

# The Doctrine of the Covenant and Testament of God



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# The Doctrine of the Covenant and Testament of God

Johannes Cocceius

Translated by Casey Carmichael  
Introduced by Willem J. van Asselt



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**Translator's Dedication**

**To Jane E. Phillips**

Mentor, Classicist, and Translator

*par excellence*



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## Series Preface

There are at least three reasons why classic Reformed theology ought to be studied and thus why this series of critical English translations should exist. First, Reformed orthodoxy forms the intellectual background of modern theology which can only be understood properly in light of its reaction to and rejection of Protestant orthodoxy. Second, Reformed orthodoxy obviously merits attention by those who identify with the Reformed confession; it is their heritage and thus shapes their theology, piety, and practice whether or not they realize it. Third, despite the disdain, disregard, and distortion which Reformed orthodoxy suffered during the Enlightenments in Europe, Britain, and North America, contemporary scholarship has shown that, whatever one's view of the theology, piety, and practice of orthodoxy, on purely historical grounds it must be regarded as a vital intellectual and spiritual movement and thus a fascinating and important subject for continued study.

We call this series "Classic Reformed Theology" because, by definition, a period is classical when it defines an approach to a discipline. During the period of Protestant orthodoxy, Reformed theology reached its highest degree of definition and precision. It was then that the most important Reformed confessions were formed, and the Reformed churches took the form they have today. For these reasons, it is more than surprising to realize that much of the most important literature from this period has been almost entirely ignored since mid-eighteenth century. As difficult as it may be for those in other fields to understand, the list of scholars who have extensive, firsthand knowledge of some of the most important primary texts in the study of Reformed orthodoxy (e.g., the major works of Olevianus, Polanus, Voetius, Cocceius, Heidegger, and van Mastricht, to name but a few) can be counted easily. Further, few of the texts from this period, even some of the most important texts, have been published in modern critical editions. Thus, until recently, even those with the ability and will to read the texts from the classical period of Reformed orthodoxy could do so only with difficulty since some of these texts are difficult to locate outside of a few libraries in Europe and Great Britain. Technological developments in recent years, however, are beginning to make these works more widely available to the

academic community. Coinciding with the development of technology has been a growing interest in classic Reformed theology.

Finally, a word about the plan for this series. First, the series seeks to produce and provide critical English translations of some of the more important but generally neglected texts of the orthodox period. The series does not intend to be exhaustive, nor will it be repetitive of critical translations already available. Most of the texts appearing in this series will be translated for the first time. It is the sincere hope of the editor and the board that at least one volume shall appear annually.

## Acknowledgments

Many people were instrumental in facilitating the appearance of this translation in print. R. Scott Clark, general editor, proved to be a constant source of encouragement throughout the five years that it took to complete the project. David Hunter, Jane Phillips, and Terence Tunberg—Latinists at the University of Kentucky—helped me become competent in translating Cocceius at the early stages of the project. They supervised my MA thesis, which included a translation of section 338 of the *SD*. Brad Carrington, librarian at the University of Kentucky, made me aware of all the Latin editions of the *SD* and purchased many of them for my research. Brian Lee, minister of Christ Reformed Church in Washington, D.C., provided us with a copy of the 1660 edition of the *SD* and alerted us to Willem van Asselt's Dutch translation of it. Dr. Lee and Prof. van Asselt offered helpful comments on the translation. We are also grateful to the late Prof. van Asselt for writing the introduction. Heather Gideon's Hebrew skills were indispensable. She translated the two Hebrew poems that Cocceius wrote at the beginning and helped with Hebrew phrases throughout. Along the way, I received financial support from my parents, Nick and Kim Carmichael, and the Leibniz Institute of European History (Mainz). Finally, thanks to the friendly staff at Reformation Heritage Books; Joel Beeke encouraged the project, Jay Collier coordinated it, and Rebecca Rine meticulously copyedited it. Finally, I am grateful to my wife, Amy, who carefully reviewed the proofs.



## Translator's Note

No modern, critical edition of Cocceius's Latin text exists to date. Therefore I not only had to translate seventeenth-century Latin into twenty-first century American English, but also adapt seventeenth-century publishing customs to twenty-first century conventions. The most obvious accommodation was to update punctuation, which included breaking extremely long sentences into shorter ones. I translated from the third and final edition of the *Summa Doctrinae de Foedere et Testamento Dei* (1660) and consulted the modern Dutch translation of W. J. van Asselt and H. G. Renger, *De Leer van het Verbond het Testament van God* (Kampen: Uitgeverij De Groot-Goudriaan, 1990).

Cocceius provided his own Latin translations of the original Hebrew and Greek texts of the Bible. I offered original translations of Cocceius's renderings. I used the modern typographical convention of putting all cited passages in quotation marks instead of italics, in which they appeared in the seventeenth-century editions. At the same time, I did keep other words or phrases that he emphasized with italics or all capital letters in those formats.

In addition, Cocceius frequently inserted Hebrew and Greek words and phrases into the main body of his Latin text, some of which he translated into Latin and others of which he assumed that his audience would know. I preserved the Hebrew and Greek, leaving the Hebrew unpointed and converting the Greek to modern script; this includes the Greek definite articles, which Cocceius used in conjunction with Hebrew and Latin phrases for greater specificity. I set off his own translation of these words with commas, whereas I marked my own translations of those that he left untranslated by parentheses.

I also put parentheses around technical philosophical and theological Latin terms, which seemed helpful to insert. I left these exactly as they appeared in the original, including case, so as to introduce as little change as possible. Moreover, I put brackets around words that I added and that were needed to render Cocceius's sense in coherent English prose.

Finally, I preserved Cocceius's versification of the Psalms; he used the Hebrew chapter numbers and Septuagint versification, which differs from versification in modern versions of the Bible. As a reminder to the reader,

Septuagint versification counts longer Psalm headings (such as “For the musicians. A Psalm of David”) as verse 1, whereas modern versification counts any headings as verse 0. Thus, Psalm 51:1 in modern versions would have been Psalm 51:2 in Cocceius’s version.

*Biographical and Historical Introduction*

**Covenant, Kingdom, and Friendship**  
*Johannes Cocceius's Federal Framework for Theology*

*Willem J. van Asselt*

**Life and Works**

Johannes Cocceius (1603–1669) was a prominent seventeenth-century biblical scholar who worked in the tradition of advanced humanist scholarship and Reformed theology. Although he spent most of his life in the Netherlands, he was born in Bremen. Because Calvinism was the recognized religion of Bremen at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Reformed faith was the basis for his theological education.<sup>1</sup>

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1. A chronological survey of the scholarship on Cocceius includes the following books and articles: G. Schrenk, *Gottesreich und Bund im älteren Protestantismus, vornehmlich bei Johannes Coccejus* (Gütersloh: Der Rufer, 1923; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1967); C. S. McCoy, "The Covenant Theology of Johannes Cocceius" (PhD diss., Yale University, 1956); J. Moltmann, "Geschichtstheologie und pietistischen Menschenbild bei Johann Coccejus und Theodor Undereyck," *Evangelische Theologie* 19 (1959): 343–361; J. Moltmann, "J. Brocard als Vorläufer der Reich-Gottes-Theologie und der prophetischen Schriftauslegung," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 71 (1960): 110–129; C. S. McCoy, "Johannes Cocceius: Federal Theologian," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 16 (1963): 352–370; H. Faulenbach, *Weg und Ziel der Erkenntnis Christi. Eine Untersuchung zur Theologie des Johannes Coccejus* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1973); W. J. van Asselt, *Amicitia Dei. Een onderzoek naar de structuur van de theologie van Johannes Coccejus, 1603–1669* (Ede: ADC, 1988); Peter T. van Rooden, *Theology, Biblical Scholarship and Rabbinical Studies in the Seventeenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1989); D. A. Weir, *The Origins of the Federal Theology in Sixteenth-Century Reformation Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990); W. J. van Asselt, "Voetius en Coccejus over de rechtvaardiging," in *De onbekende Voetius*, ed. J. van Oort et al. (Kampen: Kok, 1989), 32–47; W. J. van Asselt, "Missionaire motieven en perspectieven in de theologie van Johannes Coccejus," *Kerk en Theologie* 41 (1990): 227–236; W. J. van Asselt, "The Doctrine of the Abrogations in the Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius," *Calvin Theological Journal* 29 (1994): 101–116; W. J. van Asselt, "P. de Joncourt en zijn protest tegen de coccejaanse exegese in het begin van de achttiende eeuw," in *Een richtingenstrijd in de Gereformeerde Kerk. Voetianen en Coccejanen 1650–1750*, ed. F. G. M. Broeyer and E. G. E. van der Wall (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 1994), 153–158; W. J. van Asselt, "Ultimum tempus nobis imminet. Eschatologische structuren in de theologie van Johannes Coccejus," *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis/Dutch Review of Church History* 76

Cocceius studied philology, theology, and philosophy in Bremen and, from 1626 to 1629, Hebrew and Oriental languages at the University of Franeker in Friesland under the tutelage of the renowned orientalist Sixtinus Amama (1593–1629), one of the initiators of rabbinical studies in the Dutch Republic. Before he embarked on his academic studies at Franeker, Cocceius took private lessons in Hebrew with a Jew in Hamburg, Joseph Salomo Delmedigo (1591–1655). Delmedigo was an Ashkenazi scholar and a prominent Talmud philologist who traveled throughout Europe. He arrived in Hamburg from Poland in 1624, and it is likely that Cocceius visited him there. Cocceius is also known to have had contacts, perhaps in Bremen, with Rabbi Jakob Abendana, who worked with his younger brother Isaac on the first translation of the Mishnah into European languages.<sup>2</sup>

In Bremen, Cocceius's teacher, Matthias Martini (1572–1630), recognized his precocity and taught him Latin, Greek, Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic. At Martini's instigation, Cocceius concluded his studies at Bremen by writing a treatise on the religion of the Turks. This treatise, which was composed in Greek, included some linguistic and theological comments on the Qur'an, which Cocceius had studied in its original Arabic.<sup>3</sup>

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(1996): 189–226; W. J. van Asselt, *Johannes Coccejus, Portret van een zeventiende-eeuws theoloog op oude en nieuwe wegen, Kerkhistorische monografieën no. 6* (Heerenveen: Groen & Zoon, 1997); W. J. van Asselt, "Amicitia Dei as Ultimate Reality: An Outline of the Covenant Theology of Johannes Cocceius (1603–1669)," *Ultimate Reality and Meaning. Interdisciplinary Studies in the Philosophy of Understanding* 21 (1998): 35–47; W. J. van Asselt, "Structural Elements in the Eschatology of Johannes Cocceius," *Calvin Theological Journal* 35, no. 1 (2000): 76–104; W. J. van Asselt, "Cocceius Anti-Scholasticus?" in Willem J. van Asselt and Eef Dekker, *Reformation and Scholasticism: An Ecumenical Enterprise* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 227–251; Willem J. van Asselt, "Chiliasm and Reformed Eschatology in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in *Christian Hope in Context. Studies in Reformed Theology* 4, ed. A. van Egmond and D. van Keulen (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2001), 11–29; Willem J. van Asselt, *The Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius (1603–1669)* (Leiden-Boston-Köln: Brill, 2001); Willem J. van Asselt, "Expromissio or Fideiussio? A Seventeenth-Century Theological Debate between Voetians and Cocceians about the Nature of Christ's Suretyship in Salvation History," *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 14 (2003): 37–57; Richard A. Muller, *Holy Scripture: The Cognitive Foundation of Theology*, vol. 2 of *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 119–123; Brian J. Lee, *Johannes Cocceius and the Exegetical Roots of Federal Theology: Reformation Developments in the Interpretation of Hebrews 7–10*, vol. 7 of *Reformed Historical Theology*, ed. Herman J. Selderhuis (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht), 2009; Brian J. Lee, "The Covenant Terminology of Johannes Cocceius: *Foedus*, *Pactum*, and *Testamentum* in a Mature Federal Theologian," *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 14 (2003): 11–36; W. J. van Asselt, *Coccejus. Een inleiding met kernteksten* (Kampen: De Groot Goudriaan, 2008).

2. See Pieter E. van der Dussen, "Profetie en vervulling. Een onderzoek naar de profetische exegese bij Johannes Coccejus in relatie tot de Bijbeluitleg van Hugo Grotius en Campegius Vitringa" (PhD diss., Utrecht University, forthcoming).

3. For the contents of this treatise, see W. J. van Asselt, "De Islam in de beoordeling van Johannes Coccejus en Gisbertus Voetius," *Kerk en Theologie* 46 (1995): 229–251. Cf. J. van

Cocceius matriculated at Franeker on September 14, 1626, and commenced his studies there supported by Amama, at whose prompting he produced an annotated edition of two tractates of the Mishnah, *Sanhedrin* and *Makkot* (1629), together with extracts from the relevant Gemara. Each separate Mishnah was printed in Hebrew with a parallel Latin translation and notes.<sup>4</sup> At Franeker, Cocceius became acquainted with Johannes Maccovius (1588–1644) and William Ames (1575–1633). Maccovius, from Poland, is frequently characterized as a hyper-scholastic who advocated a strict form of supralapsarianism. There is, however, no record of any kind of conflict between these two different theological personalities. On February 2, 1644, Cocceius received his doctorate in theology under the tutelage of Maccovius, and when Maccovius died in July of that year, Cocceius delivered the funeral oration in which he called Maccovius a fervent defender of the *veritas gratiae* against the Arminians.<sup>5</sup> The Puritan William Ames, who had come to the Netherlands as a refugee, became a professor at Franeker in 1622. It is possible to identify a degree of Ames's influence upon Cocceius, especially in his definition of theology as a practical discipline.<sup>6</sup>

From 1630 onward, Cocceius was assigned to teach sacred philology (*professor philologiae sacrae*) as part of Bremen's faculty of arts (*gymnasium illustre*). In his inaugural address, entitled "Oratio de Philologia Sacra" (1631), he emphasized the importance of philological studies for theology. The core of this oration could be summarized by his famous dictum: "*Ubi sol philologiae non lucet, ibi barbaries et tyrannis imminet*" (Where the sun of philology does not shine, there barbarity and tyranny are imminent). The science of philology was at its zenith in this period, and Cocceius's attention to philology and appreciation for languages should also be understood against the backdrop of an increasing interest in history among the humanist scholars of that time.

