catholic Church was suffering due to appearance of Reformed churches.¹⁵ After the completion of his mission he returned to the department of theology at Clermont University in 1570, and stayed there until 1576. On Saint Bartholomew's Day in 1572 Maldonado met the

⁵ Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, iii.

⁶ Sommervogel, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, 403.

⁷ Schmitt, *La Réforme catholique*, 64-66.

⁸ Regarding the Jesuits of that time, see Schmitt, *La Rèforme catholique*, 174-187; O'Mallet, "Ignatius of Loyola (1491?-1556)," 298-301. The Jesuit is the part of the Catholic Church that the pope Paul III officially certified as a religious institution in September 1540. Several months later after the certification, Ignatius of Loyola was appointed as the highest chair of this institution. In the council of Trent (1545-7), Jesuit theologians were appointed as the official theologians of the council; Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, 16.

⁹ Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, 18-19.

¹⁰ Sommervogel, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, 403; Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, 161.

¹¹ Tropia, "Pédagogie et Philosophie," 213. La plus grande partie de la bibliographie sur Maldonado se concentre sur le rôle qu'il joua au Collège jésuite: l'étude classique de Prat (1856), mais aussi l'ouvrage plus récent de Schmitt (1985) s'occupent surtout de la position qu'il eut à Paris (plus généralement, en France) et, tout particulièrement, de ses combats avec l'Université de Paris et avec les protestants.

¹² Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed*, 12-18. At that time, the number of the reformed churches was growing in France. The biblical interpretation and the church law of Calvin was an important basis for them. And, the successor of Calvin, Beza, often went to France and played the role of preacher and advisor to the new churches.

¹³ Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, 186.

¹⁴ Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, 192.

¹⁵ Schmitt, *La Réforme catholique*, 224; Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, 235-6. Maldonado was sent there with Belleville, Charles Sager, Nicolas Le Cler, Odon Pigenat and Pierre Lohier. He was their leader and reported their ministry there by writing letters.

representatives of the injured Protestants, Henri de Condé and Henri de Navarre. Amid the difficulties, he endeavored to educate them in the proper doctrine of the Catholic Church.¹⁶

In 1576 he left Paris and resumed as a theology professor at the College of Bourges.¹⁷ He began to write a commentary on the Four Gospels there which was written to fight heresy. This work shows Maldonado's willingness to use his talent in maintaining and defending the Catholic Church's theology.¹⁸ Having arrived at Bourges, he intended to concentrate on biblical exegesis. However, the Jesuits gave him a new task, which was to visit and care for the Catholic Churches and colleges in the provinces.¹⁹ So he would go to several provinces in France and had the chance to guide Catholic Churches doctrinally. Having completed his duty, he intended to spend time writing his commentary on the Four Gospels. However, due to the death of the General of the Jesuit Order, he attended the fourth General Congregation as a representative of the French region in 1580. Soon he left for Rome.²⁰ Then, in 1581, he participated in correcting and editing the Septuagint.²¹ In the midst of busy days, he continued to work on his commentary on the Four Gospels. That was his last work. He passed away in Rome, on Jan. 5, 1583.²²

17.2.2 The Commentary on the Book of Jeremiah by Maldonado

Maldonado did not see his works published before his death. After his death, many publishers wanted to publish his works.²³ Through his books, he is known to be a Catholic theologian who defends and presents the theology of the Catholic Church. He is also well known to be knowledgeable about God, the background of the Bible, and the Church Fathers.²⁴ He was also erudite in the biblical languages and exegesis.²⁵ Nevertheless, compared to other theologians, especially Calvin, his works

¹⁶ Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, 290-5.

¹⁷ Schmitt, *La Rèforme catholique*, 467-470; Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, 417.

¹⁸ Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, 419. Il n'avait point cessé de lutter contre le protestantisme; et, pendant son séjour à Bourges, il écrivait encore contre cette secte son immortel commentaire sur les quatre Évangélies. Voué par état et par conviction au maintien et à la propagation de la religion catholique, il avait constamment consacré à cette sainte mission ses forces, ses talents, ses connaissances, tous les instants de sa vie.

¹⁹ Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, 439-440.

²⁰ Schmitt, *La Rèforme catholique*, 516; Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, 480.

²¹ Schmitt, *La Rèforme catholique*, 521; Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, 484-6.

²² Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, 488; Schmitt, *La Rèforme catholique*, 525.

²³ Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, 490.

²⁴ Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, 519-520.

²⁵ Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, 505.

are relatively few.²⁶ Among his works the most famous is the commentary on the Four Gospels (*Ioannis Maldonaii Societatis Iesu Theologi Commentarii in quatuor Evangelistas*, 1596). This book was first published in 1596, and in several editions afterwards.²⁷ Due to the success of this commentary interest in his other commentaries grew. So, in 1609, the commentary on the Four Prophets (*Commentarii in Prophetas IV. Jeremiam, Ezechielem, Baruch et Danielem. Accessit expositio Psalmi CIX et Epistola de Collatione Sedanensi, cum Calvinistis*, 1609) was published.²⁸

Beside his biblical commentaries, books on Maldonado's theological arguments were published. He taught the theology of the Catholic Church, protected its faith from heresy, and defended it. He considered the Calvinism the most hateful heresy.²⁹ Representatively this is found in his work on the arguments and debates over the Sacraments of the Catholic Church and the Calvinists (*Ioannis Maldonati Andalusii Societatis Iesu Theologi, disputationum ac controversiarum decisarum et circa septem Ecclesiae Romanae Sacramenta inter Catholicos praesertim et Calvinistas, tum alios hoc tempore agitari solitarum, ...*).³⁰ The period of his ministry in Paris and that of Calvin's ministry at Geneva do not overlap. However, he could not ignore Calvin's influence in his successors and students. Thus Maldonado identified Calvin's successors with heresy and endeavored to deny and rebuke their theology for his church.³¹

17.3 Maldonado's Exegesis of the Book of Jeremiah

This chapter will deal with Maldonado's interpretation of the book of Jeremiah, based on five themes that Part II covered. The verses examined in this chapter also appeared mostly in the chapter 15 of this study. In line with the purpose of this chapter, the focus will be on the comparison between the ecclesiology of Maldonado and that of Calvin.

17.3.1 Covenant as the Motif of God's People

²⁶ Sommervogel, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, 403-412.

²⁷ Sommervogel, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, 403-407; Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, 519.

²⁸ His chosen four prophets include Baruch, which is accepted in the canon of the Catholic Church.

²⁹ Schmitt, *La Réforme catholique*, 229-236; Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, 496, 519.

³⁰ Sommervogel, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, 407.

³¹ Prat, *Maldonat et L'Université de Paris*, 503.

Jeremiah proclaims that the Israelites would be captive in Babylon as well as they would someday return to their homeland. This is the divine will. Describing the return, the prophet discusses the new covenant in Jer. 31:31. Explaining this covenant, Calvin applies the situation of the Israelites to the circumstance of his church. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the reformers interpreted the Bible regularly by such applications. However, Maldonado does not apply this text to his church directly while interpreting Jer. 31. Mentioning the covenant, he does not connect it with the identity of the Catholic Church. Instead, he explains the characteristics of the new covenant. He was a professor of theology and philosophy. So, he was in a different position from the reformers', especially Calvin, who had to take care of the church as well as teach at the school. Maldonado needed to apply biblical texts to certain communities or churches less. Maldonado, in his exposition of Jer. 31:31, just defines the new covenant as the New Testament (*Novum testamentum*) or Good news (*Evangelium*).³² Interpreting verse 32-33, he clarifies the differences between the new covenant and the old covenant. According to him, the old covenant is no longer in effect, and the new covenant will not be nullified, but will continue forever. Moreover, the old covenant leads to the wrath of God according to the Law, Maldonado argues, but the new covenant leads to reconciliation with God through the death of Christ.³³ He emphasizes the spiritual aspect of the new covenant.³⁴ Such an interpretation is in line with that of Calvin who says, "the new covenant appeals to the mind of people, so it reforms their internal functioning, thereby leading them to obey God more."³⁵ However, Maldonado points out at Jer. 31:34 that heresy does not do justice to the interpretation of the Bible. He also argues that such teaching is not needed any longer.³⁶ When he mentions heresy, he refers to the Protestants. Calvin criticizes the Anabaptists who also quote the verse. Calvin rebukes the attitude of the Anabaptists who

³² Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 143 (Jer. 31:31).

³³ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 143 (Jer. 31:32). "Haec est prima differentia, quam tradit inter novum & vetus testamentum, quod vetus irritum factum sit, novum non irritabitur, sed melius servabitur. Secunda, quod in veteri Deus dominatus sit, id est, severitate usus, *lexenim iram operabatur*, ad Rom. 4.15. In novo autem testamento non item, quia filii sui morte placabitur."

³⁴ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 143 (Jer. 31:33). "... natura legis veteris requirebat, ut scripta esset, quia carnalis erat: natura legis evangelicae, ut non scribatur, sed animo sculpatur, quia spiritalis est."

³⁵ CO 38. 690-1 (COR II 6/2. 1193; Jer. 31:33). "... , ideoque non sit literalis ejus doctrina, sed in corda ipsa penetret, ac omnes sensus reformat in obsequium justitiae Dei."

³⁶ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 143 (Jer. 31:34). "Quod non est ita intelligendum, quasi in Evangelio nō sit nobis opus doctore, ut haeretici contratio errore docent: sed quod cum Evangelium non in litteris, syllabisque consistat, non sit nobis opus scribis, & Pharisaeis, neque litteratoribus istis magistris haeticorum, qui spiritalem Evangelij legem carnaliter interpretentur."

try to abandon all kinds of teaching from the Bible with their distortion of Jer. 31:34, “no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD’.”³⁷ In other words, the Anabaptists were religious fanatics who deny all traditional biblical teaching. So, Maldonado refers to Calvin and his church when Maldonado discusses any heresy which interprets and teaches the Bible against Catholic tradition. Maldonado argues that it is wrong for Calvin and his church to interpret and teach the Bible. But not because such teaching is not necessary. Interpreting the verse Calvin says, “the divinely chosen people would be clothed with the gifts of knowledge, so they would not remain novices anymore” under the new covenant.³⁸ Unlike Maldonado, Calvin does not argue that teachers of the Bible would be unnecessary under the new covenant. Furthermore, he clarifies the difference between the new covenant and the old in his exegesis of the same verse.³⁹ Nonetheless, mentioning the restoration of the people of the new covenant, Maldonado argues that Christ’s reign and the gospel will be forever, and that the sacraments will not come to an end.⁴⁰ In this it is apparent that Maldonado acknowledges the relationship between Christ and the new covenant.

In sum, Maldonado explains the difference between the new covenant and the old covenant clearly. He also points out the error of the Protestants when they explain the new covenant. While Calvin explicitly tends to compare the Catholic Church of that time to Babylon, Maldonado concentrates on the erroneous teachings of Calvinists and Lutherans, and calls them heretics.⁴¹ Thus Maldonado criticizes not only the doctrines of the Calvinists, but the reformed church as well, even though he did not compare the reformed church to Babylon.

³⁷ CO 38. 693 (COR II 6/2. 1197; Jer. 31:34). “Et hinc colligimus quosdam fanaticos inscite et perperam abusos fuisse hoc testimonio, cum vellent tollere omnem doctrinae usum, sicuti nostro tempore quidam ex Anabaptistis rejecerunt omnem doctrinam: ...”

³⁸ CO 38. 694 (COR II 6/2. 1198; Jer. 31:34). “Summa est igitur, omnes Dei electos fore etiam instructos dono intelligentiae, ut non subsistant in primis elementis.”

³⁹ CO 38. 697 (COR II 6/2. 1201; Jer 31:34). “Quoniam autem interpretor duntaxat Prophetarum verba, non opus est hic longius disserere de discrimine Veteris et Novi Testamenti, hoc est, quibus partibus inter se differant. Nam differunt Vetus et Novum Testamentum etiam in aliis.”; By comparing Jer. 31:31-34 to Heb. 8:13, Calvin explains the difference between the new covenant and the old one. On this issue, refer to Graafland, “Alter und neuer Bund:,” 134-140.

⁴⁰ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas III*, 152 (Jer. 33:18). “Significat sicut regnum Christi, ita sacerdotium Evangelicum futurum esse perpetuum, & Eucharistiae sacrificium non defuturum, ...”; One clear thing is that Calvin argues for the nullification of the sacrifices because God does not remember the sins of the believers in the New Testaments. CO 38. 695 (COR II 6/2. 1200; Jer. 31:34). “Ergo cessant sacrificia, quoniam ubi peccata remissa sunt, jam non opus est satisfactione.”

⁴¹ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas III*, 83-4 (Jer. 18:6). “Quibus locis haeretici ad tollendum liberum arbitrium abutuntur. Quos in libris contra Lutheranorum & Calvinianorum errors copiosè refutauimus.”; Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas III*, 59 (Jer. 12:6). “... quemadmodum nunc haeretici contra sacerdotes & monachos, quasi contra lupos clamant.”

17.3.2 Word and Worship as the Foundation of the Church

In his exegesis of the first verse of the book of Jeremiah, Calvin attributes the reason for Israelite corruption and impiety before God resulting in the absence of the divine word. He argues that in order to establish a church the word of God should be proclaimed clearly and worship should be performed correctly through the word.⁴² However, in his interpretation of the same text, Maldonado does not attribute the absence of God's word to be the main cause for the corruption of Israel. Rather, he emphasizes the proclamation of the word of God through Jeremiah, and focuses more on the role of Jeremiah as a prophet.⁴³ The Lord made the prophet proclaim His word by teaching him His word. In other words, it is not the word of the prophet that Jeremiah utters but that of God. Here, God puts His word into the mouth of Jeremiah.⁴⁴ Surely, Maldonado says, the prophet proclaims the word of God not his word. Likewise, in his interpretation of the first verse of Jeremiah Maldonado emphasizes the role of Jeremiah as a tool of God, rather than on the corruption of the church caused by the absence of the divine word, which Calvin emphasizes.

Moreover, in his interpretation of Jer. 7:2, Maldonado reveals the role the Temple plays. The Temple was a place for those who wanted to listen to the word of God.⁴⁵ As he summarizes Chapter 7, he states that the chapter shows the wickedness of the Israelites and criticizes their superficial faith and formal worship in the Temple.⁴⁶ Specifically, in his interpretation of verse 18, Maldonado criticizes Israelite idolatry, and illustrates it with the yeast and the flour. The bread needs flour, water, salt and butter mixed together. Through this analogy, he points to the attitude of Israel which pursued idolatry.⁴⁷ In verse 22 he also emphasizes the fact that God did not want Israelites' sacrificial worship but their mercy. God saw a right attitude as more important than worship. Thus, according to

⁴² CO 37. 472 (COR II 6/1. 19; Jer. 1:1).

⁴³ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 2 (Jer. 1:1). "Primum caput prooemium est totius libri. Nihil enim aliud Propheta narrat, quam quomodo à Deo ad munus Prophetiae destinatus fuerit."

⁴⁴ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 4 (Jer. 1:9). "Sic initiat Dominus Prophetam, ut intelligat, quae praedicturus est, non sua, sed Dei esse verba in os suum immissa. Facit hoc loco Deus manu, quod alio loco dicit lingua."

⁴⁵ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 36 (Jer. 7:2). "... id est, templi, qua omnes ingrediuntur, & egrediuntur, ut ab omnibus audiaris."

⁴⁶ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 36 (Jer. 7:1). "Ostendit Iudaeis ipsorum peccata, propter quae à Deo puniuntur: & redarguit vanam eorum confidentiam in temple Domini, & externo cultu."

⁴⁷ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 38 (Jer. 7:18). "... id est, omnes, qui in familia sunt conserunt aliquid ad sacrificia idolorum perficienda, ut eorum participes esse possint. ... Conspersionem autem vocat farinam, aquam, salem, butyrum, etsi quid aliud ad faciendas placentas miscebatur."

Maldonado, God does not like simple worship without the proper attitude. So believers should live rightly, Maldonado argues.⁴⁸ Calvin agrees with Maldonado on this point. Calvin argues that the most important part of true worship is to listen to the word of God and obey Him rather than any sacrificial offering.⁴⁹ But, what makes Calvin different from Maldonado is, of course, his view of the Catholic Church. Maldonado does not mention anything about the worship services at his church in connection with this verse. Calvin says the following: “If the papists acknowledge that God sees obedience as more important than sacrificial rites, the reformers could agree with their (the papists’) arguments.”⁵⁰ In other words, in Calvin’s view, the worship of the Catholic Church is nothing but external sacrificial rites. They did not follow nor obey the word of God. Rather, they took the doctrines of the Church Fathers and the decisions of the Catholic Church more seriously than the word of God.⁵¹ They say that people should worship God in the best way they can. However, the Catholic Church stacks up useless rites and does not listen to advice teaching that props are useless. This is because they worship God according to their taste and preference not according to the divine order.⁵² This can be found in ancient Israel. The Israelites were interested in the external rites, and ignored the original meaning of them. Furthermore, Calvin states that God only acknowledges spiritual worship and receives the worship of the heart.⁵³ Likewise, while interpreting Jer. 7:21-24, Calvin strongly criticizes the attitude of the Catholic Church for considering external worship as important and ignoring the word of God. Maldonado does not mention his church negatively nor the worship of the Protestants. Although

⁴⁸ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas III*, 38-9 (Jer. 7:22). “... sed loquitur comparatè, ut cum dicit, *Misericordiam volo, non sacrificium*. ... id est, magis misericordiam volo quàm sacrificium. vel, nolo sacrificium sine misericordia. Ita hoc loco dicit se non praecepisse sacrificia, quia priùs, & diligentius bonos mores praeceperat; vel, quia non praeceperat offerri sibi sacrificia sine bonis moribus.”

⁴⁹ CO 37. 693 (COR II 6/1. 297; Jer. 7:22). “... nempè hanc esse praecipuam partem veri et recti cultus, ubi audimus Deum loquentem: et pluris esse obedientiam quam omnes victimas, et omnia sacrificia, sicuti jam citavimus ex decimo quinto capite primi Samuelis.”

⁵⁰ CO 37. 692 (COR II 6/1. 297; Jer. 7:22). “Nam si hoc admitterent Papistae, Deo pluris esse obedientiam quam omnia sacrificia, facile inter nos conveniret.”