After six years of teaching at Bremen, Cocceius returned to the Dutch Republic, as in 1636 he was appointed professor of Hebrew and Oriental languages at the University of Franeker. His inaugural address, delivered on December 8, 1636, was entitled "De Dono Linguarum Effuso in Apostolos" (On the Gift of Languages Poured Out on the Apostles). In this oration he pointed

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Amersfoort & W. J. van Asselt, *Liever Turks dan Paaps? De visies van Johannes Coccejus, Gisbertus Voetius en Adrianus Relandus op de Islam* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 1997).

4. J. Cocceius, *Duo Tituli Thalmudici Sanhedrin et Maccoth: quorum ille agit de Synedrii, judiciis, suppliciis capitalibus Ebraeorum; hic de poena falsi testimonii, exilio & asylis, flagellatione. Cum excerptis ex utriusque Gemara, versa & annotationibus, depromptis maximam partem ex Ebraeorum commentariis, illustrata*, in *Opera Omnia* 7 (Amsterdam: ex officina Johannis a Someren, 1673–1675).

5. J. Cocceius, "Oratio habita in funere nobilis, reverendi & clarissimi viri Johannis Maccovii SS. Theologiae Doctoris & Professoris p.m. Die 2. Julii AD. 1644," in J. Cocceius, *Orationes*, in *Opera Omnia* 6 (Amsterdam: ex officina Johannis a Someren, 1673–1675), 52–54.

6. See van Asselt, *Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius*, 27–28. For a discussion on the supposed influence of Ramism on Cocceius's federal concept, see pp. 329–330. Cocceius never openly expressed his opinion about the ideas of Ramus.

to the importance for theological students to have knowledge of the *eruditio trilinguis*—Hebrew, Greek, and Latin—which he considered instruments of the Holy Spirit. He asserted that without knowledge of these three holy languages, the Holy Scriptures cannot be explained and it is impossible to practice theology in a sound and sensible way. Seven years later, in 1643, Cocceius also became professor of theology at Franeker. During his Franeker professorship, he published a great number of writings, including a 1641 polemic against Hugo Grotius on the meaning of passages about the Antichrist in the Old and New Testaments;<sup>7</sup> Old Testament commentaries on Ecclesiastes (1636) and Job (1644);<sup>8</sup> and his famous *Collationes de Foedere et Testamento Dei* (1648)—in later editions *Summa Doctrinae*—the work discussed and translated in this book as *The Doctrine of the Covenant and Testament of God*. In addition, he wrote several disputations against the Socinians and Jesuits (e.g., Robert Bellarmine); these were gathered by his son Johannes Henricus Cocceius in the *Disputationes Selectae*.<sup>9</sup>

In 1650, Cocceius moved to Holland where he became professor of theology at the University of Leiden, an important international center of Reformed theology at that time. He lived there until his death in 1669. His inaugural lecture, “De Causis Incredulitatis Judaeorum” (On the causes of the unbelief of the Jews) (1650), dealt with reasons for Jewish disbelief in Christianity and endorsed the traditional Christian expectation of their imminent conversion. At Leiden his colleagues were Abraham Heidanus (1597–1678), Jacobus Trigland (1583–1654), and, from 1654 onward, Johannes Hoornbeeck (1617–1666).<sup>10</sup>

Cocceius’s prolific writings during his Leiden professorship included commentaries on all the biblical books; more works on philology, dogmatics, and ethics; and several volumes on biblical theology, including several new editions of his *Summa Doctrinae*. He also published an explication of the Heidelberg Catechism, probably written during the late 1660s. In response to special requests of his students and friends, he wrote a handbook in 1662 called *Summa Theologiae ex Scripturis Repetita*. The form of this work—*loci communes*—resembled the standard Reformed dogmatic treatises of the era; it based theology upon biblical exegesis and expounded Cocceius’s federal theology in a more systematic form.<sup>11</sup> In 1696, this work was translated into Dutch by Theodorus

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7. J. Cocceius, *Repetitio Illustrium Locorum Vet. & Nov. Test. qui de Antichristo agunt*, in *Opera Omnia* 7 (Amsterdam, 1673–1675).

8. For more details about Cocceius’s commentaries, see van Asselt, *Portret*, 23–33.

9. For these disputations, see *Opera Omnia* 6 (Amsterdam, 1673–1675).

10. Hoornbeeck was a pupil of Gisbertus Voetius (1589–1676), the prominent Reformed systematic theologian at the University of Utrecht. Voetius was the leading supporter of the Dutch Further Reformation (in Dutch, *Nadere Reformatie*), a movement that stressed spiritual discipline and purity of life.

11. J. Cocceius, *Summa Theologiae ex Scripturis Repetita; adjecta eiusdem Auctoris Doctrina de Foedere et Testamento* (Genevae, 1665).

Antonides and was published in Leeuwarden and Amsterdam.<sup>12</sup> Finally, Cocceius's monumental Hebrew-Aramaic *Lexicon*, first published in the year of his death, was later edited four times and may be seen as the epitome of his exegetical achievements.<sup>13</sup>

Cocceius died in 1669. He was one of the many victims of the plague that afflicted Leiden at that time. He was buried in Pieterskerk at Leiden, where the present-day visitor can still admire the memorial erected in honor of this “Light of the Netherlands,” as he was called in a poem. His son Johannes Henricus, who became a lawyer, published a complete edition of his father's works in eight volumes in 1673–1675, entitled *Opera omnia theologica, exegetica, didactica, polemica, philologica*.<sup>14</sup> This collection also contains a biography of Cocceius, his extensive correspondence with many scholars in Europe, and the funeral address given by his Leiden colleague Abraham Heidanus.<sup>15</sup> A second edition of the *Opera Omnia* was published in Frankfurt in 1689 and in 1702 by B. Ch. Wustius; a third edition appeared in Amsterdam (1701) and was printed by P. and J. Blaeu. In 1706, Cocceius's son edited two other volumes containing not-yet-published writings and letters of his father under the title *Opera Anekdotæ Theologica et Philologica, divisa in duo Volumina*.<sup>16</sup>

### Historical Context

As a Reformed theologian, Cocceius sought to formulate a covenant theory that described all of salvation history by introducing the overall structure of consecutive covenants, or *foedera*. By means of the concept of *foedus* (covenant), he sought to do justice to the historical nature of the biblical narrative. His systematic work was an extension of the exegetical and philological research that had brought him international fame. After the late 1650s, however, he had to

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12. *Hoofd-somme der Godgeleerdheid uit de Schriften opgehaalt door Johannes Coccejus...* (Leeuwarden: Gerardus Hoogslag, 1696; Amsterdam: Hendrik & Dirk Boom, 1696).

13. *Johannis Cocceji theologiae doctoris ac professoris Lexicon et Commentarius sermonis Hebraici et Chaldaici veteris Testamenti. Accedit interpretatio vocum Germanica, Belgica ac Graeca et LXX interpretibus et necassarii indices* (Amstelodami, 1669); *Lexicon et Commentarius sermonis Hebraici et Chaldaici. Editio altera...opera atque studio Johannis Henrici Maji* (Francofurti ad Moenum, 1689); *Lexicon et Commentarius sermonis Hebraici et Chaldaici. Editio novissima, prioribus longe correctior atque auctior...opera atque studio Johannis Henrici Maji* (Froncfurtae et Lipsiae, 1715); *Lexicon et Commentarius sermonis Hebraici et Chaldaici post Joh. Coccejum et Joh. Hen. Maium longe, quam antebac, correctius et emendatius. Edidit Io. Chr. Fri. Schulz* (Lipsiae, 1777).

14. *Opera omnia theologica, exegetica, didactica, polemica, philologica*, first edition in 8 vols. (Amsterdam, 1673–1675); second edition in 8 vols. (Frankfurt am Main, 1689 and 1702); third edition in 10 vols. (Amsterdam, 1701).

15. Abraham Heidanus, *De luctuosa Calamitate, quae a. d. 1669 Civitatem Leidensem, Curiam, Ecclesiam & Academiam graviter afflixit, & praecipuis suis Columnis & Ornamentis destituit & orbavit, Lugduni Batavorum in Opera Omnia 1* (1670).

16. *Opera Anekdotæ Theologica et Philologica, divisa in duo Volumina* (Amsterdam: Prostant apud Jansonio-Waesbergios, Boom, & Goethals, 1706).

face the consequences of his exegesis and theological system, which encountered growing criticism. He became involved in several conflicts with various other orthodox theologians who confronted him with some practical consequences of his exegesis of the Old Testament. In opposition to the Voetian party (see below), his followers formed a theological school known as Cocceians. At the same time, the “new” Cartesian philosophy was taking hold in the universities of the Dutch Republic, and some of the Cocceians sought to bring about a synthesis with Cartesianism, in spite of Cocceius’s rejection of such a union.

The controversy with Voetius and his followers concentrated first on the status of Old Testament believers, and especially upon the interpretation of the fourth commandment. According to Cocceius, the Sabbath as a day of rest was a ceremony, not a universal and moral institution. His central thesis was that the Sabbath depicted in Genesis 2:1–3 did not signify a separation between profane and holy days, but rather the start of the sanctification of all time. The Sabbath commandment of a weekly recurring day of rest in Exodus 20:8–11 was not given in Paradise; its origin lay in Israel’s desert period, a period that belonged to the (abrogated) covenant of works. Cocceius’s rejection of Sabbatarianism was, in fact, a protest against the sizeable flow of devotional literature from Puritan England. This Puritan import precipitated the conflict.<sup>17</sup>

The controversy with the Voetian party, however, did not merely concern this particular point of the Sabbath rest. The main issue was a different interpretation of the continuity and discontinuity of redemptive history in the Old and New Testaments. Whereas the Voetians stressed the substantial *uniformity* of salvation for believers in the Old and New Testament dispensations, Cocceius and his followers underlined the *progressive* nature of salvation in history and, therefore, the differing statuses of Old and New Testament believers. At the same time, Cocceius’s idea of progression in redemptive history was a basic motive for developing a distinctive view of God’s treatment of sin. In the Old Testament, Cocceius argued, there was only a “passing over,” or a tolerance of the guilt of sin, while in the New Testament this guilt was completely taken away. Only when Christ died would it be possible to say that He blotted “out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross” (Col. 2:14). For this distinction, Cocceius referred to Romans 3:25 and Hebrews 10:18, texts in which two different words are used for the remission of sins: *páresis* and *áphesis* (see especially *Summa Doctrinae* §339). Against Cocceius, Voetius argued this meant then that believers under the Old Testament could not be justified in the full sense of the word.<sup>18</sup> Cocceius reacted to Voetius’s initial disputations on this subject by offering an extended exegesis

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17. See H. B. Visser, *De geschiedenis van den Sabbatsstrijd onder de gereformeerden in de zeventiende eeuw* (Utrecht: Kemink en Zoon, 1939); C. Steenblok, *Voetius en de Sabbat* (Gouda: Gereformeerde Pers, 1975). See also van Asselt, *Portret*, 52–57.

18. See van Asselt, “Voetius en Coccejus,” 32–47.

of the words *páresis* and *áphesis* in his *Moreh Nebochim* (1665), pointing once again to the importance of the salvation-historical context in the description of the order of salvation for both Old and New Testament believers.<sup>19</sup> This position gave rise to another conflict between Voetius and Cocceius and their respective disciples that continued long after the death of both great personalities. While the altercations between the Voetians and Cocceians continued far into the eighteenth century, they continued to worship in the same church and accepted a degree of pluriformity in church practice.

Before understanding why the quarrels between Voetians and Cocceians dominated the life of the Republic for so long, it is first necessary to realize to some extent the unease of the Reformed church over the rise of the new Cartesian philosophy and certain developments in natural science. Cocceian views appeared to be amenable to these new intellectual forces, and, in some respects, this was indeed the case.<sup>20</sup> Cocceius himself, however, maintained that theology and philosophy each had their own field and that one should not read Scripture with philosophical concepts in mind. He was familiar with the academic philosophy that was inclined toward Aristotelianism as well as with Cartesianism. He required his students to acquaint themselves with the philosophies of Aristotle and Plato, as well as that of Descartes, but with the stipulation that philosophy must function as the handmaid and student of God's Word (*philosophiam verbo Dei ancillam imo et discipulam praestare*).<sup>21</sup>

Although the *Summa Doctrinae* does not provide us with any systematic exposition of the relationship between (Cartesian) philosophy and theology, in his later writings Cocceius does address at length certain tenets of Descartes's philosophy. In his *Considerationes ad Ultima Mosis* (Meditations on the Last Words of Moses), he devoted an entire section to the Cartesian principle of doubt (§74). Cocceius understood and acknowledged that, for Descartes, doubt is the means to sure and certain knowledge, but he also maintained that Descartes made an unfortunate choice with regard to the formulations he employed. Cocceius believed the Cartesians' persistent use of the term *dubitatio* caused massive confusion. Although Cocceius himself rejected the tenets of Cartesianism, some of his followers, such as Abraham Heidanus in Leiden, Franciscus Burmannus (1628–1679) in Utrecht, Johannes Braunius (1628–1708) in Groningen, and Christophorus Wittichius (1625–1687) in Duisburg, were more attracted to its ideas. They even developed a kind of Cartesio-Cocceian theology, which, in combination with their prophetic theology, gave rise to

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19. J. Cocceius, *Moreh Nebochim. Utilitas distinctionis duorum vocabulorum páreseos et ápheseos* (1665), in *Opera Omnia* 7 (Amsterdam, 1673–1675).