⁵¹ CO 37. 692 (COR II 6/1. 297; Jer. 7:22). “Et videmus etiam pertinaciter in hoc principio ipsos insistere, non standum esse, neque acquiescendum verbo Dei, quia nihil certum sit illic: ideo pluris aestimant doctrinam Patrum et perpetuum consensum Ecclesiae Catholicae, ut vocant, quam et Legem, et Prophetas, et Evangelium.”

⁵² CO 37. 691 (COR II 6/1. 295-6; Jer. 7:22). “... quia in Papatu existimant Deum rite et optime coli, dum accumulunt multas ceremoniarum pompas, nec potest illis persuaderi hoc totum esse frivolum. Quare? Deum enim aestimant ex proprio ingenio, et tamen omnes ceremoniae papales sunt commentitiae: nullum enim habent testimonium ex Lege aut Evangelio.”

⁵³ CO 37. 690 (COR II 6/1. 294; Jer. 7:22). “Ergo Propheta hic sacrificia repudiat, quae adulteraverant perversi illi Dei cultores, cum scilicet tantum intenti essent in externas ceremonias, et negligerent finem ipsum, atque adeo contemnerent. Scimus enim ab initio, Deum voluisse spiritualiter coli: neque enim hodie mutavit naturam. Ergo quemadmodum hodie non alium cultum probat, quam spirituale, sicuti ipse est Spiritus: ita et sub Lege voluit sincero corde se coli.”

Maldonado does not tend to apply the word of God to his community, his application appears in his interpretation of Jeremiah 43:9. “So I interpret it as suits the sense of the prophecy. For because the Israelites did not believe the words of Jeremiah, God ordered him to use not only words, but also things themselves to announce to them the coming calamity. We have frequently noted above that this typically happens.”⁵⁴ In this quote he points out, by using the word “we,” that we do not listen well to the word of calamities when they befall us, just like the Israelites. To show this, he states that he interpreted Scripture as if he were a prophet. It is rare for Maldonado to apply the word of God to his situation by using the expression, “we,” compared to Calvin. Even if it is rather indirect, he applied the words to the negative aspects of his community. Thus we see that both Calvin and Maldonado used their biblical interpretation to criticize the church of the other as well as to maintain the piety of their own church.

17.3.3 Unholiness as the Fall of the Church

In Maldonado’s interpretation of Jer. 12:7-8, although God loved the Israelites and called them His possession,⁵⁵ they became hostile and offensive towards God.⁵⁶ Moreover, God criticizes the religious leaders of the Israelites, the priests, and the prophets. Maldonado also critically states that they did not care for the people of God, and ultimately led them to their destruction and ruin.⁵⁷ In his exposition of the same verse, Calvin also rebukes the impious Israelites. First of all, Calvin states that the kingdom of Judah was the holy abode of God, but this privilege became poisonous to the Israelites. This is because due to this privilege, they misunderstood and came to believe that their safety was sure no matter how evil they were. Calvin clearly points out the attitude of the Israelites who enjoyed the wonderful privileges of God but did not obey Him.⁵⁸ However, there are differences

⁵⁴ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 182 (Jer. 43:9). “Sic interpretor, ut sensus prophetiae conveniat. Nam quia Iudaei verbis Ieremiae non crediderant, iubetur à Deo non solùm verbis, sed rebus etiam ipsis futuram illis calamitatem antenuntiare, quod supra adnotavimus saepe fieri solere.”; Cf. Maldonado, *Reformation Commentary on Scripture, Jeremiah*, 389-390.

⁵⁵ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 59 (Jer. 12:7). “*Dimisi hereditatem meam*, id est, populum Iudaicum, qui hereditas Domini vocabatur, ...”

⁵⁶ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 60 (Jer. 12:8). “*Facta est mihi hereditas mea*, id est, populum Iudaeorum. *Quasi leo in Silva*, id est, efferatus, alienus à me; offendens me, sicut leo homines, quos non novit, occidit.”

⁵⁷ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 60 (Jer. 12:8). “Sacerdotes & Prophetae, cùm multi essent, non bene custodierunt populum meum; quin eum potiùs in exitium, & in interitum induxerunt, dicentes, ...”

⁵⁸ CO 38. 138 (COR II 6/1. 488-9; Jer. 12:7). “Hoc nomen valde honorificum erat Iudaeis: et ideo quantumvis quotidie accenderent adversum se iram Dei, putabant tamen se quodam privilegio salvos fore, quoniam erant Dei haereditas.

between the interpretation of Calvin and Maldonado. Calvin explicitly applies this text to his situation. Specifically, he compares the self-indulgence of the Israelites with the defiance of the papists. He says: “Therefore, what we suffer in this tragic time (by the Catholic Church) is the same as what Jeremiah lamented over the people of his time. They raised their defiant voice toward God.”⁵⁹ Calvin says that it is a tragedy for him and his church to see the papists being defiant to God. Calvin sees the situation of the church during his time through the biblical texts. Maldonado does not apply the wickedness of the Israelites to his church nor to the heretical church, which is that of Calvin. Maldonado just points out the errors of biblical interpretation made by the heretics.⁶⁰

In addition, Maldonado discusses not only the wickedness and destruction of ancient Israel but also their restoration. Maldonado says that the Israelites are the sons of God and with whom God is pleased: “Isn’t Ephraim enough to be glorified? They became aware of the sins (*cognoverit*) that were punished by me (God) and repented (*egerit*).”⁶¹ Through this question, Maldonado sees the repentance of the Israelites in a positive light. He describes Ephraim as an obedient son (*filio morigero*).⁶² In this part, the verbs behind the Latin ‘*cognoverit*’ and ‘*egerit*’ are 3rd person active in Hebrew, which means that Ephraim recognized his sins ‘by himself’ and repented ‘on his own.’ However, according to Calvin, this verse was one of the most important debates between the papists and Calvin’s church. The Catholic Church argues that Israel, that is a man, can return to God by his own will.⁶³ But, Calvin states that a man cannot recognize his sin by himself but only becomes aware of his sin after God makes him turn back. The repentance of a sinner is not a human task but a divine

... Sed tamen locus hic oblique Judaeis exprobrat suam ingratitude, quod tam singularibus Dei beneficiis non fuerint retenti in obsequio.”

⁵⁹ CO 38. 139-140 (COR II 6/1. 490; Jer. 12:8). “Quibus verbis accusat proterviam populi: qualis etiam hodie in mundo cernitur. Nam quam audacter blasphemias suas evomunt Papistae adversus Deum? nebulones et quisquiliae plebis non dubitant pleno gutture contra Deum insolere: ... Ergo hoc misero nostro saeculo idem experimur quod deplorat Propheta in hominibus suae aetatis, nempe quod voces suas ederent adversus Deum.”

⁶⁰ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 52 (Jer. 10:23). “... , & in libris contra Calvinianorum errores copiosius explamavimus.”

⁶¹ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 141 (Jer. 31:20). “Nónne Ephraim puer est honore dingus, cùm à me castigatus peccata sua cognoverit, & poenitentiam egerit?”

⁶² Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 141 (Jer. 31:20).

⁶³ CO 38.673 (COR II 6/2. 1170; Jer. 31:19). “Ergo hinc colligimus quam caeci fuerint Papistae, qui dum loquuntur de poenitentia existimant hominem proprio arbitrio redire ad Deum, et hac de re maximum est nobis hodie certamen.”

ministry.⁶⁴ A man cannot recognize his sin before the divine renewal of his mind.⁶⁵ Repentance and turning back to God is divine grace, and is possible only by divine election and forgiveness.⁶⁶

In the discussion of the Israelite restoration, the difference between the Catholic Church and Calvin is also found in Jer. 31:22. On this verse, “a woman encircles a man (ESV),” Calvin says that ‘a woman’ means Israel while ‘a man’ means the enemy of Judah, which is Babylon. According to Calvin, this verse means that ‘the Israelites will excel the Chaldeans in bravery.’ Ultimately, this means that no matter how strong the enemy of the Israelites are, the Israelites will triumph. Calvin explains that this verse indicates the rescue of the Israelites from Babylonian captivity.⁶⁷ However, Maldonado says that this special expression means the Virgin Mary’s embrace of Jesus who is the perfect man physically. The birth of Jesus is new and amazing.⁶⁸ But, his interpretation is out of context. Calvin already knew that the Catholic Church would apply Mary and Christ to this verse, and says that such an interpretation is not appropriate.⁶⁹ To be sure, the interpretation of Maldonado was published after Calvin’s death, but Calvin’s statement implicitly indicates that he knew how the Catholic Church interpreted the verse at that time.

In sum, both Calvin and Maldonado emphasize that, due to their wickedness, the Israelites will face destruction and captivity. Calvin, being different than Maldonado, applies such wickedness to the church of his time; especially the idolatry and impiety of the Catholic Church. Specifically, the focus is on the issue of conversion. While Calvin argues that conversion is totally by divine grace, Maldonado insists that conversion needs help from God, yet a man can recognize his sin and repent in his own power.

⁶⁴ CO 38. 672 (COR II 6/2. 1170; Jer. 31:19). “Dicit igitur, *postquam convertisti me, egi poenitentiam*. Confirmat quod jam dixit, nempe esse peculiare Dei opus cum respiscit peccator, neque id posse humanis viribus ascribi: ac si homines proprio motu redirent in viam. Sed quomodo hoc factum est? *Postquam convertisti me.*”

⁶⁵ CO 38. 673 (COR II 6/2. 1170; Jer. 31:19). “Utrumque ascribit Propheta gratiae Dei, quia dicit populum non ante sibi displicuisse in peccatis, quam fuerit conversus, id est, renovatus tam intelligentia quam corde.”

⁶⁶ CO 38. 676 (COR II 6/2. 1174; Jer. 31:20). “Hic igitur revocatur ad fontem gratuita misericordiae, quod scilicet Deus ignoscat populi illius peccatis, quoniam semel illum elegit.”

⁶⁷ CO 38. 680 (COR II 6/2. 1179-80; Jer. 31:22). “Femina una praestabit multis viris, hoc est, singuli Judaei praestabunt singulis Chaldaeis, ita Judaei superiores erunt, quamvis magnum et terribile sit robur hostium.”

⁶⁸ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 141 (Jer. 31:22). “*Faemina circumdabit virum*, id est, Virgo Maria Christum corpore quidem patuum, sapientia vero virum perfectum utero suo complectetur atque circumdabit. Hoc enim vero novum est, & admirabile.”

⁶⁹ CO 38. 680 (COR II 6/2. 1179; Jer. 31:22). “Dicunt igitur hanc esse rem novam, de qua loquitur Propheta, quod virgo gestaverit utero suo Christum infantem, sed simul virum, quia scilicet plenus fuit divina fortitudine, quamvis secundam carnem creverit et statura, et sapientia, et virtute. Merito hoc ridetur a Judaeis: tamen illi etiam, meo iudicio, non tenent genuinam Prophetiae mentem.”

17.3.4 Suffering and Pastors as the Preservation of the Church

Jeremiah the prophet delivered a message that the Israelites would become captive in Babylon, and his prophecy came true. So, the captivity of the Israelites is historical fact. When mentioning the preservation of the church it is thus reasonable to say that the church still remains in this world despite tribulations. Calvin, who knows Israel's history, talks about the suffering of believers in his interpretation. They are not always in a calm and safe state all of the time. Suffering comes to them. However, when believers face such suffering, they believe God cares for them amid such suffering. Therefore, Calvin encourages those believers to remember the divine care in their suffering.⁷⁰ Moreover, he emphasizes that suffering occurs within divine providence.⁷¹

In the interpretation of Jer.18, Maldonado points out that God wants the Israelites to know His ability to return them from captivity through the example of the potter.⁷² The people of God suffer because God allows them to suffer. However, while mentioning such difficulties, Maldonado severely criticizes the Calvinists and the Lutherans in his exposition of Jer.18:6 because they misunderstood the free will of man.⁷³ Calvin argues that man is dependent on the will and power of God as the pot is up to the will and power of the potter.⁷⁴ In other words, human states such as suffering and prosperity is dependent on divine unconditional grace, not on man.⁷⁵ Ultimately, Calvin states, everything in this world depends on the providence of God. However, in Maldonado's view, the issue is that Calvinists seem not to acknowledge the free will of man. In this, Maldonado disdains Calvin's arguments. Nevertheless, like Calvin, Maldonado also acknowledges that God can make a man suffer.⁷⁶

Moreover, Calvin and Maldonado do not overlook the fact that God sends the servant of God to the churches in their suffering. Jeremiah was nothing more than the tool of God. God made

⁷⁰ CO 39. 643 (COR 7. 463; Lam. 5:20). "... , ut ad Dei misericordiam confugerent."

⁷¹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 149 (Sermon 22 on Jer. 18:11-14). "... , pour leur monstret que cela ne viendra point des hommes, mais par la providence de Dieu."

⁷² Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas III*, 83 (Jer. 18:1). "Ostendit Deus exemplo figuli vas, quod dissipatum fuerat, refigentis, posse se Iudaeos dissipare, & captivitate dispergere, ac post in pristinum statum restituere."

⁷³ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas III*, 83-4 (Jer. 18:6). "Quibus locis haeretici ad tollendum liberum arbitrium abutuntur. Quos in libris contra Lutheranorum, & Calvinianorum errores copiosè refutavimus."

⁷⁴ CO 38. 295 (COR 6/1. 691; Jer. 18:3). "Sicuti in arbitrio et potestate figuli est lutum, ita etiam in arbitrio Dei sunt homines. Ergo Deus confertur figulo."

⁷⁵ CO 38. 297 (COR 6/1. 693; Jer. 18:6). "Ergo semper veniat nobis hoc in mentem, et recurat etiam subinde, statum nostrum non esse in nobis ipsis firmum, sed in gratuita Dei bonitate."

⁷⁶ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas III*, 84 (Jer. 18:6).

Jeremiah work in public service.⁷⁷ According to Maldonado, God told His servant of the imminent hardship that the people of God would face, and delivered His will through that servant. God taught His prophet what words to deliver and made him proclaim the word of God, not his own. God worked hard in order to deliver His will to His people.⁷⁸ Such an interpretation of Maldonado's is in line with Calvin's. Calvin says that the servant of God is His tool to deliver the divine message only, not his own thought.⁷⁹ On the attitude of those who deliver the word of God, Maldonado warns them, saying that the prophet should not overstate the wickedness or the state of bondage in order to drive the people to have a closer relationship with God. This is because if they are the true people of God, He does not remember their wickedness.⁸⁰ Here, Maldonado warns that the messengers should not add to what God says nor overstate the word of God.⁸¹ Moreover, in his interpretation of 3:15, Maldonado mentions the church office holders, especially pastors, and says that it is good for the church to have a good shepherd. Through a good shepherd, church members are able to know the apostles' divine words and believe the Catholic Church.⁸²

In sum, Maldonado acknowledges that the church, like the ancient Israelites, can face difficult times when abiding in the will of God. Amidst such difficult situations, the pastors who deliver the word of God are the instruments of God. However, in the light of Calvin's statement, Maldonado's thought appears differently than that of Calvin, for the priests of the Catholic Church taught not only the word of God but also the tradition of their church.⁸³

⁷⁷ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 3 (Jer. 1:5). "Id est, praedestinavi ad officium Prophetarum. Cognoscere, scire, aut praescire, pro praedestinare aliquando ponitur, ... Sanctificare hoc loco non videtur significare, Sanctum facere, aut iustificare: Sed designare ad publicum officium, ..."

⁷⁸ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 4 (Jer. 1:9). Sic initiat Dominus Prophetam, ut intelligat, quae praedicturus est, non sua, sed Dei esse verba in os suum immissa. Facit hoc loco Deus manu, quod alio loco dicit lingua."; Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 2 (Jer. 1:1). "Primum caput proemium est totius libri. Nihil enim aliud Propheta narrat, quam quomodo à Deo ad munus Prophetiae destinatus fuerit."

⁷⁹ CO 38. 47 (COR II 6/1. 371; Jer. 9:20). "... tametsi enim utitur mea opera, ego tamen ita sum organum ipsius, ut facile vobis constet me nihil temere proferre, sed fideliter tradere quae ab ipso accepi."

⁸⁰ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 143 (Jer. 31:34). "Non erit opus Ieremia, qui nobis peccata nostra exaggerans, & captivitatem comminans doceat nos Dominum cognoscere, id est, in eius gratiam, familiaritatemque redire. quia propitiabitur iniquitatibus nostris, & peccatorum nostrorum amplius non recordabitur."

⁸¹ Calvin says that they should not speak a word other than what they receive from God. God acknowledges what He says only. Cf. Calvin, *Sermons*, 125 (Sermon 18 on Jer. 17:13b, 15, 16).

⁸² Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 17 (Jer. 3:15). "Et dabo vobis pastores iuxta cor meum. id est, bonos, non quales populus vult; sed quales ego. Pars enim felicitatis populi est bonos habere pastores. Per bonos autem pastores Apostolos videtur intelligere, cum de Ecclesia Catholica loquatur."

⁸³ Calvin, *Sermons*, 125-6 (Sermon 18 on Jer. 17:13b, 15, 16).

17.3.5 Election centered on Christ as the Restoration of the Church

Jeremiah proclaimed that the Israelites would come back to their land at the time God chose and rebuild the city and Temple. However, his prophecy had limitations because such a promise was not given to all Israelites. According to Calvin, God said that only the elect among the Israelites would return.⁸⁴ The divine will concerning the elect and the deserted appears in Jer. 24. Like Calvin, Maldonado also interprets Jer. 24 by dividing the people into two kinds of figs. Specifically, he clearly distinguishes the captive people in Babylon from those who remained in Judah.⁸⁵ In his interpretation Maldonado does not use the word ‘elect’ explicitly. Moreover, Maldonado states in his interpretation of Jer. 31:17 that the remnant ultimately would return safely.⁸⁶ He clearly says that a ‘remnant (*reliquiis*)’ - not all Israelites - would come back to their motherland. Maldonado also states that if the Gentiles, including the Babylonians return to the word of God from their idols, God will number them among the Israelites. He explains this by the analogy of a wild olive shoot grafted into the good olive tree. This reminds us of Paul in Romans who mentions God calling the Gentiles.⁸⁷ Such a thought on the remnant and the Gentiles, that they would be saved in the end is in line with Calvin’s thinking.⁸⁸

Let us examine the theology of Maldonado regarding the recovery of the Israelites: when God intends to rebuild the nation that committed sin against Him, He makes them repent and softens their heart.⁸⁹ In his interpretation of Jer. 24:6, Maldonado says that God will look on them in mercy and make them return and have stability.⁹⁰ According to him, the returned Israelites are stabilized. This marks a difference between Maldonado and Calvin. When God says that He would bring the nation to

⁸⁴ CO 39. 24 (COR II 6/2. 1240; Jer. 32: 28). “Postea adjungit se tandem propitium fore exulibus: sed restringitur gratia illa ad solos electos et fideles.”