20. See van Asselt, *Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius*, 72–94.

21. See van Asselt, *Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius*, 73–74.

ongoing debates in the Dutch Reformed church at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries.<sup>22</sup>

While these followers incorporated elements of Cartesian philosophy into the Cocceian system (and were therefore called “Tolerant” or “Leiden Cocceians”), others, such as Campegius Vitringa (1659–1722) and Johannes d’Outrein (1662–1722), developed a more pietistic model of covenant theology (and were therefore called “Earnest Cocceians”) that interacted with other Reformed pietistic circles in the north of Germany as represented by Friedrich Adolf Lampe (1683–1729) and Theodore Undereyck (1635–1693). In many respects, Herman Witsius (1636–1708) can be viewed as a mediating figure between the Cocceian and Voetian traditions of covenant theology and its piety. It should be noted, however, that in the social and ecclesiastical contexts of the eighteenth century, theological disputes came to function as external identity markers by means of which one group could distinguish itself from another. Thus, the terms “Voetians” and “Cocceians” did not exclusively refer to theologians, but rather to ecclesiastical, social, and especially political networks and factions with shared interests.<sup>23</sup>

### Exegetical and Hermeneutical Issues

In several prefaces to his commentaries, Cocceius offered a number of fixed hermeneutical and methodological rules when interpreting Scripture; these he applied in his *Summa Doctrinae*. In the preface to the 1660 edition of the *Summa Doctrinae*, he emphasized that his main concern in writing it was to demonstrate how the analogy and symphony of Christian doctrine finds its entire center in God’s covenant (p. 4). Five years later he wrote in his commentary on Romans (1665):

Meaning must be taken not from the force of individual words, certain phrases, or some expression, but from the whole context of God’s Word.... The words [in Scripture] therefore mean what they can signify within the whole discourse in such a way that they altogether harmonize and so that it becomes clear that God has spoken in a way which is wise and suited for teaching, and that, therefore, they may not be interpreted contrary to his intention. Where there is an interpretation according to the analogy of

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22. For discussions on the relationship between Cartesianism and Cocceianism, see Thomas A. McGahagan, “Cartesianism in the Netherlands, 1639–1676. The New Science and the Calvinist Counter-Reformation” (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1976); Theo Verbeek, *Descartes and the Dutch. Early Reactions to Cartesian Philosophy, 1637–1650* (Carbondale: University of Illinois Press, 1992); Aza Goudriaan, *Reformed Orthodoxy and Philosophy, 1625–1750. Gisbertus Voetius, Petrus van Mastricht, and Anthonius Driessen* (Leiden: Brill, 2006). For an evaluation, see van Asselt, *Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius*, 72–86.

23. See van Asselt, “*Expromissio or Fideiussio?*,” 37–57.

faith both of the discourse or context and of the phrasing of Scripture, it must not be sought elsewhere.<sup>24</sup>

Cocceius placed the emphasis upon the interrelationships of the texts (*tota compages orationis*). The presupposition of this emphasis is that Scripture is incapable of expressing anything unworthy of God. In contrast with the allegorists who preceded or followed him, Cocceius emphasized the literal and historical meaning of Scripture (*sensus literalis et historicus*). He denied that the Scriptures have multiple senses and assigned typology to the *sensus literalis*,<sup>25</sup> which presupposes the unity of the Old and New Testaments. The Testaments are like two eyes, both of which are necessary. As a philologist, Cocceius stressed the usefulness of rabbinical literature for a better knowledge of Hebrew and a good understanding of the law of Moses. He was familiar with Christian Hebraists such as Johannes Reuchlin (1455–1522), the Jewish scholar Elias Levita (1469–1549), and Johannes Buxtorf the Elder (1564–1629), professor of Hebrew at Basel.<sup>26</sup> Among Cocceius's extensive correspondence with Hebrew scholars and theological friends in Europe, the reader will also find a great number of letters addressed to Buxtorf Jr., who, like his father, taught at the University of Basel.

In his inaugural lecture at Bremen, “De Philologia Sacra,” and in the sixth chapter of his treatise *Protheoria de Ratione Interpretandi sive Introductio in Philologiam Sacram* (1630), Cocceius presented an overview of four methods for interpreting Scripture: 1. *lexikon* or *dictio*, comprising a grammatical, historical, etymological, and semantic approach; 2. *rhetorikon*, or rhetorical interpretation, which explains the metaphors and other figurative expressions in biblical discourse according to the rules and definitions of the art of rhetoric; 3. *logikon*, or logical analysis, indicating the scope and argument of the discourse, and using syllogisms by which necessary conclusions can be deduced from the words of Scripture; and 4. *pragmatikon*, or the method indicated by the apostle Paul

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24. J. Cocceius, *Commentariu in Epistolam ad Romanos*, in *Opera Omnia* 4 (Amsterdam, 1673–1675), *Praefatio*, theses 35–36: “Significatio sumenda est non ex aliqua potestate singulorum verborum, aut phraseos alicuius, aut enunciationis alicuius, sed ex tota compage sermonis.... Id ergo significant verba, quod possunt significare in integra oratione, sic, ut omnino inter se convenient; ut Deum appareat sapienter et apte ad docendum esse locutum, et non egisse aliud praeter scopum scilicet. Ubi datur interpretatio secundum analogiam fidei et orationis sive contextus et phraseologiae Scripturae non est querenda alia.”

25. See J. Cocceius, *Praefatio ad Romanos*, thesis 41: “Minime admittendum est, Christum et Apostolos indicasse *sensus mysticos*, quos Deus apud se scil. reservaverit hactenus, qui sciri nullo modo potuerint, nisi Deus ipse aut Propheta instructus divinae missionis auctoritate eos indicaret.” “It must not be allowed at all that Christ and the apostles taught mystical senses, which God of course had reserved for Himself to the extent that they could not in any way be known unless taught by God Himself or a prophet equipped with the authority of a divine commission.”

26. Buxtorf the Elder was also the editor of two Hebrew Bibles (1611 and 1618), a Hebrew grammar, dictionaries, and textbooks.

in 2 Timothy 3:16–17: the teaching of biblical truth (*institutio ad veritatem*), refutation of falsehood (*refutatio falsitatis*), and the correction of vices (*correptio vitiorum*).<sup>27</sup> According to Cocceius, sacred philology was not meant for idle speculation, but like all other methods of interpretation it should aim at the edification of the Christian church (*ad aedificationem Ecclesiae collineare debent*). In chapter 8 of this treatise, Cocceius praised medieval Jewish commentators such as Rashi (1040–1105) and David Kimchi (ca. 1160–ca. 1235) for their scholarship, but, in actuality, he used their work to confirm his christological view of the Old Testament. Close readings of Cocceius’s interpretations of Genesis and Leviticus, however, sometimes reveal unusual juxtapositions of Christian and Jewish understandings of the Hebrew Bible.<sup>28</sup> Another argument brought forward by Cocceius for the use of rabbinical literature was related to New Testament Greek. In a short treatise probably written while in Franeker entitled *Hebraismi aliquot & Hellenisticae locutiones ex Novo Testamento*, of which only fragments have survived, he defended the thesis that New Testament Greek was characterized by a profusion of Semitisms, which could only be interpreted correctly by using rabbinical sources.<sup>29</sup> In the *Summa Doctrinae* there are also several references to rabbinical sources (e.g., the discussion in §304 concerning the meaning of “the serpent” in Genesis 3:15).

Cocceius saw Scripture as a harmonious system or a symphony in which the leading melody was the history of God’s covenants with humankind. An important second theme in this symphony was eschatology. Cocceius elaborated on this theme in his doctrine of the kingdom of God, following his Bremen teacher L. Crocius (1586–1655) in discerning a development in seven periods. He believed that this development had been described in the seven letters to the churches in Asia Minor in the second and third chapters of Revelation.<sup>30</sup> This view of salvation history is also found in Cocceius’s interpretation of the last six

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27. J. Cocceius, *Protheoria de ratione interpretandi sive introductio in Philologiam sacram*, in *Opera Anekdotica Theologica et Philologica* 1 (Amsterdam, 1706), 62–75.

28. See Adina M. Yoffie, “Cocceius and the Jewish Commentators,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 65 (2004): 383–398.

29. J. Cocceius, *Hebraismi aliquot & Hellenisticae locutiones ex Novo Testamento*, *Opera Anekdotica Theologica et Philologica* (Amstelodami, 1706), 509–512.

30. See J. Cocceius, *Cogitationes de Apocalypsi S. Johannis Theologi*, in *Opera Omnia* 5 (Amsterdam, 1673–1675), cap. 1, §§15, 16: “Visorum, quae in toto libro proponuntur, ordo septem partes habent... Qui non nimis indiligenter hasce partes inter se contulerit, clare videbit, in iis agit de iisdem rebus, alio atque alio modo, & easdem, quasi toties factas, narrari. Quod signum certissimum est, Apocalypsis filum non esse unum per librum continuatum, sed quasi aliquoties replicatum.” “The order of the visions which are set forth in the whole book, have seven parts.... If someone not excessively careless would have compared these parts to each other, then one will clearly see that in them he treats of the same matters, in one way and then in another, and the same things are spoken of as if they were frequently done. Because the sign is as certain as possible, the theme of Revelation is not only continued throughout the book, but it is as if it were unfolded over and over.”

chapters of Deuteronomy, published under the title *Considerationes ad Ultima Mosis*.<sup>31</sup> In his *Summa Doctrinae*, the doctrine of God's kingdom was addressed in the last chapter, which discusses the last abrogation of the covenant of works (§§609–50).

With the help of these two concepts—“covenant” and “kingdom”—Cocceius discovered the same pattern throughout Scripture, especially in the prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, and developed a theology of history or, in his own words, a “prophetic theology.” He tried to formulate general rules for explaining these prophecies and wrote lengthy theoretical and methodological expositions on this topic. On the basis of a supposed analogy between the Old and New Testament prophecies, Cocceius interpreted the Bible as a prolonged prophecy of the Christian church, extending until the end of time. Prophecy and world history were closely linked in this prophetic theology. He developed, together with his covenant theology, a dynamic theology of the kingdom of God: God's rule gradually came to be revealed in the course of history, which was divided in seven periods. Thus, Cocceius tried to formulate general rules for explaining the prophecies.<sup>32</sup> Elements of his prophetic theology were extensively elaborated in the works of a later generation of Cocceians such as Henricus Groenewegen (ca. 1640–1692) and Johannes d'Outrein (1662–1722).<sup>33</sup>

### **The *Summa Doctrinae de Foedere et Testamento Dei***

Cocceius's most famous work, however, is his *Summa Doctrinae de Foedere et Testamento Dei*, which became a classic of continental federal theology. It was published in the form of a monograph in which a large portion of classical theological material was treated from the perspective of the covenant. In this keyword, inherited from the Reformed tradition (Cocceius himself mentions Bullinger, Martinius, and, especially, Olevianus),<sup>34</sup> Cocceius believed he found the secret enabling him to present a coherent and biblically based dogmatics. His monumental work was published in 1648 with the title *Collationes de Foedere et Testamento Dei, ad illustrandam methodum et ἀναλογίαν Doctrinae Pietatis in Scripturis traditum*. It originated in more than forty-nine disputations held under

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31. J. Cocceius, *Ad Ultima Mosis, hoc est, sex postrema capita Deuteronomii considerationes, in quibus (...) fundamentales veritates religionis christianae ac canon prophetiae perspicue proponuntur* (Franeker, 1650).

32. On Cocceius's prophetic theology, see van Asselt, “Structural Elements,” 76–104; van Asselt, *Portret*, 229–246.

33. See W. J. van Asselt, “De neus van de bruid: De ‘profetische’ en ‘zinnebeeldige’ godgeleerdheid van Henricus Groenewegen en Johannes d'Outrein,” in *Profetie en godsspraak in de geschiedenis van het christendom. Studies over de historische ontwikkeling van een opvallend verschijnsel*, ed. F. G. M. Broeyer and E. M. V. M. Honeé (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 1997), 163–184.

34. See Cocceius, *Summa Doctrinae, Praefatio* (1648), \*3: “Exemplum huius disquisitionis alii quoque Viri Docti praeberunt; imprimis laudatissimae memoriae Vir Gaspar Olevianus.”

his presidency at the University of Franeker in the years before 1648.<sup>35</sup> Many students from the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Hungary, and Switzerland acted as respondents.<sup>36</sup>

In 1654, a second Latin edition was published. Cocceius wrote its preface on September 13, 1653.<sup>37</sup> Although the number of paragraphs (650) remained unaltered (as in the next editions), there were some substantial changes. The names of the respondents were removed, and, according to Cocceius's comments in the preface, this second edition had a "clearer scheme" (*nitidiori schemate*) as it was divided into chapters and included headings and summaries at the beginning of each chapter. Furthermore, citations from Scripture were written in full (*verbatim*) so that the reader would not have to look them up. Finally, Cocceius added a Latin translation of Hebrew and Greek words and expressions used in his exposition of Scripture passages. The additions to this second edition—including the collation of parallel texts; the explanations of terms, definitions, and divisions; and the insertion of meditative paragraphs—were motivated by his desire to provide the reader (especially the beginning student [*cum primis tironi*]), with an improved edition that answered the criticism that the first edition, because of its brevity (*brevitas*), was not clear enough. This second edition of the *Summa Doctrinae* was also published in Geneva in 1665 in a compounded volume that also contained the second edition of his *Summa Theologiae*, first published in 1662. On the title page the publisher, Johannes Widerhold, described the *Summa Doctrinae* as "a most complete work that thus far is desired by many because of the excellence of the subject matter and its treatment."<sup>38</sup>

In 1660, a third Latin edition appeared with some significant additions, three of which are most important. The first addition was extensive indices of biblical passages and subjects, as well as an appendix containing a 1660 address Cocceius gave as vice-chancellor of Leiden University, "Panegyricus de Regno Dei."<sup>39</sup> A second addition is found in §537, where Cocceius—probably

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35. J. Cocceius, *Collationes de Foedere et Testamento Dei, ad illustrandam methodum et analogian doctrinae pietatis in Scripturis traditum* (Franekerae: Idzardus Balck, 1648). In octavo format comprising four hundred pages.