⁸⁵ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 108 (Jer. 24:2). “... , bonis ficibus comparatur Iechonias, & qui cum eo in Chaldaeam translati sunt; malis verò Sedecias, & eius principes, ac familiares.”

⁸⁶ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 140 (Jer. 31:17). “... extremis diebus tuis, vel, reliquiis filiorum tuorum, quae saluae erunt, ...”

⁸⁷ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 61 (Jer. 12:16). “Si de Chaldaeis, & vicinis gentibus: significat, fore ut si gentes etiam ipsae relictis idolis ad verum Deum convertantur; eos Deus in populo suo habeat. & oleastri in bonam olivam inserantur. videtur enim vocationem gentium praedicere de qua D. Paul. ad Rom. 11.”

⁸⁸ CO 37. 606 (COR II 6/1. 187; Jer. 5:1). “Videmus ut Deus quasi seorsum colligat paucos illos in quibus residuum erat pietatis semen, imo in quorum animis vigeat aliqua religio.” This issue is already dealt in Chapter 13 in detail.

⁸⁹ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 84 (Jer. 18:9). “... quasi dicat, si postquam constituero alicui genti malè facere, poenitentiam egerit, repente sententiam mutabo, ...”

⁹⁰ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 108 (Jer. 24:6). “... id est, benignè, ac misericorditer respiciam eos. ... Repetitio enim est. *Aedificato eos, & non destruiam*, id est, dabo illis stabiles, ac perpetuas sedes, quas non ampliùs mutabunt.”

Zion (3:14), Maldonado argues that Zion is the Catholic Church.⁹¹ Maldonado says that the Catholic Church is the place of God's presence and reign. So all nations will come to the Catholic Church (*Ecclesiam Catholicam*) and there be baptized and become aware of their wickedness.⁹² This shows a clear difference between Calvin's expression of the 'church' as '*Ecclesia(m)*' in his commentary.⁹³ According to Maldonado the people who are the remnant gather in the Catholic Church. This shows Maldonado's different stance from that of Calvin and other reformers.⁹⁴

There is one thing that should not be overlooked. Maldonado states that the prophecy of the restoration of the Israelites indicates the time of Christ. He argues that means salvation from Satan.⁹⁵ This is in line with Calvin's argument. Since Calvin argues that the return of the Israelites was proof of divine grace, the divine plan for the restoration of His true people is to rebuild His church. Notably, at the center of the return, there is Christ.⁹⁶ Adding to this, Maldonado says that since Christ is the good shepherd, He knows His sheep, counts them, and gives them unending restoration. Likewise, Maldonado also emphasizes the role of Christ in the recovery of Israel.⁹⁷ Furthermore, restoration by Christ means the eternal reign of Christ and the everlasting gospel in Him implying the continuous practice of the sacraments.⁹⁸ In this respect, Calvin expounds on the reign of Christ after the return.⁹⁹ He states that the reign of Christ will be forever, and that if the kingdom of Christ is the dominion of

⁹¹ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 17 (Jer. 3:14). "..., sed reducam in Sion, id est, ad Ecclesiam Catholicam."

⁹² Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 17 (Jer. 3:17). "Ecclesiam Catholicam intelligit, ubi Deus habet soliū suum, id est, regnat. *Et congregabuntur ad eam*. Quia omnes gentes ad Ecclesiam Catholicā venturae erant. *In nomine Domini*, quo baptizandae erāt. ... cogitationem cordis sui malam."

⁹³ "Compared to the interpretations of other reformers, Oecolampadius expresses church as '*Ecclesiam*' like Calvin in his interpretation on Jeremiah 3:17." Oecolampadius, *Hieremiam*, 1:29b. (Jer. 3:17). "Id est, vocabitur Hierusalē Ecclesiā: nam per Hierusalem ecclesiam cape."; "Bullinger also calls church '*Ecclesiam*' like Calvin in his eleventh sermon on the book of Jeremiah." Bullinger, *Concionibus CLXX expositus*, 26 (Jer. 3:11-18). "Colliguntur enim as ipsum Deum, adeque ad Christum, non ad divos: & in Hierusalem, id est, in ecclesiam: ..."

⁹⁴ Jedin, *Kleine Konziliengeschichte*, 92-102; Ozment, *The age of Reform*, 407-409.

⁹⁵ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 108 (Jer. 24:7). "Hoc indicat prophetiā hanc propriē esse de tempore Christi, & de liberatione à captivitate Satanae intelligendam, ..."

⁹⁶ CO 39. 46 (COR II 6/2. 1267; Jer. 32:41). "Atqui Prophetae, quemadmodum dixi, incipiunt a reditu populi: sed statuunt simul Christum in medio, ut cognoscant fideles reditum illum fuisse tenuem duntaxat gustum plenae gratiae, quae a Christo demum expectanda erat. Tunc ergo Deus vere plantavit populum suum."

⁹⁷ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 152 (Jer. 33:13). "Ipse enim est pastor bonus, Ioan. 10.11.14. Numerare autem oves est, eas recognoscere, earum curam habere, nequa pereat."

⁹⁸ Maldonado, *Commentarii in Prophetas IIII*, 152 (Jer. 33:18). "Significat sicut regnum Christi, ita sacerdotium Evangelicum futurum esse perpetuum, & Eucharistiae sacrificium non defuturum, ..."

⁹⁹ This is already dealt in Chapter 14 in detail. Upon this issue, refer to 14.4 and 14.5.

Christ then the church is His kingdom. He also argues that the happiness of the church will be realized in Christ.¹⁰⁰

Mentioning the restoration of the church, Maldonado shows a similar stance to Calvin's. First of all, Maldonado explains the return of the Israelites, comparing it to that of the church, like Calvin. Both Calvin and Maldonado state that not all Israelites, but only some of them are the remnant who will belong to the renewed church. Moreover, they both argue that if the Gentiles are converted, they could become members of the renewed church. Furthermore, the center of the renewed church is Christ. By arguing that the people will gather in "the Catholic Church," Maldonado shows a different stance from other reformers, including that of Calvin.

17.4 Conclusion

Maldonado worked in Paris after the death of Calvin. He dedicated himself to teaching the doctrines of the Catholic Church, in response to the growing number of Reformed in Paris. His commentary on the book of Jeremiah focuses on the interpretation of the biblical texts rather than the application of the text to the church. In other words, his academic context explains his different approach from that of Calvin who wrote mainly in the context of practical work for the church. Maldonado's interpretation was rarely applicable to a church audience. Specifically, he considers the traditions of the Catholic Church important and argues that a man can convert to God by his own decision. Furthermore, since he believes the Catholic Church to be the true church, he sees the return of the Protestants to the Catholic Church as the restoration of the church. The most outstanding difference between Maldonado and Calvin appears in the issue of the fall of the church. While Calvin sees the wickedness of the Catholic Church as the main problem of the church, Maldonado takes other forms of the church, such as Calvinists, as the real downfall of the church. Compared to other theologians in previous chapters, the ecclesiology of Calvin is at its greatest distance from that of

¹⁰⁰ CO 38. 411 (COR II 6/1. 840; Jer. 23:6). "Sicuti enim spirituale est Regnum Christi, ita et quaecunque ex eo pendent. Ergo cum Propheta dicit *salvum fore Jehudah*, tantundem hoc valet, ac si promitteret solidam felicitatem Ecclesiae sub Christo."

Maldonado. Furthermore, the ecclesiology of Maldonado is distant as well from that of Bullinger and Oecolampadius.

Chapter XVIII. Conclusion

18.1 Calvin's Ecclesiology in His Interpretation of the Book of Jeremiah

One may wonder if it might be more appropriate to study the doctrine of God or Soteriology than Ecclesiology in Calvin's interpretation of the book of Jeremiah because the book contains more information on the fore-mentioned subjects. Dealing with this kind of issue, one may find out that Calvin's interpretation of Jeremiah has a clear and detailed purpose. He interpreted the book of Jeremiah not for an unspecified public, but for his sermons to his congregation in Geneva or for his lectures to students and pastors at the Geneva Academy. So how Calvin understood the divine word delivered to the Israelites is related to how he applied this understanding to the Genevan church. Calvin's starting point is that the Genevan church should learn from the book of Jeremiah as well as how each member of the Genevan congregation should live as Christians. Calvin's interpretation of Jeremiah clearly shows his ideas of the church and the Christian life. As such Calvin's ecclesiological notions have become good material for research.

However, there is one fact that cannot be overlooked. As mentioned before, Calvin's interpretation of the book of Jeremiah does not contain all of his ecclesiology comprehensively. Specifically, Calvin's discussion of church offices in Chapter 11 shows that he focused on pastors or teachers while mentioning elders once and deacons not at all. When compared to his *Institutes* of 1559, this means that his exegesis does not include all of his theology of the church. After the *Institutes* had been written in 1559, he lectured on Jeremiah in 1560. After that, his lectures were published. Seeing this sequence, one may notice that Calvin briefly mentioned, in his biblical interpretation, what he had already dealt with in detail through his *Institutes*. Moreover, it can be assumed that Calvin could not teach his theology in class or from the pulpit if they have nothing to do with biblical texts. Specifically, his classes and sermons had time limits and a sense of immediacy. For this reason, his biblical interpretations could not contain all of his theological concepts and contents. In his interpretation of Jeremiah, Calvin does not give a full explanation of church offices, nor discuss church discipline. Thus, it might be possible to state that he interpreted the Bible with the expectation that his students and hearers would consult the *Institutes* as a theological reference. In

other words, his biblical interpretation only deals with the contents related to biblical texts. He must have also considered many factors in terms of the on-the-site sense, the *Sitz im Leben*, and the historical situations of his listeners. This shows an aspect of Calvin as a pastor who had to interpret and deliver messages within his historical and pastoral constraints. One must not overlook the characteristics of Calvin's work in terms of genre and historical context. As a result, studying his ecclesiology from the basis of his interpretation of Jeremiah has its limits. However, this research has found aspects of his ecclesiology which differ from what appeared in the *Institutes* or his systematic papers. It was the purpose of this research to study those unique aspects. These can be found in the following.

18.2 Hermeneutics (1): Continuity and Unity

It is well known that Calvin worked hard for the unity of the Reformed churches throughout his life. In his sermon on Jeremiah 16:20-21 in 1549, Calvin emphasized the 'one church.'¹ Although he had established a concrete status politically and ecclesiologically, he worked hard for protestant churches beyond his Genevan church. This shows his point of view that he considered the Reformed churches as one (Ch.2). The Catholic Church criticized the Reformed churches during the Reformation era, and claimed its tradition was superior, expecting for revival. So, Calvin dedicated himself to defending and protecting the Reformed churches. Although he did not want to abandon the Catholic Church and establish a new church, he endeavored to reform churches even if opposed by the Catholic Church.² As he worked for the unity of the Reformed churches of his time, he tried to emphasize that the Reformed churches are the same as the early church, diachronically. Based on such an attitude, he interpreted the Bible and applied it to his church. Calvin thinks that all the churches, since the Old Testament era, have continuity, despite their differences in situations and circumstances. And he insists that such continuity reaches as far as his church in Geneva.³ This

¹ Calvin, *Sermons*, 88 (Sermon 13 on Jer. 16:20-21).

² Monter, *Calvin's Geneva*, 99; Gordon, *Calvin*, 224; Wright, "Calvin's role," 281. Calvin was sure that the unity of church is certain. Calvin clearly said that any union with the Catholic Church would be cursed: CO 38. 230 (COR II 6/1. 607; Jer. 15:17). "Ergo est nobis divortium, et quidem irreconciliabile: et maledicti essemus, si vellemus manum porrigere Papistis."

³ CO 38. 634 (COR II 6/2. 1120; Jer. 30:20). "Hinc colligenda est nobis utilis doctrina, Ecclesiam sic esse perpetuam, ut tamen non sit aequalis ejus conditio. ... Quod tunc accidit accommodemus ad nostrum tempus."

conviction leads him to apply his interpretation of Israel to 'his church'.⁴ Since Calvin considers the Israelites a church of previous history, his explication and application connect Israel to his church in Geneva directly.⁵ Considering this it is possible to apply his biblical interpretation to the present church, which belongs to later history. Then one may wonder if it is appropriate for Calvin to apply the situation of the Israelites to the Genevan church. All of the churches since the Old Testament era have different viewpoints, depending on their time, region and given environment. Moreover, their theology and doctrine have developed according to their times. However an abiding aspect is that they have worshipped the same God and have formed each church in relationship with the same God. Furthermore, they have established a church based on the covenant with the same God. So Calvin could directly compare the Israelites in the book of Jeremiah with his church. Specifically, he thought that the situation of his church was similar to that of the Israelites during the ante- and post-Babylonian captivity (Ch.4).⁶ Likewise it is based on the covenant between God and Israel when Calvin calls the Israelites as well as the Genevan church of the 16th century 'the church' (Ch. 5). Such covenant theology shows the identity of the church as the people of God. As God chose His people and made covenantal relationships with them, so too has He gathered His people in the church. This applies to all of the churches. In this respect, it is appropriate for Calvin to apply the situation of the Israelites to his church. Furthermore, Calvin compares the church of Jeremiah's era with the Catholic Church and states that impious and unholy aspects of the Catholic Church with the Reformed (Ch.4). In fact, Calvin emphasizes the importance of the Christ-centered church while criticizing the Catholic Church as the corrupt community, with the pope at its center. Calvin explains the two signs of the church with Christ's two offices: king and priest (Ch.7). So as the development of Calvin's thought unfolds, Chapter 14 depicts the church by means of the two roles of Christ: the kingdom of Christ and the body of Christ. This Christ-centered church is apparently different from the Catholic Church, which is pope-centered. Thus, it is not an exaggeration to say that all Christ-centered churches form

⁴ CO 31. 50; Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 237-8; Milner, *Calvin's doctrine*, 99.

⁵ Boer, *The Visions of Ezekiel*, 249.

⁶ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 239-40. Selderhuis argues that Calvin was influenced by Luther's work, 'The Babylonian Captivity of the Church'; Calvin, *Sermons*, 81 (Sermon 12 on Jer. 16:14-19a). "N'avons nous donc pas matiere de dire: "Dieu est vivant!", voire quant il nous a retirez de ceste Babilone? ... Et puis, comment est ce que nous estions detenuz en ceste malheureuse papauté? et nous voyons comment il nous en a delivrez par sa grace".

the one church. The church of the Old Testaments and Calvin's church of the 16th century are essentially 'the same'. Calvin's biblical interpretation thus proves to be Christological. Based on this interpretation, the Christ-centered church will exist throughout history. For example, there is a mention in Calvin which shows the continuity between the Israelites of the Old Testament and the church of the 16th century: "And if Jeremiah himself were now alive on earth, he would, if I am not deceived, add his recommendation, for he would acknowledge that his prophecies have been explained by me honestly and reverently. Further, that they have been usefully accommodated to present circumstances."⁷ In this sentence Calvin talks about his ministry and its essence. He was a prophet who delivered prophecies through the word of God. Calvin states in his sermons on Jeremiah that the duty of prophets is to interpret the Bible, explain its meaning and deliver it.⁸ He argues that he is also a person who interprets the Bible in the right way. He thinks that he is a prophet like Jeremiah at Geneva.⁹ As an expounder of the Bible, he seems to be in continuity with the previous prophets throughout his ministry (Ch. 4). Likewise, in Calvin's biblical interpretation, he saw his church in the situation of the Israelites before and after their captivity in Babylon. Moreover, it is clear that he was aware of his role as a prophet during his ministry.

18.3 Hermeneutics (2)

a. Discrepancy and Consistency: Calvin and Other Theologians

The main purpose of this study is not to show the differences and similarities between Calvin and other theologians, but to help readers to understand the characteristics of Calvin's biblical interpretation. Calvin does not mention either Oecolampadius or Bullinger in his biblical

⁷ Gordon, *Calvin*, 330; Cf. CO 20. 77-78 (Calvin to the Elector of the Palatinate, 23 July 1536). "Ac si hodie superstes in terris ageret Ieremias ipse, ad commendationem, nisi fallor, accederet eius suffragium, quia suas prophetias agnosceret non sincere minus quam reverenter a me fuisse expositas: addo etiam ad praesentem usum utiliter accommodatas."

⁸ Calvin, *Sermons*, 125 (Sermon 18 on Jer. 17:13, 15-16). "Vray est que Dieu <ne> nous a pas commis, afin de reciter l'Esriture tant seulement, mais afin de exposer sa volunté."; In the preface to the commentary on Isaiah and the lectures of Hosea, Calvin introduces the idea that prophets are the interpreters of the Law.

⁹ Engammare, "Calvin: A Prophet," 660-1. According to him, Calvin was not alone in believing himself to be in the succession of the prophets. John Knox identified himself, explicitly as well as implicitly, with the prophet Ezekiel, and Zwingli, earlier, also considered himself a prophet.

interpretations. However, Calvin referred to Oecolampadius' commentary on Jeremiah (Ch. 15). And, in the 1550's Bullinger and Calvin shared many theological and ecclesiological viewpoints (Ch.16). But Calvin did not know Maldonado because he worked in Paris after the death of Calvin. Nevertheless in his writings Maldonado mentions the churches and pastors that have been influenced by Calvin in the 1560's. Maldonado knew Calvin's theology indirectly.

The relationship between these theologians and Calvin appears clearly in their biblical interpretations. Oecolampadius and Bullinger argue that their churches are the continuation of the ancient Israel of Jeremiah's time. Specifically Bullinger, who served at the church in Zurich, explains biblical texts with expressions and applications specifically related to his congregation. Moreover, Oecolampadius and Bullinger describe the religious oppression of their congregations in their interpretation because they were shepherding believers who kept their faith against the Catholic Church. They point out the impious aspects of their churches by comparing them to the faults of the Catholic Church. Above all, they emphasize that the church is a Christ-centered community not a pope-centered one (Ch. 15, 16). They were reformers like Calvin against the Catholic Church, and they helped their cities to manage in the new reformed faith. Their biblical interpretation has a historical-ecclesiological context. Maldonado is not an exception. In his interpretation, Maldonado defends his church. He believed the Catholic Church to be the true church and therefore he saw the return of the heretics (Protestants) to the Catholic faith as the restoration of the church. He had, then, a different stance from Calvin's. The outstanding difference appears in the explanation of the fall of the church. While Calvin sees the sin of the Catholic Church as the major failure of the church, Maldonado argues that the weakening of the church was caused by Protestants such as Calvinists (Ch. 17). This viewpoint comes from his ecclesiology, which is different than Calvin's.