36. See F. Postma and J. van Sluis, *Auditorium Academiae Franekerensis. Bibliographie der Reden, Disputationen und Gelegenheitsdruckwerke der Universität und des Athenäums in Franeker 1585–1843* (Leeuwarden: Fryske Akademy, 1995), 118–122.

37. J. Cocceius, *Summa Doctrinae de Foedere et Testamento Dei. Editio secunda auctior et emandatior* (Lugduni Batavorum: Elsevirii, 1654). In duodecimo format comprising 544 pages, including 24 unnumbered pages.

38. *Joh. Cocceji, SS. Theologiae in Acad. Leydensi Professris Celeberrimi, Summa Theologiae ex Scripturis Repetita. Editio Secunda, a mendis, quibus prior scatebat, dilligenter repurgata, ac indice dictorum Scripturae utilissimo aucta. Adjecta ad calcem eiusdem authoris Doctrina de Foedere et Testamento Dei; Opus absolutissimum, ob materiae et tractationis excellentiam a multis hactenus desideratum* (Genevae: Sumptibus Ioann. Herm. Widerhold, 1665).

39. J. Cocceius, *Summa Doctrinae de Foedere et Testamento Dei. Editio tertia emandatior, et,*

because of his problems with church authorities—inserted more than sixty lines discussing the role and function of church order and church discipline. In this extra paragraph he maintained that church discipline had no other end than to win the neighbor (*ut lucremur proximum*), and not to participate in the sins of other people (*ut non communicemus cum alieno peccato*). The third addition, which he likely included to address the discussions of Sabbath observance at Leiden at that time and in order to combat misinterpretations of his view on the subject by his colleague Johannes Hoornbeeck, was inserted in §338 and included seventy-one subsections to demonstrate that the Decalogue in general—and the fourth commandment in particular—belongs entirely to the covenant of grace. In these sections he argued that the fourth commandment receives its moral significance from the covenant of grace, not from the covenant of works.<sup>40</sup> In all of the following editions, these extra sections were maintained.

The fourth edition of 1672 was further extended with the inclusion of a more extensive index of subjects and of all of the cited biblical terms and passages discussed in the *Summa Doctrinae*.<sup>41</sup> The fifth and sixth editions,<sup>42</sup> dating

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*cum caetera, tum imprimis indicibus auctior. Accedit Panegyricus de Regno Dei* (Lugduni Batavorum: Jacobus Voorn, 1660). In duodecimo format comprising 596 pages, including 68 unnumbered pages].

40. See Johannes Henricus Cocceius, *Opera Omnia* 1, *Praefatio*, 3: “Quum igitur & tertia ipsi mota esset controversia de Decalogo, an ea esset formula Foederis Gratiae, arguentibus antagonistis quartum praeceptum ideo quod positum esset inter praecepta moralia, etiam morale esse: Parente statuente Decalogum continere formulam Foederis Gratiae, &, in Foederis Gratiae formula posse sibi locum vindicare praeceptum typicum, etiam de eo variis in locis agere necessum habuit & postquam scriptiones adversariae jam vetitae essent ab Ordinibus, coactus est de iis quaedam inserere tertiae Editioni Summae Doctrinae de Foedere, quia D. Hoornbeeckius in postremo suo scripto de Sabbato, quod ediderat brevi ante inhibitas a D.D. Ordinibus adversarias scriptiones, volebat videri solide ipsius sententiam refutasse.” “Therefore since the third controversy he would have brought up concerns the Decalogue, whether the formula of the covenant of grace was there, in which our opponents argue that the fourth commandment is also moral because it was placed among the moral commandments. Since the controversy’s originator states that the Decalogue contains the formula of the covenant of grace, and in the formula of the covenant of grace he can claim for it a place as a typical commandment, it was also necessary to deal with various passages of Scripture and afterwards our adversary’s writings that had already been prohibited by the nobles. For these reasons, certain things have been inserted into the third edition of the *Summae Doctrinae de Foedere*, because Dr. Hoornbeeck in his last writing on the Sabbath, which he published shortly before the nobles prohibited adversarial writings, wanted to appear to have solidly refuted this view.”

41. J. Cocceius, *Summa Doctrinae de Foedere et Testamento Dei. Editio quarta varie emendata, et, cum caetera, tum imprimis novo indice locorum Scripturae tum citatorum tum explicatorum aucta* (Amstelodami: Johannes a Someren, 1672). In octavo format comprising 472 pages, including 100 unnumbered pages.

42. J. Cocceius, *Summa Doctrinae de Foedere et Testamento Dei. Editio quinta varie emendata, et, cum caetera, tum imprimis novo indice locorum Scripturae tum citatorum tum explicatorum aucta* (Amstelodami: vidua Joannis a Someren, 1683). In octavo format comprising 560 pages, including 100 unnumbered pages. See also *Summa Doctrinae de Foedere et Testamento Dei. Editio*

respectively from 1683 and 1691, are almost identical with the fourth; they include some minor additions and emendations of the Scripture indices and their explanation.

In 1677, the *Summa Doctrinae* was translated into Dutch by Johannes vander Waeyen.<sup>43</sup> A second edition of this translation appeared in Amsterdam in 1689, which indicates the popularity of Cocceius's ideas during the second half of the seventeenth century. In 1990, a translation into modern Dutch was edited by W. J. van Asselt and H. G. Renger.<sup>44</sup> The present volume is a landmark event for the study of Reformed theology because it presents the first English translation of this standard work of covenant theology.

### **The Three Covenants in the *Summa Doctrinae***

In the *Summa Doctrinae*, Cocceius defined the covenant of God as “nothing other than the divine declaration of the way of receiving the love of God as well as the union and communion of becoming a partaker in Him”; that is to say, “the friendship of God” (§5). This is the ultimate goal of salvation history. The terms used for this covenant are *berith* (Hebrew), *diatheke* (Greek), *foedus*, *pactum*, and *testamentum* (Latin). The proper sense of *berith* includes mutuality by the parties, but Cocceius argued that the term could have a range of meanings; in the covenant of God with humanity, God's unilateral action is primary. *Diatheke*, understood in a testamentary sense, properly corresponds to this latter meaning of *berith*, and therefore *testamentum* is a preferable Latin translation to *pactum* since *pactum* implies the proper mutual sense of *berith*.<sup>45</sup> Thus, Cocceius stressed the basic unilateral or monopleuric nature of the covenant. However, he also explained that the covenant has dipleuric elements that bind the creature to obedience and by which the creature has a right to make a claim on the covenanted God. The covenant was unilateral or monopleuric in origin, but, once established, it was bilateral or dipleuric (cf. §§6, 7). Two years later, in his *Considerationes ad Ultima Mosis*, Cocceius summarized the relationship of covenanted parties in a clear way:

Here [Deuteronomy 29], covenant (*foedus*) means a mutual testimony of love. From God's part it is an attestation of His benevolence, from the people's part it is gratitude that must be demonstrated by the obedience by

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*sexta varie emendata, et, cum caetera, tum imprimis novo indice locorum Scripturae tum citatorum tum explicatorum aucta* (Amstelodami: vidua Joannis et Abrahami a Someren, 1691). In octavo format comprising 560 pages, including 100 unnumbered pages.

43. J. Cocceius, *De Leere van het Verbond en Testament Gods, kort en grondig verklaart. Uit het Latijn overgeset*, trans. Johannes vanderWaeyen (Middelburg: Jacobus Noenaard, 1677).

44. J. Cocceius, *De Leer van het verbond en het Testament van God* (Kampen: De Groot-Goudriaan, 1990).

45. See Lee, “Covenant Terminology of Johannes Cocceius,” 11–36. See also Lee, *Johannes Cocceius and the Exegetical Roots*.

which God is glorified. God is said to establish a covenant with people in so far as He is the first author of friendship and obliges them *to homologia*, that is to an agreement and response of mutual love.<sup>46</sup>

As with earlier articulations of covenant theology, Cocceius distinguished two fundamental forms of God's covenants in salvation history: the covenant of works (*foedus operum*) before the fall (*ante lapsum*), and the covenant of grace (*foedus gratiae*) after the fall (*post lapsum*). The former was violated by the disobedience of Adam; the latter was promulgated immediately after the fall. Cocceius chiefly divided the covenant of grace into two periods: *ante Christum natum* and *post Christum natum* (§11).

This covenant of grace, however, was not simply an incident caused by the fall, but rested ultimately upon God's free disposition. This free disposition Cocceius also called a *testamentum*; thus, according to Cocceius, "God's free disposition" is another possible translation of the Hebrew word *berith* and the Greek word *diatheke*. Cocceius borrowed the term *testamentum* from references in Scripture such as Galatians 3:15 and Hebrews 9:16, passages that indicate God's ultimate will for those who will be saved. Furthermore, this testament was the result of an eternal pact within the Trinitarian Godhead. It was not a pact with fallen man, but between the eternal Father and the Mediator, Christ. Cocceius called this eternal pact, on which the solidity of the testamentary covenant rested, a *pactum salutis*, or "counsel of peace," referring to Psalms 2; 8; 16:2–3, 6–7; 40:7, 13; Isaiah 42:1, 6; 49:5–12; 53:10–11; and Zechariah 6:13. For exegetical evidence from the New Testament, he referred to Hebrews 7:22 and to Christ's words in Luke 22:29 ("as my Father hath appointed [a kingdom] unto me"), which He spoke at the institution of the Lord's Supper (§88). Although Cocceius did not introduce the notion of a pretemporal *pactum salutis* into Reformed theology, he was one of the first theologians who extensively developed its exegetical and theological implications and systematically incorporated it into the entire federal framework.<sup>47</sup>

Christ's role in the *pactum salutis* concerned His *sponsio*, or surety, of the covenant of grace. According to Cocceius, Christ's bail bond, or *sponsio*, in the Old Testament was not an *expromissio*, but a *fideiussio*. These terms come from Roman law. Although Cocceius did not explicitly use the aforementioned designations in the *Summa Doctrinae*, he discussed the appropriateness of the term *fideiussio* in the *praefatio* to his commentary on the epistle to the Ephesians (1667) and elsewhere, especially in his *Summa Theologiae*. According to Cocceius,

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46. J. Cocceius, *Considerationes ad Ultima Mosis* (1650), §§6, 7: "Foedus hic significat mutuam testificationem de amore, qui a parte Dei est benevolentiae, & a parte populi est gratitudinis demonstrandae per illam obedientiam, qua Deus glorificatur. Deus dicitur facere foedus cum populo, quatenus ipse auctor est primus amicitiae, & ad homologiam, h.e. consensionem & responsonem mutui amoris obligat."

47. See van Asselt, *Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius*, 227–229.

*fideiussio* is to be released on a promised (but not yet paid) bail bond, and an *expromissio* on a paid bail. Christ's *sponsio*, considered as an *expromissio*, included the idea that already in the eternal pact the guilt of sin was simply transferred from the elect to the Son. Cocceius rejected this concept. Rather, the *sponsio* was a *fideiussio*, or promise, to pay the bail bond, a guarantee that was already effective in the Old Testament dispensations, but in such a way that the faithful of the Old Testament were liable right up to the actual satisfaction of Christ.<sup>48</sup>

This topic of Cocceius's theology, in combination with the criticism of his doctrine of *páresis* and *áphesis*, initiated a controversy among other leading Reformed theologians in Europe such as Francis Turretin (1623–1687), Petrus van Mastricht (1630–1706), and Melchior Leydecker (1642–1721) in Utrecht, who insisted that the *sponsio* of Christ was absolute and that in the eternal pact, He had taken upon Himself once and for all the complete case of the elect sinner both in the Old and New Testament dispensations.<sup>49</sup> According to these theologians, Cocceius and his pupils had introduced a historical component into the doctrines of the Trinity, predestination, and atonement by developing the conception of Christ's *sponsio* as a *fideiussio*.<sup>50</sup>

Furthermore, Cocceius argued, the Holy Spirit was the person in the intra-Trinitarian pact who works out the *pactum ad extra* in salvation history. The Holy Spirit is thus included in the Trinitarian pact. In §89 of the *Summa Doctrinae*, Cocceius speaks of an "economy" within the *pactum salutis*; there is thus a certain division of labor in this connection. Regarding the Holy Spirit, Cocceius explains: "The Holy Spirit exercises the power of the Godhead by regenerating us, and its charity by uniting us to God and by sealing our inheritance" (§89). Although

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48. See Cocceius, *Summa Theologiae*, cap. 35 §§2, 3, 4: "Fuit tamen is effectus *Sponsionis*, ut peccatum, postquam commissum esset, *non imputaretur* haeredibus in Testamento scriptis, h.e. ut non posset esse in Deo voluntas puniendi peccatum ipsorum in ipsis. Quippe quod impactum erat in Sponsorem & in eum debebat incurrere, & ab eo exigi, Esa. 53, 6.7 ... Deinde: ut adventus Sponsoris ad praestandum sacrificium & expiandum omne peccatum, quod Deus constitueret remittere, & Evangelium salutis ac justitiae posset promitti. Imo ut ea promissio haeredibus salutis proponeretur, & sic testamentum Dei aperiretur & notificaretur."

49. See F. Turretin, *Institutio theologiae elencticae. Pars Secunda* (Geneva, 1688), *locus* XII, *quaestio* IX, 10; M. Leydecker, *Filius Dei Sponsor of de Loff en Eere Jesu Christi* (Amsterdam, 1708).