The consistency and discrepancy between Calvin and the three theologians in Part III can be summed up in two ways. The first one is that their religious and ecclesiological backdrop is the biggest influence to their biblical interpretation. The second influence is their '*Sitz im Leben*' which is their historical and ministerial context. Specifically Bullinger, who served at the Grossmünster in Zurich, interpreted the Bible in a more church-friendly manner. This is why the interpretations of Calvin and Bullinger are so close.

b. Audience-Centered Interpretation

By comparing Calvin's exegesis and that of Luther, Selderhuis states that "Luther's exegesis very clearly has a '*pro me*' character while the exegesis of Calvin reflects a theology '*pro nobis*'."¹⁰ And, this difference, he argues, comes from their different situations. Calvin's interpretation of the book of Jeremiah was done through two genres: sermon and lecture. With these genres, Calvin differs in contents and direction in his interpretation because the audience was different (Ch. 1, 7). A biblical interpretation that departs from the audience, situation and contexts may cause a misunderstanding. When his congregation or students heard his sermons or lectures, he wanted them to understand it and to apply it to their life. Delivering messages was intended to change a person's life as well as the life of the city.¹¹ Calvin had a rule to make every pericope of the Bible aimed at his audience directly. He thought that preachers had to apply the contents of the Bible to the *Sitz im Leben* of their audiences. This also applies to the preachers because they listen to the word of God. Thus, Calvin's interpretation of the book of Jeremiah is audience-centered, that is, church-centered.

Considering the characteristics of Calvin's hermeneutics, one can find two outstanding features of his ecclesiology being shown in his interpretation of Jeremiah. First, Calvin's ecclesiology is pastoral. He did not study the Bible simply to teach what the church is. By applying the Bible to the life of his audience, Calvin wanted their life to change (Ch. 11). Therefore, his exegesis plays the role of a 'mirror,' which mirrors the life of believers by means of the will of God.¹² This means that his ecclesiology cannot be separated from church ministry. His ecclesiology in his interpretation of Jeremiah is practical, pragmatic and didactic. Another characteristic is that his ecclesiology has its limits. This means that his ecclesiology only deals with contents from the biblical texts. As his expressions and use of words in sermons and lectures have audience-centric limits, his ecclesiology only covers the possible range of the text. The emphasis of his ecclesiology differs according to the chosen pericope of the Bible and the situations of the congregation. This is different from his

¹⁰ Selderhuis, *The Psalms*, 286.

¹¹ Moehn, *Calvin's Sermons on Act*, 236-7.

¹² CO 37. 664 (COR II 6/1. 261; Jer. 6:22). "Sed in hoc speculo perspicere licet, ..."; Cf. Blacketer, *The School of God*, 107. "For God chose his ancient people to be "as a mirror of his church."

ecclesiology as it appears in the *Institutes* or systematic papers. Such ‘texts’ and ‘*Sitz im Leben*’ form the characteristics of the church that he discusses through his interpretation of Jeremiah.

18.4 Exposition: Characteristics of Calvin’s Ecclesiology from Jeremiah

Although Calvin takes his historical situation and context into account in his interpretation of Jeremiah, his exegesis also refers to the church in history, and its future development. There exist two time frames in the texts of Jeremiah. They refer to the time of the Israelites’ captivity in Babylon and the future of their liberation from Babylon. Mentioning this, Calvin explains the Christ-centered church. In Calvin’s interpretation of Jeremiah he also deals with the second coming of Christ.¹³ Such a concept of time is important in ecclesiology because it tells us that the church of the past and that of the future form one church with the church of the present on the line of continuity. This shows, in Calvin’s viewpoint, that the present church belongs to the Jeremian history of the church. Surely the church of Calvin is externally different from the church nowadays. However, his interpretation has influence on the church of today. With the influence of his exegesis on the church of today, three characteristics of his interpretation can be summed up.

a. Praedicatio Verbi Dei

In ancient Israel a prophet like Jeremiah delivered the word of God. Likewise, in the Genevan church of the 16th century, Calvin and his colleagues preached the divine word. Also, the worship services of the churches were different from the previous years; i.e., it became word-centered. This is the most outstanding change from the worship service of the medieval era (Ch. 8). And now, in the present church of our day, the word of God is delivered through preachers (Ch. 7). Historically God speaks in every church. This is divine accommodation and His way to be in communion with His people (Ch.5). The importance of the proclamation of the word is found in the decision of the Genevan city Council of October, 1549, that the proclamation of the divine word should be offered

¹³ de Boer, *The Visions of Ezekiel*, 249. According to de Boer, the period between Israel’s return from captivity and the coming of the Redeemer is not merely an interval between the two Testaments, but an important period in the history of the Church.

not only on Sunday but also on other days in Geneva. The proclamation of the word at church is the sign of the church, as Calvin states it (Ch.7). The existence of the church depends on whether the divine word is proclaimed. God wanted to reside in the church no matter what kind of church it was. So, God always spoke to churches no matter what kind of state they were in; sinful or righteous. He wanted His people to follow His word. This is the characteristic of the church which can be seen in the church of the Old Testament, of Geneva, and of the present. This characteristic of the proclamation of the divine word brings up the role of Christ. As we mentioned the Christ-centered church, we dealt with the two roles of Christ: priest and king (Ch. 14). In addition, the remaining role of Christ as prophet appears in the proclamation of the divine word. However, Christ sends His delegates who speak for Him in His church. The church, armed with the divine word, means a focus on the role of pastors (Ch. 11). In his exegesis of Jeremiah, Calvin also focuses on the pastors' role in dealing with the word more than other roles. It is assumed that the ability of preachers is also important. The wall between the text and the audience can be pulled down by their work,¹⁴ and the chronological difference disappears, because the similarities between the past and present can clearly appear. Likewise, the church is the place for the proclamation of the divine word.

b. The Church Moving towards the Last Day

Churches started in the relationship between the Israel of the Old Testament and God, and the chosen people based on the covenant as the church (Ch. 5). However, it is not the case that churches have maintained the same form and shape throughout all ages. This is clearly present throughout the book of Jeremiah. The Israel of Jeremiah appears to be more impious than their ancestors whom God had made a covenant with (Ch. 9). This shows that the church was headed in the wrong direction; a thing which God never desired. So, through Jeremiah, God participated in their situation. This appears in two important moments of the book of Jeremiah: the Babylonian captivity, and the liberation from Babylon. By making Israel aware of their corrupt status through Jeremiah, God taught them the way that they should follow Him (Ch. 9). They had to move forward gradually as the pious servants of

¹⁴ Baxter, "John Calvin's Use and Hermeneutics," 35-6.

God, as God had wanted them to be. In his exposition of this process, Calvin taught that the church also needs a time of repentance for revival (Ch. 10). According to Calvin, such a time like the Babylonian captivity was the time for the purification of the church (Ch. 9). For the holy progress of the church, the time of captivity was essential. In the book of Jeremiah various aspects of the ancient church are introduced: from the beginning of the church of that time and up to the restoration. This means that a church is not a static community but a dynamic one. These aspects of the church are explained in four parts of this research. This all leads finally to the coming of Christ (Ch. 14). Thus, the things which happened to the Israel of the book of Jeremiah are symbols showing the reality of the church of the present day and of the history of the church. In other words, the church of Jeremiah's era plays a role as a mirror of the present church. This is because the status of the church of the last day can be found in the interpretation of Jeremiah. Specifically, the book of Jeremiah clearly shows that the church is the meeting of a mixed people. Calvin proclaims that his congregation should repent as Jeremiah likewise preached to the Israelites. The community that Calvin belonged to was still imperfect and impious. His community was on the way to true piety, which would only be complete on the last day. In other words, the community was in the process of sanctification. However, Calvin focuses more on the act of God rather than of man in this process of sanctification. This is because sanctification is the direct act of God, who makes His people righteous (Ch. 9). If this is explained on the basis of Soteriology, the church is the meeting of the people of God who are in the process of being saved (Ch.14). The church is the community of faith on the way of Christ living in opposition to sin through history. Furthermore, church is the community that lives out its faith to the last day by the will of God alone. The present church is in process, like the church of the Old Testament and the 16th century.

c. Ecclesia Militans

While discussing Calvin's church of the 16th century, we cannot forget the church of battles and sufferings (*Ecclesia Militans*). The religious belief that believers of the 16th century reformed church had is connected to political. Many had to become refugees seeking religious freedom. Geneva was the city that accepted those refugees. Calvin lived most of his life as a refugee, and went

through difficulties in and out of the city. Considering such a historical situation, the suffering of Christians was an important theme of their *Sitz im Leben* (Ch. 12).¹⁵ Calvin had to endure the corruption and oppression of the papists and bear persecution from enemies within Geneva, who were called Perrinists. Likewise, all churches experience struggles. Calvin interprets the suffering described in the narratives of Jeremiah showing “a living image” to many churches facing similarly difficult situations.¹⁶ Such appears both in the church of the Old Testament and the Genevan church of the 16th century. Surely the contents and causes of their difficulties may be different, but the churches face the necessity of endurance amidst keeping of faith. According to Calvin believers, in suffering, become aware of divine providence through the knowledge of God, and renew their identity as the elect in their suffering. Therefore, the difficulties churches face can be explained as having an educational purpose. The commentary on the book of Jeremiah can teach such things through a close reading of the biblical narrative (Ch.12). Moreover, for the Christians of the 16th century, suffering was a key for hope and waiting for the future church. The church of the elect cannot help being an *ecclesia militans*, and needs to be compared to the *ecclesia triumphans* of the last day. Calvin’s teaching of divine predestination which includes people in the *ecclesia militans* was sure to be their comfort and hope (Ch. 13). Furthermore, the people of God suffering were to live holy lives and to maintain the church in piety. So, the implication of the *ecclesia militans* is that there exists evils outside and that believers are too weak to keep their faith alone. Therefore, God still keeps and governs the people of God through the churches (Ch. 12). Eventually, the *ecclesia militans* will be the church with God. This leads to the fact that the church is the community governed by God by divine providence.