50. See van Asselt, "Expromissio or Fideiussio?," 37–57. Cf. Petrus van Mastricht, *Theoretico-practica Theologia*. Editio nova (Utrecht: W. van de Water, J. van Poolsum, J. Wagens, G. v. Paddenburg, 1724), 5.1. 34: "Fratres illi, qui celeb. Cocceium sectantur post ipsius obitum, quo commodius haberent fideles Vet. Testamenti non obstante sponsione aeterna fuisse ad actualem usque satisfactionem sub reatu, statuunt sponsionem illam fuisse fideiussionem, per quam debitor principalis maneat sub reatu usque ad actualem solutionem." "Those brothers, who follow the renowned Cocceius after his death, state that the *sponsio* was a *fideiussio* through which the principal debtor remains under guilt until the time of actual repayment. [They hold this] so that they might more easily hold that Old Testament believers, notwithstanding the eternal *sponsio* were under guilt until the actual satisfaction."

the Spirit is not involved as a partner in the agreement itself, He certainly is an active person in the implementation of the pact. He is the one who actualizes the result of the pact; He is the power of God who implements, safeguards, and administers the testament throughout the course of salvation history. In this way Cocceius emphasized the work of the Holy Spirit in salvation history.<sup>51</sup>

### **The Doctrine of the Abrogations**

The structure and shape of the *Summa Doctrinae* is decidedly determined by the doctrine of the annulment of the covenant of works, the so-called abrogation doctrine. It is the thread that runs throughout the entire volume. Chapters 2–4, 10, 15, and 16 provide this framework. This work describes all of biblical history after the fall as a series of events by which this original covenant of works was canceled and abrogated step by step (§58). The events that were decisive for these abrogations of the covenant of works and that initiated a new phase in the history of the covenant of grace at every stage include the following: (1) the fall; (2) God’s decision to establish the covenant of grace and the promise of this new covenant, which runs through the entire Old Testament and is fulfilled in the New Testament; (3) the detachment from and the renunciation of the old humanity in the sanctification undergone by Christians; (4) physical death; and (5) the resurrection from death.

As presented in the *Summa Doctrinae*, this abrogation doctrine encompasses all of covenant history from creation to eschaton. In each phase of this history, the covenant of works retains some function, even though its effect is increasingly weakened until, in the eschaton, all the evil effects of the transgression of the covenant of works are canceled.

The prominence of abrogation in Cocceius’s view of the covenant resulted in a strongly eschatological orientation. Cocceius regarded the history of the covenant of grace as a progressive history with room for development. The primary aspect of this development is positive, and the secondary aspect negative. The positive aspect is the furtherance (*progressio*) of the covenant of grace, and the negative the abrogation of the effects of the transgression of the covenant of works. Salvation history thus acquired the character of a “liberation history” in phases, culminating in the eschaton. In this regard, one may speak of a history involving a decrease of evil and an increase in salvation.<sup>52</sup>

Cocceius further compared this abrogation process in salvation history to the process of sanctification in the *ordo salutis*, or order of salvation. In the doctrine of sanctification, taken as a description of the work of the Holy Spirit in the individual believer, Cocceius also spoke of a process that includes a negative and positive aspect: whereas the believer’s “outward nature” is destroyed, his inner

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51. See van Asselt, *Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius*, 233–236.

52. See van Asselt, “Doctrine of the Abrogations,” 101–116.

nature is being renewed day by day (§552; cf. 2 Cor. 4:16). In fact, salvation history and the order of salvation are not alternatives to one another; rather, they reflect one another. The acts of the biblical God in Israel, in the church, and in the soul of the individual believer are profoundly connected by virtue of analogy and a hidden correspondence. Both are ultimately the result of the Holy Spirit's work of sanctification in salvation history and in each individual believer at the same time, considered either in a broader or in a more restricted sense.<sup>53</sup>

### *Praxis Pietatis*

The pneumatological emphasis within Cocceius's covenant theology provided opportunities for him to address human subjectivity in the covenant (see especially §§223–44). Through the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration and conversion, Christ lives in the Christian, and in this life the covenant takes the form of a fellowship or communion between God and humans. Thus, for Cocceius, spiritual experience was an integral part of theology. His definition of the task and content of theology seems to be inspired by Ames, particularly in passages such as the following: “Theology is the doctrine according to true piety, that is, a doctrine fitting and appropriate to instill piety and true religion aiming at a firm consolation in this life and eternal salvation thereafter, which is revealed in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament.”<sup>54</sup> Especially in Cocceius's notion of covenant as friendship with God, theory and praxis intertwined to produce the kind of understanding that was proper to faith in God and interpersonal relations.<sup>55</sup> The basic intent of his covenant theology was to form persons whose way of life would testify to the truth of theology.

In many sections of his work, Cocceius meditated on the Christian life as an existence in the covenant of God (see especially Chapter 7). That he himself was a man of deep personal faith and piety was already observed by his students, and one of them wrote: “His hearers noted that his eyes would fill with tears when, in giving an exposition of Scripture, he praised the richness of God's grace.”<sup>56</sup> In the preface to his commentary on the twelve Minor Prophets, he wrote: “The most beautiful title of all is Christian, the right to this name is a magnificent possession. For a Christian is ultimately...a friend of Christ.”<sup>57</sup> In one of the

53. See van Asselt, *Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius*, 297–310.

54. “*Theologia est doctrina secundum veram pietatem, h.e. apta et conveniens instillandae pietati sive verae religioni ad consolationem certam in hac vita et salutem aeternam in posterum, revelata in scripturis Vet. et Nov. Test.*” J. Cocceius, *Aphorismi breviores per universam theologiam*, §1, in *Opera Omnia* 6 (Amsterdam, 1673–1675).

55. Cf. Cocceius, *Summa Theologiae*, cap. 22, §17: “*Foedus autem appellamus...plenius pactum de amicitia consummatum; aut ius ad communionem et amicitiam ex pacto proveniens.*” “However, in a fuller sense, we call a *foedus* a consummated pact of friendship; or a right to communion and friendship flowing from a pact.”

56. See Schrenk, *Gottes Reich und Bund*, 8.

57. J. Cocceius, *Praefatio in lectionem Prophetarum eisagogike*. “*Pulcherrima omnino*

first sections of his *Considerationes ad Ultima Mosis*, he wrote, “When in Holy Scripture God is said to establish a covenant with His people, this ultimately means that He is offering His friendship to someone.”<sup>58</sup>

The Protestant German theologian Jürgen Moltmann was one of the first to stress the importance of this *amicitia* concept in the covenant theology of Cocceius. He argued that Cocceius understood the covenant as the fulfillment of the universal human longing for salvation that takes concrete form in the relationship of friendship between God and humanity. The covenant was only secondary for Cocceius; the relationship of friendship is primary.<sup>59</sup> By contrast, I have proposed to interpret the concept of friendship in Cocceian thought as the pneumatological dimension of his covenant theology.<sup>60</sup> For Cocceius, it is God the Holy Spirit who ultimately enables us to love God as friend. But to love God as friend is to love the God who always loves us first. It is God’s movement toward us in love and friendship that allows us to move toward God in friendship. The friendship of God certainly presupposes God’s initiative and choice: “Man, before grace came, had nothing by which he could raise himself, please God, and be united to Him.... Hence, it is clear that man is led by grace alone into the covenant and to grace or the friendship of God” (§§211–212).

To gain further insight into Cocceius’s use of the concept of *amicitia*, consider where in the history of the covenant that Cocceius discusses the *amicitia* in both its subjective and objective sense. In doing so, we discover what may be called a “history of friendship” that runs parallel to the history of the covenants and the history of God’s kingdom. In the Old Testament dispensation of the covenant of grace, friendship with God was still, as it were, in a state of infancy and was mixed with ignorance. That fades away when Christ appears in the flesh and effects reconciliation. This reconciliation indicates the complete work of joining alienated humanity with God in friendship. For Cocceius, Good Friday was the turning point in the history of God’s friendship with His fallen creatures. This means that a transfer had taken place from a human condition characterized by hate and enmity toward God to a new status characterized by friendship and blessing effected by the work of the Holy Spirit.<sup>61</sup> According to Cocceius, the experience of this blessing and friendship was brought about by the operation

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Christiani nomenclatura est, res magna jus nominis. Nam Christianus, Christi...amicus est.” This introduction preceded his *Commentarius in Prophetas Duodecim Minores* (1652) in *Opera Omnia* 3 (Amsterdam, 1673–1675).

58. Cocceius, *Considerationes ad Ultima Mosis*, §9: “Foedus seare est in Scripturis plenissime Amicitiam suam alicui addicere.”

59. See Moltmann, “Geschichtstheologie und pietistisches Menschenbild,” 343–361.

60. See van Asselt, *Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius*, 306–310.

61. J. Cocceius, *Diagrammata dicendorum in Epistolam ad Romanos* (1645), cap. 11, §64: “Reconciliatio significat translationem a statu odii et irae ad statum amicitiae et benedictionis, a separatione ad unionem et communionem.” “Reconciliation means a transfer from a state of hostility to a state of friendship and blessing, from separation to union and communion.”

of the Holy Spirit in the congregation of true believers and in their hearts. Therefore, this friendship with God through the Spirit can first be enjoyed in personal prayer, in which God and the believer relate to each other “as a friend enjoys his friend and shares all he has with him.”<sup>62</sup>

However, this work of the Holy Spirit, and thereby one’s participation in the covenant, was not a universal reality. Not everyone in this world can be called a friend of God. Therefore, Cocceius argued, one cannot say that Christ died for the whole of mankind. He died only for those who were promised by the Father to the Son as *sponsio* in the eternal pact (§§108, 539).

### Church and Sacraments

It is not surprising that Cocceius’s understanding of covenantal friendship plays a prominent part in his ecclesiology as well, as developed in the *Summa Doctrinae*. The thirteenth chapter is devoted entirely to the doctrine of the sacraments (§§404–534). The institution and continuing use of the sacraments in both the Old and the New Testaments is a “strengthening of salvation history” (*firmamentum historiae evangelicae*). The sacraments are signs of the covenant (*signa foederis*), or testimonies of the love and friendship of God (*testimonia amicitiae Dei*), by means of which God gathers a community for Himself. God has not only willed that His people should be called by the word, but also that they should respond to this calling to form a community that together provides a testimony to unity, friendship, intercession, and edification (§§190–94, 202, 408).

The sacraments are, therefore, indispensable. Whoever despises them deprives his own soul: “It is clear from this that those who neglect or treat with contempt the sacraments are rightly said to neglect or treat with contempt the covenant of God” (§408). Even the covenant of works before the fall had its sacraments: Paradise and the Tree of Life (§§32–40). They not only signified the eternal life and the heavenly country in which righteousness and glory dwell, but also sealed God’s gift of friendship as the reward for man’s obedience to His law.<sup>63</sup> During the Old Testament dispensations of the covenant of grace, the main sacramental signs were circumcision and the Passover; for Cocceius, these both had essentially the same content as the later sacraments of the New Testament (baptism and the Lord’s Supper), namely, God’s friendship and grace, although

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62. J. Cocceius, *In librum Jobi Commentarius* (1644), in *Opera Omnia* 1, cap. 29, §16: “Quemadmodum amicus amico fruitur et omnibus eius utitur bonis.”

63. Cocceius, *Summa Doctrinae*, §32: “Sacramentum coelestis civitatis & aeternae vitae fuit Paradisus et Arbor vitae.” §§39–40: “Erat igitur Arbor haec verum Sacramentum justificationis ex operibus.... Non tamen significabat Arbor haec Filium Dei, ut Christum sive mediatorem; quia Filius Dei est Mediator foederis gratiae. Qui dicunt, Christum significasse, personam intelligunt, non considerantes officium mediatorium.... Neque commode dicitur, Arborem vitae Euangelii, alteram cognitionis boni et mali Legis typum fuisse. Hoc enim est foedera confundere.”

they were manifested more imperfectly and weakly because Christ had not yet appeared in the flesh.<sup>64</sup>

In the New Testament, the blessing of friendship deriving from the covenant of grace, and brought about by the full operation of the Holy Spirit, was experienced only in the community of believers (§209). In the covenant of grace, baptism was the sign of God's enduring friendship. It was the sacrament from which the Christian lives out the whole of his life. Although administered but once, baptism was in Cocceius's view a continuing reality that organically linked tradition, community, and faith. Baptism was the sealing of God's covenant as the main foundation of the church (§§427–34). Cocceius further thought of the Lord's Supper as the portrayal or acting out of the whole Christian life. In his commentary on the Gospel of John, Cocceius was so moved by the depth and beauty of John 15:15, "I have called you friends," that he allowed the power of these words to infuse his view of the church.<sup>65</sup> Thus, for Cocceius, the mystery of the Lord's Supper centered on the intimate experience one has when they are counted as a friend of God in the community of believers. As he wrote in §539: "Those who are Christ's are His friends." In his explication of Heidelberg

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64. See Cocceius, *Summa Doctrinae*, §340: "Quanquam autem omnia, quae lege ceremoniali continentur, pertineant ad sacramentorum sive sigillorum ordinem.... praecipua tamen sacramenta fuerunt suo, quae et antiquiora sunt tota lege praeceptorum, quae ex placitis constant; videlicet circumcisio & Paschalis agnus.... Licet enim [circumcisio] esset sigillum iustitiae fidei (ut iam §202, 203 & 320 diximus), nihilominus tamen habebat aliquam commonefactionem de imperfectione & infirmitate sive impotentia, quippe data est tantum Abrahamo & semini eius per generationes ipsorum, quamdiu terram Canaan essent possessari, donec Abrahamo daretur haereditas mundi."

65. J. Cocceius, *Euangelium secundum Johannem* (1670), in *Opera Omnia* 4, cap. 15, §65: "Commendat Christus charitatem mutuam, quia est charitas dilectorum, amicorum, nempe in Christo. Est enim membrum membro amicum et bonum, si igitur volumus videri diligere, non debemus nobis alios subicere, sed aestimare ut amicos; neque id agere, ut fruamur amicis et eorum bonis, sed potius, ut illi fruntur nobis. Haec mens Christi est.... Qui vere diligit amicos, cupit ut eos in maxime se frui. Maximum, quod quis amicis et dilectis...impendere potest, est vita." "Christ commends mutual love because it is the love of those beloved, of friends, namely, of those in Christ. For a member is a friend and good to another member. If therefore we want to be seen as loving, we must not make others subject to ourselves, but to esteem them as friends; and not to behave so that we may enjoy friends and their possessions, but rather that they enjoy ours. This is the mind of Christ...whoever truly loves their friends, desires that they would especially enjoy them."; cf. J. Cocceius, *Commentarius in Epistolam ad Romanos* (1665), *Opera Omnia* 6, cap. 1, § 57: Hi enim possunt certi esse, in iis, qui habent eundem Spiritum fidei, obedientiae et charitatis erga Deum et proximum, esse eosdem sensus, eandem voluntatem, communiaque et laeta et tristia, et eorum cor atque animam esse ut cor suum et animam suam, quin etiam utrorumque cor esse rectum et Deo plenum: ut amor mutuus ipsorum ex amore Dei derivetur et in eum referatur." "For they can be certain that in those who possess the same Spirit of faith, obedience, and love towards God and neighbor, they have the same feelings, the same will, and common joys and sorrows, and their heart and soul is like their own heart and their own soul, moreover, the heart of both persons is upright and filled with God: so that they may draw their mutual love from their love of God and bring it back to Him."