18.5 Outlook: Questions For Us

Before becoming a reformer, Calvin was a member of the Catholic Church. Among the questions asked by the previous reformers including Luther, Calvin faced a question, “is the Catholic Church of our day the true church?” His answer to this question is given throughout his whole life. And to understand his answer, we have studied his sermons and lectures on the book of Jeremiah. His

¹⁵ Balserak, *Establishing the Remnant Church*, 213-4.

¹⁶ Baxter, “John Calvin’s Use and Hermeneutics,” 1.

answer is clear even to our eyes: the Catholic Church of his day was not the true church. If we make his question ours, it becomes “is the church of our day the true church of the Bible?” The answer to the question points to the everlasting value of the church, which cannot be changed throughout history. So, in the previous section, we have summed up the characteristics of the church into three parts: the church as the place where *praedicatio verbi dei* takes place, the church as it lives towards the last day, and the *ecclesia militans*. In fact, the question, “is the church of our day the true church of the Bible?” should be rephrased: “what do the people of God do in the present church?” and “what does God do in the present church?” This is because the church is a community of covenantal relationship. Since the book of Jeremiah shows the relationship between God and the Israelites, Calvin’s interpretation of the book describes the divine will and how the people of God should live in the church. In other words, his exegesis mirrors the divine will and the reaction of His people to that will. Based on our research, ‘God chooses His people, calls them to His church, speaks to them in His church, governs them in their suffering and leads them to live holy lives until the last day.’ Thusly ‘the people of God form the church through the divine will, listen to and learn the word of God, keep their faith in suffering, and live with hope for the last day, always maintaining their piety.’ The ecclesiology on display in Calvin’s interpretation of Jeremiah is about the knowledge of God and His people in the church. And, his exegesis as expressed in his sermons and lectures focuses on the reality of the church. That is the most important feature of Calvin’s exegesis. Calvin’s faith is as follows: God, who looked after His church in the past, governs the present church and will lead the church in the future until the time of the end. Surely, in Calvin’s eyes, the people of God were, are and will be in covenant with Him in His church till the last day.

A Summary of Dissertation

This study focuses mainly on Calvin's thoughts on church, particularly as elucidated in his lectures and sermons on the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations. Examining his work within its historical and religious context, especially during the later years of his life, the study seeks to address the main question: "*What is Calvin's ecclesiology in his biblical interpretations on the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations, and what are its characteristics? How do these characteristics differ from the ecclesiology presented in the commentaries on Jeremiah by his contemporaries?*"

Before delving into an analysis of Calvin's exegesis on Jeremiah, *Part I* of the study provides essential context. Chapter 1 outlines Calvin's hermeneutical principles and exegetical practices, aiming to better understand his ecclesiology. This section also discusses the historical backdrop of Calvin's later life, both within and beyond Geneva (Chapter 2), and delves into the fundamental theological issues regarding Calvin's exegesis on Jeremiah, particularly regarding the relationship between knowledge of God and of humanity, and the Church (Chapter 3). Chapter 4 compares the churches of Calvin's era to those of Jeremiah's time, focusing on Calvin's ideas about the church through various comparisons: between Israel and the Church in the 16th century, between Israel's remnant and the Reformed church, and between Jeremiah and Calvin as prophets.

Chapter 5 and 6 mark the beginning of *Part II* analyzing Calvin's exegesis of the book of Jeremiah. These chapters elucidate *the motif of populus meus*. Chapter five examines the covenant between Israel and God and its application, while Chapter six describes the characteristics, role and importance of the Israelites as covenant people. It argues that there is no distinction between the identity of Israel and the Church as the people of God. Chapter seven focuses on Calvin's view of Scripture as the revelation of God and on the nature and character of the Word. Chapter eight emphasizes true worship while addressing the idolatry of Judah and discussing the significance of keeping the Sabbath and the relationship between Christian life and worship. These chapters lay *the foundation of the Church*. Chapter nine highlights various sins within the visible church, addressing the covenant-breaking state of the people of Judah and the Genevan church, which led *to the fall of the church*. Chapter ten considers the issues of repentance as the means to maintain the relationship

between God and the church. These two chapters illustrate the dynamics of holiness and non-holiness within the Church. Chapter eleven underscores the importance of the church offices in maintaining the holiness of church as a dynamic community and discusses their educational function. Chapter twelve examines the plight of the people of God under religious oppression, drawing parallels between the corrupted Israelites and their captivity and the historical situation of the 16th century. The following chapters discuss *the restoration of the church* by understanding the Israelites' return from captivity in Babylon. Chapter thirteen primarily addresses the ecclesiological question of predestination and the relationship between the church and the doctrine of election. Chapter fourteen examines the Christ-centered church revealing its characteristics through the analogies of 'the Kingdom of Christ' and 'the body of Christ.' These two chapters consider not only the present state of the church but also its future, while illustrating the dynamic character of the church as it moves towards its ultimate moment.

Before moving on to the conclusion, *Part III* examines the similarities and differences between Calvin and three contemporaries – Oecolampadius (Chapter 15), Bullinger (Chapter 16), and Maldonado (Chapter 17) – concerning their ecclesiology as seen in their interpretations of Jeremiah based on the analysis of *Part II*. This comparative study demonstrates that their interpretations are significantly influenced by their respective personal contexts, much like Calvin's interpretations of Jeremiah.

In summary, this study contributes to the understanding of John Calvin's ecclesiology as presented in his exegesis of Jeremiah and Lamentations, shedding light on its characteristics. It is the thesis of this study that Calvin elucidates his views on the church by comparing the historical and religious context of Israel to that of the church of his own time in his interpretations of Jeremiah and Lamentations. Thus, his ecclesiology can be appropriately understood within its historical-ecclesiological context. Also, he equates the church of the Old Testament with his own church in their covenantal relationship. Calvin's ecclesiology, as revealed in his interpretations of Jeremiah and Lamentations, centers around the audience, the covenant, and Christ, distinguishing it from the views of his contemporaries. Furthermore, this research emphasizes the following characteristics of church: it is where the word of God is proclaimed; it has a dynamic character moving towards the final future

with Christ at its center; and the people of God within the church endure and struggle under God's reign. In essence, Calvin's ecclesiology, as seen in his interpretations of Jeremiah and Lamentations, is shaped by his context and reflects the characteristics of the church as manifested in the covenantal relationship between God and his people.

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Curriculum Vitae

In 2017 Bong-il Park began his Ph.D. research at the *Theologische Universiteit Apeldoorn* under the supervision of his advisor (*Promotor*), Prof. Dr. Herman J. Selderhuis and second advisor (*tweede Promotor*), Prof. Dr. Wilhelmus H. Th. Moehn (*PThU*). The title of his Ph.D. dissertation is “Calvin’s Ecclesiology in his biblical exegesis of the book of Jeremiah: The Motif of *Populus Meus*.” In 2016, he graduated *cum laude* from *TUA* with a Master degree of Theology (Th.M.). The title of his Th.M. thesis was “Calvijns visie over ‘vluchteling en vervolging’ in zijn *praelectiones* van het bijbelboek Daniël,” which was conducted under the guidance of Prof. Dr. Herman J. Selderhuis. Between 2007 and 2010, he studied Theology at the *Presbyterian General Assembly (Chongshin) Theological Seminary* in Korea, graduating with a Master of Divinity (M.Div.). He studied Mechanical Engineering at *Chungang University* in Seoul (1995-2001) and History Education at *Chongshin University* in Seoul (2005-2007). Bong-il was born in Incheon, South Korea on the 21st of February 1976, and in 2011, he was ordained as a pastor of the *Presbyterian Churches in Korea (GAPCA)*. He served at *Incheon Joongang Church* (2008-2011), *Korean Church in the Netherlands in Amsterdam* (2013-2015) and *Dongsan Church* in Incheon (2019-2022). Currently, he serves as an assistant pastor of *Rodemnamu Church* in Seoul. He has been married to Bumha Kang since 2014, who oversees the English Ministry at the same Church (*Rodemnamu Church*) in Seoul.