Catechism 81, he noted that a Christian celebrates the Lord's Supper as someone who participates in God's covenant, "being a friend of God" and "having God as friend."<sup>66</sup> This covenantal approach to the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper played an important role in shaping the Reformed formulas for the administration of baptism and celebrating the Lord's Supper in the liturgy of the Dutch Reformed churches.

All of the main elements of Cocceius's covenant theology converge in his ecclesiology. What is more, in the community of the church, the friendship of believers reflects the friendship and love of the triune God Himself. Considered on our own we are simply creatures and servants, but in Christ, and through the Spirit's gift of friendship and charity, we have become friends of God. During his biblical studies, Cocceius became more and more convinced that the church is a community that exists to enjoy the love and friendship of God, and, consequently, mutual charity among believers, which excludes every form of oppression or tyranny. When discussing church discipline at the end of Chapter 14 of the *Summa Doctrinae*, Cocceius emphasized that any form of oppression or tyranny in the church is completely contrary to Christ's kingdom (§537). Therefore, he was convinced that the church and its unity were constituted only by God's covenantal actions, not by human confessions, agreements, or practices. God certainly invites a true response—a response of faithful confession and practice (§430)—but confessions of faith are no more than acts of response to the offer of divine and covenantal friendship. Cocceius stressed that God's acts are not dependent on human response (§§416, 427). Because God's covenant rests on the eternal pact (§442), His friendship is not annulled even in the absence of a faithful confession, as is sometimes the case with children (§§457–61). By contrast, when the covenant is absent, no confession (*homologia*) or practice of faith is possible (§454). Even when the Bible, especially the Old Testament, refers to God's anger and judgment because of the disobedience of His people, His judgment always comes *within* the context of the covenant. And what is true of God's actions under the old covenant of grace, Cocceius believed, is certainly true of God's actions under the new covenant of grace (§§450–55). For Cocceius, membership in the church is therefore not rooted in some agreement Christians have made with each other; rather, it is rooted in the fact that God's covenant has placed them there together. It is not an expression of individual preference, but the practice of learning to live together as children of the same divine covenant.

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66. J. Cocceius, *Explicatio Catecheseos Heidelbergensis*, in *Opera Omnia* 6 (Amsterdam, 1673–1675), §188: "non moratur humanum iudicium, sed in bona conscientia, tanquam amicus Dei & amicum Deum habens, propositis a Deo pignoribus utitur, & se gerit pro filio Dei, Joh. 1:12, clamans Abba pater: cui Sp [iritus] S[anctus] in Scriptura loquens attestatur, Rom. 8: 15, 16."

### **Cocceius's Significance and Relevance for Contemporary Systematic Theology**

Cocceius's covenant theology as developed in his *Summa Doctrinae* was of considerable importance in the theological history of Europe and the United States as it helped form the covenantal framework for much of Reformed theology throughout the past three centuries. Some historians (Gottlob Schrenk, Charles S. McCoy, and Heiner Faulenbach, for example) have argued that the historical approach in the *Summa Doctrinae* was a radical departure from Protestant scholasticism. They present Cocceius as primarily an exegete with a distaste for speculative theology, contrasting his biblical theology with the arid logical theology of the Reformed scholastics.<sup>67</sup> However, Cocceius's departure from scholasticism was not as absolute as is suggested by most of the secondary literature.<sup>68</sup> In his elaboration of the covenant concept in both the *Summa Doctrinae* and the *Summa Theologiae*, Cocceius at times (critically) used the scholastic method of argumentation and disputation. In addition, it can be argued that biblical theology is an anachronistic term as applied to Cocceius since it denotes a movement that began in earnest with the German theologian J. P. Gabler (1753–1826). Moreover, one should keep in mind that rational argumentation must not be confused with rationalism. Although Cocceius sought to formulate a theology in his *Summa Doctrinae* that was thoroughly grounded in Scripture, he retained much of the same method and doctrine as his fellow Reformed scholastics. There is thus no radical disjunction between Cocceius and Reformed scholasticism.

Nevertheless, Cocceius's extensive knowledge of Judaism and rabbinical literature led him to focus more closely on the biblical text—particularly on Old Testament details—than his contemporaries. His belief in a progression of redemptive history in the Old and New Testaments, as evidenced and unfolded in the *Summa Doctrinae*, explains why he felt it important to study every stage in the history of salvation. His extensive knowledge of Semitic languages and his readings of Jewish exegesis make him a fascinating example of a theologian who incorporated humanist scholarship into Reformed thought.

Finally, this short account highlighting distinctive features of Cocceius's covenant theology might also help in the rediscovery of certain premodern themes—themes often considered by modernists and postmodernists to be hampered by abstract and dogmatic metaphysics. In my view, Cocceius articulates a theology that has significant hermeneutical and theological insights that may be useful today. In order to grasp these theological and hermeneutical implications of Cocceius's covenantal thought, it should be pointed out that he did *not* use

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67. See Schrenk, *Gottesreich und Bund*, 22–23; McCoy, “Covenant Theology,” 135–138; Faulenbach, *Weg und Ziel*, 179–180.

68. See van Asselt, “Cocceius Anti-Scholasticus?,” 227–251.

the notion of covenant in order to show that God and man could be considered as separate entities. He employed the covenant notion in order to demonstrate *how* God's action in the world should be understood, and *how* the relationship between God and humanity functions and develops in the course of time. In other words, God and mankind are discussed only in their mutual relationship *within* salvation history. This means that every doctrinal issue discussed in the *Summa Doctrinae* has its starting point in the experienced covenantal relationship between the living God and His creatures. Because its starting point is the *praxis pietatis*, Cocceius's covenant thought is a pneumatologically driven explanation of both salvation history and the *ordo salutis*. The Holy Spirit both shapes the connection between the Godhead and the covenant of works, and He causes the Son's work of reconciliation to be experienced in the regeneration of the elect.

This means that the notion of covenant in salvation history and in the experience of the individual believer presupposes a knowledge of God that has as its object not an exclusively transcendent God, but a God who also enters into a relationship with humanity. Both covenants—the covenant of works and of grace—encompass the whole of Christian life even as it comprises all of time, from creation until the eschaton. At the same time, Cocceius did not use the notion of the pretemporal *pactum salutis*, with its focus on the work of the Spirit, as an abstract or metaphysical speculation or a piece of precritical mythology (*pace* Karl Barth). On the contrary, for Cocceius the *pactum salutis* is a certain expression of God's involvement in human history. This doctrine explicitly demonstrates that the relationship between God and human beings is founded in God Himself; it is not described as a formal state of affairs, but as an interaction within God Himself.

Cocceius's covenantal theology also implies a degree of subjectivity—although this subjectivity is far different from the modern idea of subjectivity in which man is doomed to realize his own aims. In this respect, Cocceius's covenant theology offers an old but surprising alternative to the atomistic and autonomous (Kantian) perception of individuality as found in modernity. Cocceius's covenant theology is an argument against all finite absolutes as it demonstrates that human beings are inherently connected to God and to each other. Furthermore, Cocceius's covenant theology presupposes that there is a living relationship of friendship between God and His creatures such that the existence of God and the life of His people should be discussed in the light of this covenantal relation of friendship. For Cocceius, God's covenant meant that through the internal work of the Holy Spirit, Christ—who on the threshold of His passion and death invited His followers to no longer to think of themselves as His servants but as His friends (John 15:15)—should live in the Christian community and in the heart of each individual Christian.

SUMMA DOCTRINÆ  
DE  
**FOEDERE**  
ET  
**TESTAMENTO DEI**



## Preface to the Reader

Dear Reader,

Undoubtedly ζητήσεις μωραὶ καὶ ἀπαίδευτοι, foolish questions as well as those that are ignorant or unlearned, greatly block the path to piety. The former concern matters that accomplish nothing for piety. The latter arise from ignorance of the doctrine of righteousness, arguments against the faith, or even τοῖς ἅ μὴ ἑώρακασιν ἑμβατεύουσιν (from those who take their stand) on what they have not seen, who have neither seen nor heard anything in the Word of God, but who habitually appear and rear up with profane feet.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, κενοφωνίαι and λογομαχίαι, foolish talk and quarrels about words, greatly hinder edification. Indeed, into what sordid conditions men will fall, who understand neither Scripture nor its substance! With all their might they furnish obscure, new, erratic, and suspect ideas as ends for religion, reduce the faith to tragedy, or transform the words of God into dross as amid a fire, thereby weakening and emptying them.

Contrarily, those things necessary for piety include the thorough examination of the Word of God, comparison of spiritual matters with spiritual matters, demonstration of the truth that accords with piety, conscience, the foundation of religion and the ἀναλογία τῆς πίστεως (analogy of faith)—the *harmony* and conformity of all that must be believed from the uniform witness of God through σύνεσιν (conscience) and ἐπίστασιν (care). Also necessary for piety is the serious examination and proper consideration of the weight of God's Word, as well as the disciplined and careful comparison of the product of all these practices. The end of all this is to subject the mind to the divine witness and the ἀποδείξιν τοῦ Πνεύματος, demonstration of the Spirit.

The devil very much hates this greatest means of increasing and strengthening true religion and destroying wickedness. Therefore, he corrupts the minds of men, so that they do not give heed to sound doctrine and the force of Scripture. Although these men have the μόρφωσιν (form) and precise outline of piety, they deny it, with both παραδιατριβὰς (idle occupation) and leisure spent for gain.

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1. The expression *profano pede insiliunt, oboriri solent* appears to be formulaic, but it is not clear to what Cocceius was referring.

Instead, they pursue ἀντιθέσεις ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως, contradictions falsely called knowledge, preferring this account to the opinion of the πολυμαθείας (very learned), experience, and common sense. Full of zeal, these men multiply their wickedness in numerous schools and seminaries.<sup>2</sup>

In contrast, when Scripture is taken as the standard, there is nothing that is a greater threat, is more insidious, opposes, and tears down ἐπισυναγωγαῖς, congregations, more than τῶν σχολαζόντων τῇ μαθήσιν, those who lack devotion to the sacred truth. After that danger is the one in which students, in the face of the trials of this life, only have knowledge of the truth as it suits them to listen to or talk about it. These follies, which are inappropriate to those who are and are called brothers, must cause harm.

For this reason, those who have been appointed to the sacred ministry to shepherd the flocks by the consensus and recommendation of the church and called by the authority of the elders must devote themselves with more anxious care so that they are found diligent and active not only in the explanation and presentation of the main points of doctrine but also in discussions about the mystery of piety according to its revelation in the Scriptures, together with the refutation of errors and restraint of corruptions, fruitless questions, and unhelpful assertions about the Word of God. This kind of office, since it was imposed on us by the will of those whom we receive as judges of studies (which was a most certain proof of divine command to me), has appeared before all things, to lead the way for our hearers to the explication of the particular theological argument about the *covenant and testament of God*.

Therefore, I proceed in this manner, (1) in order that I might show ὀφθαλμοφανῶς (clearly) the analogy and συμφωνίαν (harmony) of Christian doctrine, all of which is channeled into this place as its center. Since the covenant is twofold, I will display the difference between the covenant of works and the legal righteousness proceeding from it, which is in our Lord Jesus Christ alone, and the covenant of grace. Similarly, I will demonstrate the difference between the Old Testament and covenant, which God gave through Moses, and the promise given to the Fathers together with its fulfillment. In addition, I will show the difference between the bondage and freedom of the church. [I also write] (2) in order that, throughout the work, I might set forth before the eyes of the reader the terms and thought of the Reformed church by comparison and explication of the Scriptures. I have written in this manner in order to maintain

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2. In contemporary usage, in this context, the word “seminary” would refer to a class of education institutions for the training of ministers. It was used widely, however, by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Protestant writers of schools as metaphorical “seedbeds for the church.” In this period, in most cases, theological instruction occurred in a university setting where the theology faculty was a division of the university or school rather than a free-standing institution.

compact brevity. However, I could not keep myself from writing extensively at times, yet more in analysis of ideas than in abundance of words.

The nature of what I had in view was both positive and negative. Positively, I had in mind that faith to which Holy Scripture attributes righteousness, its foundation and nature, and to examine the reasons of our hope. Negatively, I sought to detect the faults fundamental to the false religions from which we must separate. Through these lenses, let us behold Him to whom all theology points and who will keep us from polluting sound doctrine with *μωραῖς καὶ ἀπαιδεύτοις ζητήσεις* (foolish and ignorant controversies). In doing this, the sacred Scriptures must be taken as our focal point. Indeed, in our scrutiny of them, we will hardly profit at all unless we daily discover new treasures of knowledge and wisdom in them for the elucidation and confirmation of the truth. The fruit of such study is abundant enough to provide the church a most certain interpretation, build the truth on the cloud of the most famous witnesses, and refute every error.

Other learned men have already undertaken focused studies of this doctrine. Caspar Olevianus stands above all as most noteworthy of memory.<sup>3</sup> To be sure, I wish that I could match his level of expertise, which so great a matter requires. Although I concede this, nevertheless I am confident that study and good conscience will approve me to the reader. For whatever does not bring instruction to the church is shipwrecked with regard to its trust. Sadly, it often happens that such works are submerged, *ἀναπολόγητον καὶ αὐτοκατάκριτον* (without excuse and self-condemned), before they reach the harbor of salvation. Therefore, let us beg God that He may grant that all our minds may submit to Him in this doctrine that we have come to know, that we may walk in concord, and that our hearts may be strengthened by His grace.

As you remember, reader *θεόφιλε* (beloved by God), with these words I addressed you in the preface of the previous edition in 1648. Now, urged by former and current students, and by friends and patrons who are praying for me, I intend to resubmit the same small book for you with greater confidence and more polish, divided into chapters that are illuminated with short *συνόψεις* (synopses). Here you will find the same number of paragraphs as were in the previous edition, so you will be able to assess those areas where we think that we have made progress. We in fact have added very many witnesses from Scripture,

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3. The reference is to the German Reformed theologian, Caspar Olevianus (1536–1587), a transitional figure in the history of covenant theology. Doubtless he had in mind Olevianus's major work in covenant theology, *De substantia foederis gratuiti inter Deum et electos* (Geneva, 1585). See Caspar Olevianus, *An Exposition of the Apostles' Creed*, trans. Lyle D. Bierma, *Classic Reformed Theology* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2009), xi–xix; R. Scott Clark, *Caspar Olevian and the Substance of the Covenant: The Double Benefit of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2008); and Lyle D. Bierma, *The Covenant Theology of Caspar Olevianus* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2005).

the examination of which could delay reading, yet to neglect reading them did not appear without loss. We have also frequently explained these. But we have added only what we have translated into Latin from the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament. We did not do this because we reject the labors of learned translators or because we want their writings to be jettisoned. Rather, we did this because it was neither easy for us to commit these translations to memory nor to give them exhaustive consideration. We also did this because we know that the most learned translators had expressed the same thing, since we learned from the same sources as they did.

It is possible, however, that we are mistaken in this. For these are the riches of the sacred Word, the depths of which cannot be exhaustively plumbed by a few talented men. Indeed, it often happens that one man sees this and another that, and each must express what he sees. Since I believe that this practice is especially appropriate, I have written in such a manner that I have meticulously cited the authors from whom I have learned. Of course, we do not explain the accounts of men in detail, although their works are most profitable to the church. Rather, we focus on what God has revealed to us by His Word, in diverse grace, one faith, and charity born among us in turn. As members of the same body, we are united, imitating the industry and faith of those who have shaped us by the Word of God from infancy. Fearing that the fruit of their instruction may not be returned by us *μετὰ προκοπῆς καὶ τόκου*, with increase and profit, let us learn from the image of the wicked servant who buried the talent. If we act like that man, we have already lost what we think we have and have not arrived at the mind of our fathers, who reared us in Christ.

At any rate, where the brevity of the previous edition appeared to leave something vaguely described, we have labored to remedy it with fuller discussion. No one will consider my sentences careless, but rather they will be taken for devotion to satisfy the reader, especially the beginner. For they consist of comparison of parallel ideas, explanation of terms, definitions and distinctions of matters, warnings, proofs for and connection of interrelated thoughts. Moreover, writing in such depth is another form of teaching, which makes something more drawn out. At the same time, I was afraid that I would hear again, “Critical brevity often does not profit.” Yet this will not happen, since more than one person has remarked that this was not composed for the wandering eye but for the mind that is attentive and free from distractions. The mind that will profit most from reading this must be constantly hindered and led away from straying thoughts and called back to *σύγκρασις*, *ἀναλογία*, and *ἀπόδειξις* (comparison, analogy, and exposition).

I wrote this book for the studious youth, dear reader, in order that, with your favor, you may succeed in aiding our efforts by your charity and prayers and may deem it worthy to produce good fruit. Now I pray again, begging God that

He will cause the light of His countenance to dwell upon us, that we all may truly know Him in Christ, that the fog of our minds may be lifted, and that we may cling faithfully to the Apostle of our confession to obtain the inheritance bequeathed in the eternal testament.<sup>4</sup>

I addressed you with these words in 1653. Before three or four years had passed after that, copies began to be desired, and a certain noble man decided to pay for this *Summa* to be published in a third edition. Nevertheless, I add nothing, except that I give thanks to God, because He did not desire our weak labor to be without fruit. At the same time, in this third edition, we have revised and expanded many things. For such was a concern to us. We now proceed, in writing, to teach. May God hereafter fulfill in us all what is written in Psalm 25:14, “The mystery of the Lord is for those who fear Him, and He makes His covenant known to them.”

Leiden, March 25, 1660

Yours with my utmost devotion,  
Johannes Cocceius

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4. Cf. Hebrews 3:1.



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THEOLOGICAL APHORISMS  
CONCERNING  
THE DOUBLE COVENANT  
OF WORKS AND OF GRACE  
MOST FIRMLY AND VIGOROUSLY  
PUT FORWARD

BY

JOHANNES COCCEIUS  
THEOLOGICAL DOCTOR OF SACRED SCRIPTURE



For all who would understand the counsel of God, taking pleasure in the words of His covenant and miraculous acts,<sup>1</sup> this book with kindness brings to light of day the faithfulness of our God and His trustworthiness. His faithfulnesses upon every creature are wondrous: His first covenant, His ways like searchers, His will to forgive and call sinners, pardoning the remnant of His inheritance.

A Redeemer at the fullness of times, He brings the Anointed One, the Prince of His covenant that He makes secure, work which is established for all who carefully seek the depths of the workmanship of His oath. Long ago, passing through a time of curse and ban and difficult statutes that were before, He turned from His anger and visited the vineyard that He loves in His compassion. The earlier times of darkness passed; light now shines and to Him shines those pursuers of righteousness, for they will not be ashamed who wait for His salvation. They are all the sons of the covenant and oath, lifted with joy from the fountain of salvation, in order that, to those who are near and those who are far, news of the faithfulness of our God and His trustworthiness may come.

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1. This page contains the translation of an unpointed Hebrew poem that Cocceius presumably wrote.

**Another**

Descendants of Adam, we were made heirs of his blood,  
And evil gathered strength through the laws themselves.  
That covenant was violated: And when He gave over  
Eve even to deceit, woe! Hands conquered to their damnation.  
As it happened, the divine image perished! And the race was not  
Led away from the Father without stain.  
However, lest by this the stipulation should hand over all of those  
Guilty from the sin of Adam together to eternal death,  
For His elect brothers, having destroyed sin, Christ  
Appeased the countenance of God, the Just Avenger.  
That is the nature of the covenant of Christ, which protects us its members  
And blesses us with saving knowledge.  
Death is from Adam but life is from Christ; they rise from the dead  
Who hold a part in that covenant of love.  
These covenants are thus recognized as distinct norms,  
Which, Cocceius, everything of this covenant is yours,  
Whoever strives to convey Jehovah with the whole mind,  
To him every page will give a vast offering.

—*F. Knuyt*

**Another of the same**

In fixed covenants, all things remain fixed under law,  
Whatever God has established:  
Nor is less held out to man in the account of salvation  
Than to marvel at the excellence of the counsel.  
For the mortal race has joined itself in fixed covenant  
From the beginning of the world.  
Constant obedience was to save  
And crown man:  
The fall stopped this, as did rebellion against the holy law  
And the weakness of the flesh.  
Therefore, that rigor, which justice, having been exacted exactly, denied,  
Grace supplied.  
The sure way of salvation is laid out and the new covenant led in  
By the blood of Christ;  
And the reconciled of God, the covenants of eternal peace,  
And the everlasting gift of grace.  
Not the hardships of works under condition and fear,  
But what faith alone seizes.  
This special fact of the Word and covenant,  
The glowing torch of this page displays.  
Men may betray others in covenants and destroy covenants,  
But God never betrays confidence.

—*A. Uchtmannus, Secretary of the Sub-Prefect*



## CHAPTER 1

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# *The Covenant of God in General*

- 1–4. Covenant, ברית, Διαθήκη
- 5–7. What Is the Covenant of God?
- 8. Whether It Exists
- 9–10. It Concerns the Whole Man
- 11. The Covenant Is Twofold

### **Covenant, ברית, Διαθήκη**

§1. Some derive “covenant” (*foedus*) from *treaty-making* (*feriendo*), others from *faith* (*fide*), still others from something else.<sup>1</sup> It is not surprising that *believing* (*fidens*) or *belief* (*fiducia*) should be derived from *πεποιθός* (that which is believed). Nevertheless, while we are discussing the *covenant of God*, the revelation of which is in the Scriptures, it should not be considered of great importance that the Latin word, rather than the Hebrew word for which it is appointed, prevails. The Hebrew word ברית, *berith*, is more commonly and more properly related to ברה, *to choose*, than to ברע, *to cut* (as Grotius thinks).<sup>2</sup>

Hence, an agreement of peace and friendship is asserted, having been initiated either before war, with things intact, or after the right of one party has been violated by another, or even after war. In any case, in all agreements there is *αἵρεσις* (choice) and *selection* of conditions from each party. In an agreement of friendship, however, one of the contracting parties chooses the other, welcoming it with love, and there is mutual benevolence and eagerness. Abraham made such a *covenant* with Mamre, [the brother of] Eschol and Aner (Gen. 14:13). The

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1. Unless otherwise noted, all words translated as “covenant” render *foedus*. In general, I have attempted to translate *foedus* as “covenant,” *pactum* as “pact,” and *testamentum* as “testament,” etc., following Brian Lee, “The Covenant Terminology of Johannes Cocceius: The Use of *Foedus*, *Pactum*, and *Testamentum* in a Mature Federal Theologian,” *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 14 (2003): 11–36.

2. Hugo Grotius (1583–1645) was a Dutch humanist, philosopher, and theologian. He espoused Arminian theology and was a frequent interlocutor of Cocceius.

LXX describes these elders as *συνωμάτας*, bound by oath, as it does Abimelech (Gen. 21:32) and Isaac (Gen. 26:28–29).<sup>3</sup> The law of the Israelites forbade them to make such a covenant with the Amorites (Ex. 34:12–13, 15; Deut. 7:2). Jonathan also had a covenant of mutual love and care with David (1 Sam. 18:3). From this is the *ברית שלום*, “covenant of peace” (Isa. 54:10), which came for the sake of *peace* (Zech. 11:10; Dan. 9:27). When Hugo Grotius compares that passage with *διαθήκη* (covenant) [in] Matt. 26:28, he sins grievously. For *καινή διαθήκη* (new covenant) does not signify a *new pact* or anything of the sort described in the words of Zechariah and Daniel. For in both writers that peace is understood that was throughout the whole world under Augustus and his successors and that was destroyed in the Jewish war, which was “the beginning of the birth pains” (Matt. 24:6–8). The covenant is said to hold with that thing that is safe from harm, which could be received by anything (Job 5:23; Hos. 2:17, or v. 18 in Junius’s edition, and v. 20).<sup>4</sup> There is also the passage that records the natural obligation to friendship (Amos 1:9). Moreover, there is a covenant between spouses (Mal. 2:14), “But she is your partner and the wife of your covenant,” or covenanted to you, to whom you are united and obligated by an immutable covenant and pact of love, care, and comfort.

§2. Such an agreement is established with a just and equitable stipulation and a promise sworn by both sides (see Gen. 21:23–31; Gen. 26:28–29, 31). Moreover, it is established in express words and commonly with memorable signs added. These signs often have the power to serve as a strong reminder of the general nature of the covenant and its sanction (e.g., what it is like to make a treaty, to slay an animal, to pass through the parts of an animal cut to pieces [Jer. 34:18]. See thoughts of this kind imported by Grotius on Matthew 26:38. That ceremony signified that the blood and life of the one covenanted becomes liable if he should fail, as in Jeremiah 34:20). In addition, signs serve as a strong reminder of the specific nature of the covenant by their likeness to the thing promised, as it will be demonstrated in the covenants of God.

§3. It is synecdoche when *covenant* is used for the law or precepts to which the promise has been annexed, just as it is said with “the ark of the covenant” (Num. 10:33; Josh. 4:18), in which were the tablets “of the covenant” (Deut. 9:15), containing “the words of the covenant” (Ex. 34:28). The same is the case when it says that, during the events that intervened, God “was making covenant” with His people (Ex. 34:27); that is, He was setting very great promises before them.

3. LXX, to which Cocceius frequently refers, is the abbreviation for the Septuagint, i.e., the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, which was completed in antiquity before Christ.

4. Cocceius makes reference to the Latin translation of the Hebrew Old Testament made by French Huguenot theologian Franciscus Junius (1545–1602).

It is likewise used when Adam is said “to have transgressed the covenant” (Hos. 6:7) and when the irrevocable promise was given (Isa. 59:21; Ex. 34:10), “Behold I make covenant with you,” that is, I bind myself with a voluntary promise, “before all your people I will do marvelous things that are not done in all the nations,” etc. For in the covenant there is both precept and promise. Indeed, God makes covenant by setting forth the law and the promise annexed to the law, and so He summons them to agree to the law and hope for the promise.

Elsewhere synecdoche is mixed with metaphor whenever the phrase *to make a covenant* appears (the Hebrews say, *to cut a covenant*, that is, to make a covenant after a part of the animal has been offered), signifying *to promise*, and indeed absolutely, i.e., to be granted apart from the law or a condition of the other party. For just as when the covenant is made, its author, agreeing to the conditions proposed, wills to obligate himself to stand by his promises, so also the one who promises frankly and simply gives to those to whom he promises the right to expect payment of their promises. For this point I provide the following examples where only the word “to cut” (*secare*) is used: 2 Chronicles 7:18, “And I will make your royal throne to stand as I have cut (that is, I have promised) with your father David, saying, ‘A man who has power in Israel will not be razed to the ground among you,’” Haggai 2:4–5, “I am with you; with the Word, which,” that is, “from which I have cut with you” (that is, “I have covenanted [*pactus sum*] with you what I have promised to you”), “when you came out of Egypt, and My Spirit stood in your midst,” and 2 Samuel 23:5, “For my house is not right with God, but He established an eternal covenant (eternal promise) for me, preserved and guarded in all things; He will be my whole salvation, εὐδοκία (desire), and affection, when my house will not sprout forth.”

There is a time when *covenant* signifies an irrevocable gift, as in Numbers 18:19, “All ἀφαιρέματα (holy contributions) I give to you, from the establishment of the world; it is a covenant of the salt of the earth in the presence of Jehovah and you,” that is, the gift is irrevocable. Such a gift may not be considered παλαίωσιν (obsolete) and abrogated, being so truly and constantly kept by God. Just as salt cannot go bad, the gifts of God never suffer ἀσήπτω (decay), since they are preserved. Analogous to this, elsewhere, for the sake of the decree and effective command, there must be compliance. In Jeremiah 33:20 [God said,] “If you should make ineffective My covenant of the day and My covenant of the night,” that is, the effective decree and command that the alterations of night and day are for all the days of the earth. [He speaks similarly in] Job 31:1, “I made covenant with My eyes” or before My eyes, that is, I have made a firm resolution, and I have promised as it were before My eyes.

§4. Διαθήκη, among Greek speakers and Hellenistic Jews (which is how we refer to the Jews who made use of the Greek language with some imitation of

the Hebrew idiom), was often used rather broadly. For it was also used in place of *συνθήκη*, pact. It is also related, however, to the Hebrew word *ברית*, *berith*, with the meaning of *testamentary disposition*, which is closer to the Greek word (Gal. 3:15) and clearer (Heb. 9:16; cf. Heb. 8:10). The LXX nearly everywhere rendered this for the Hebrew word *ברית*, because the latter is used more broadly than *συνθήκη*. For it was often used where agreement and pact had no place, as also were *διαθήκη* and *τὸ διατίθεσθαι*. For the sake of argument in Luke 22:29, Grotius takes this for the heading of the Gospels, although he is not consistent with that in his exposition of the passage. For there, in the case of this passage, he demonstrates that *τὸ διατίθεσθαι* has a broader meaning than *συντίθεσθαι*. Here, however, he explains the promise (*sponsionem*) under the condition of suffering or the awarding of glory by endurance of the thing to be acquired, and thus he uses *διατίθεσθαι*, to award by pact, which is *συνθήκην ποιῆσθαι* (to make a pact). In this passage, however, the will of God is indicated first, by which He decreed that the Son would obtain the inheritance and kingdom of the world from the divine power of the Father. The will of Christ is indicated second, that the apostles and others given to Him by faith would become heirs of righteousness, of both the heavenly kingdom and the kingdom on earth (see Gal. 3:8). Therefore the apostle wished to call the covenant of Abraham and Hebrews 8:10 a proclaimed *testament*. Whether in Matthew 26:28 and elsewhere it ought to be taken in this manner must be treated in its own place. See paragraphs 86 and §§470–75.

### What Is the Covenant of God?

§5. The covenant of God with man is different from those made by men among themselves. For men make covenants for mutual benefits. God, however, makes covenant for His people. Indeed, the *covenant of God* is nothing other than the divine declaration of the way of receiving the love of God as well as the union and communion of becoming a partaker in Him. If man makes use of this way, he is in the friendship of God, or, the Creator is his own. God is his own in a personal way (Gen. 17:7), and he is one spirit with God (1 Cor. 6:17), who is one with him (John 17:21). His is *סֵדֶךְ אֱלֹהִים*, the intimate fellowship of God (Ps. 25:14, cf. Job 29:4; John 14:23). The one who is outside of the covenant is *ἄθεος*, without God (Eph. 2:12). This *declaration*, taken from Hebrews 8:6, can rightly be called *θεία ἐπὶ ἐπαγγελίαις νομοθεσία*, divine legislation sanctioned in the promises. When it is attached to the application of the *testament* or the plan of the future inheritance (we discuss this application below in §179; §184), *νομοθεσία διαθήκης*, the legislation of the testament, or *διαθήκη νενομοθετημένη*, the testament according to the force of the covenant and law, is described.

§6. Therefore, the covenant of God with man is *μονόπλευρον* (one-sided), insofar as it is the design and arrangement of God alone concerning the way of receiving His love and benefits. Indeed, this is very similar to the way in which victors are accustomed to order their vanquished, masters their *ἀργυρωνήτοις*, slaves, and parents their children. Every covenant of God, however, is not so *μονόπλευρον* (one-sided) that obligation is entirely absent from the other party, as it is for instance when God makes covenant with day and night, obligating Himself by decree that the distinction between day and night would be preserved (Jer. 33:20; Gen. 8:22).

§7. The covenant of God is *δίπλευρον* (two-sided) or mutual, when man, clinging to God according to the law of the covenant, obligates himself *τῇ ὁμολογίᾳ*, by confession, to the force of the divine arrangement, as if to guarantee His love and benefits. Here I freely use a word that fully signifies what the apostle uses elegantly and powerfully (2 Cor. 9:13), “glorifying God” *ἐπὶ τῇ ὑποταγῇ τῆς ὁμολογίας ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ*, “on account of the obedience of your confession in the gospel” or “the preaching of Christ,” whom for this reason Hebrews 3:1 calls *τὸν Ἀπόστολον τῆς ὁμολογίας ἡμῶν*, the “apostle,” intercessor, and mediator, “of our confession.” Through Him we are certainly approved by the exacting God and assent and agree that we choose the way that He has revealed to us for communion with Him, our highest good, and the law that God brings to us. We in turn devote ourselves to God. Examples of this include the divine stipulation in Isaiah 45:22, “Look to Me, all the ends of the earth,” and the confession or *ὁμολογία* of man (Ps. 27:8), “For You” (that is, for Your sake, for You, O God), “my heart has said, seek My face” (as if he should say, “What you have made known to me in secret, my heart seals this, chooses this, for You my very soul and my eager will join this to your name and words, according to Your Word in which You command Your face to be sought), “Your face, Jehovah, I seek and will see”; my conscience is my witness that I shall seek Your face. The divine promise is found again in the words of Isaiah, “Look to Me, and *be saved*, all ends of the earth.”<sup>5</sup> *A good conscience* *τοῦ ὁμολόγουντος τῇ νομοθεσίᾳ*, of confession before the divine law, and promise creates *ἐπερώτησιν*, reciprocation, and *παρρησίαν* (confidence), by which we know that we receive from Him what we ask (1 Peter 3:21; 1 John 3:21–22). We glorify God by confessing and provide Him a means of boasting about us, just as God, by promising to those who confess, provides a means of boasting in Him. Let us learn this from Deuteronomy 26:17–19, which I express better in Greek, *τῷ Κυρίῳ ΠΡΟΣΕΥΧΗΜΕΝΟΙ ΕΠΕΤΡΕΨΑΣ ΛΕΓΕΙΝ ΠΕΡΙ* (compare the diction and the use of the letter *ἔ* in 1 Sam. 19:1; Ps. 106:26–27) *τοῦ γενέσθαι σοὶ Θεὸν, καὶ τοῦ*

5. Isa. 45:22.

πορεύεσθαι ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ, καὶ τοῦ τηρεῖν τὰ δικαιώματα αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ, καὶ τὰς κρίσεις αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὁ Κύριος ἤκουσεν ἐπέτρυσέ σοι λέγειν περὶ τοῦ γενέσθαι αὐτῷ λαὸν περιούσιον, καθὼς ἐλάλησέ σοι, καὶ περὶ τοῦ τηρεῖν πάσας τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ, καὶ περὶ τοῦ ποιῆσαι σε ὑψιστον πάντων ἔθνων, etc.<sup>6</sup> He looks back to what went before, when He had commanded that the Israelites offering their firstfruits and tithes approach God *παρρησία* (with confidence) and good conscience and earnestly seek His blessing. And He renders this account of His condition: as they move God in this boasting when they keep His statutes, so that He is called the God of them who walk in His ways, so God in turn gives them the *παρρησίαν* (confidence) of drawing near to His throne, to boast that they are the people of God, keep His precepts, have hope of the world being made subject to them, and are a people holy to God. John calls this *ἐξουσίαν τέκνα θεοῦ γενέσθαι* (John 1:12), that is, to claim, demand, and acquire for themselves the right that belongs to the children of God and to be received as the children of God (from whom they have been born, v. 13). Indeed, although this is from grace and the law of faith, nevertheless the same freedom and faith is born from the whole law that Job 23:4–7 calls *ἑλέγχους* (proofs). Compare Isaiah 1:18, “Come, come, let us reason together.” To those who turn themselves to Him in faith, He gives the right to draw near to Him, in order that in the presence of the Lord, as if for witness and example, their works may become manifest, and they may demand from Him remission of sins and all benefits. That promise is nothing other than *πληροφορία καὶ ὁμολογία τῆς ἔλπιδος*, “the full assurance and confession of hope” (Heb. 6:11; 10:23). For as in confession in the commandment of God, so also in confession in the promise or in the restatement of the promised benefits, there is obedience and *ὑποταγή* (submission). Indeed, the peculiar obedience in a certain covenant is hope.

### Whether It Exists

§8. *That there is a covenant of God with man naturally convinces even the most savage men of the following:*

1. There is a conscience or faculty seated in the soul from birth for distinguishing between those things that are *θεοπρεπῆ*, proper to God and worthy of God, and those that are unworthy of God, between those that are praiseworthy and those that are reproachable, between those that are licit and those that are illicit. Its judgment approves the

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6. “You have turned to the Lord to say that He is your God, that you will walk in His ways, keep His statutes, His commandments, and His judgments. And the Lord has turned to you to say that you are to be a chosen people for Him, as He proclaimed to you, that you are to keep all His commandments, and that He will establish you high above all nations, etc.”

law of God and goads it to do those things that are right and praiseworthy and to avoid the contrary, confirming deeds done justly and condemning deeds done wickedly (Rom. 2:15). Conscience, having been darkened in the sinner by the loss of divine illumination, various arguments, empty opinions, and also by proneness to evil, has been made impotent to present man holy. Nevertheless, it has not been destroyed entirely, so that it does not accuse sin, make it shameful, and give to man reason to seek a covering for sin, or quicken him to condemn the sin of another, teach him to produce just laws, or even give occasion for boasting after the pattern of one's innocence either with a show of zeal or as one less depraved. So it is a witness of the rectitude in which man was created (Eccl. 7:29). Rectitude, moreover, shows that the law has been revealed to man: "When the Gentiles not having the law, do the things which are of the law, although they do not have the law, they are a law unto themselves" (Rom. 2:14).

2. The will of man desires the true good, in which he could find pleasure and which is naught but God, longs for immortal life, and flees death. This desire in itself is naught but from the Creator Himself, drawing man to its fruition by the instinct of nature. If this is without effect, it does more to torment man than to delight him. The perfect Creator, moreover, undoubtedly did not wish to create man guilty of vain desire, for misery and torment. Nor can the same desire at the same time be good (compliant with the nature and will of God) and vain, as if it were not proper to God and yet in harmony with His will.
3. The daily and constant benefits by which man is stirred to seek His Creator and Benefactor, love Him, glorify Him, and give thanks to Him, are so powerful that they seem to proclaim, "Seek God" (Acts 17:27; 14:17; Rom. 1:21). His purity, however, allows Him to say to a certain one, "In vain you seek Me" (Isa. 45:18–19). Thus, Scripture makes it clear that it is necessary for those who walk with God to believe that God exists and rewards those who seek Him (Heb. 11:6).

### **It Concerns the Whole Man**

§9. God binds the whole man to Himself, that is, his soul and body (1 Cor. 6:19–20), even though the chief part is the soul offering its whole body and self as a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1), presenting all its members as servants of righteousness (Rom. 6:19). Thus, the soul offering the whole body (1 Thess. 5:23) is our *true* and *reasonable* worship (Rom. 12:1; John 4:23). For just as to honor God with the mouth only (Isa. 29:13) is to speak falsely about God (Ps. 66:3), so also to worship

God with no service of one's members is to be spiritually dead. Yet the body that is dead to fleshly lusts not only in external worship, but much more, that practices deeds of true virtue, is evidence of a life and soul that clings to God.

§10. Similarly, the benefit of the friendship of God is not only for the *soul* or *mind* of man (in that by which he judges, with the voice of the *heart* and *soul*, in that by which he desires, with the voice of the *mind*, clearly mentioned in several places [see Deut. 4:29; 6:5; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 4:12]). Rather, it is also for the *body*, namely, how we conduct ourselves, and therefore it pertains to *ὅλοτελῆ*, the whole, man (1 Tim. 4:8; 1 Thess. 5:23; 1 Cor. 15:44–46; 1 Cor. 6:19; 2 Cor. 4:10–11; Rom. 8:11).

### The Covenant Is Twofold

§11. The *covenant of God* with man is *twofold* according to opposing ways of receiving the love of God: *of works* and *of grace*. Indeed, Scripture sets these two ways of obtaining righteousness and thus all happiness in opposition, clearly indicating opposition between *works* and *faith*. This is because *faith*, which is considered among works, is not reckoned as a work and form of a powerful condition performed by man who keeps himself without swerving, to win over God, and has the word of *grace* adjoined, which faith receives as the cause of righteousness and from which it results. Romans 11:6, “If by grace, it is not according to works: otherwise it would not be grace” or *grace* would not be found. *If indeed it is according to works, there is no grace: otherwise work is not work*. Hence, two laws are mentioned, the “law of works” and the “law of faith” (Rom. 3:27), and the difference between them is finely (*subtiliter*) explained by the apostle in Romans 4:4–5, “To him who works, rewards will not be rewarded according to grace but according to debt. However, the one who does not work but trusts Him who justifies the wicked, his faith is reckoned for righteousness.” It is *faith* that believes that it is true that “the one who does these things will live by them.” These deeds pertain to *the covenant of works* but do not justify, because they only justify those who have done them. This faith condemns the one who does not do these deeds. For it is concluded that the one who has been condemned believes that he has been condemned. Therefore *faith*, which justifies, is “not of the one who works” but of the one who confesses that he is guilty and trusts “God, who justifies the wicked.”