Pierre Jurieu (1637–1713): The French Reformed Theology of Refuge

MARTIN I. KLAUBER
mklauber@tiu.edu
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

I have long contended that theological development must be evaluated in its historical context. Although I believe that Scripture reveals timeless truth, theology has been developed and shaped by historical events. This is why in my series of three books on French Protestant theology, I have divided the format by two categories—*historical context* and the *theological contributions* of key figures in the movement.[1] One of the most cataclysmic events for the French Huguenot movement took place at the end of the seventeenth century and can be compared to the Babylonian Captivity of Judah and the destruction of Solomon's Temple in 587 BC.

The Edict of Nantes was a royal decree issued by the King of France, Henri IV, in 1598. The decree provided some measure of religious toleration for the Huguenots. The edict remained in force from 1598 to 1685, when King Louis XIV revoked the decree and gave French Reformed pastors fifteen days to leave the country or convert to Roman Catholicism. Consequently, Louis XIV declared that Protestantism no longer existed in France. Furthermore, the king declared it illegal for Protestants to flee the country, even though about 150,000 people did so. Protestant places of worship were destroyed throughout France—including the magnificent church structure in Charenton, just outside of Paris. Of the approximately 870 Reformed pastors in France, about 680 chose to leave. The rest, however, stayed behind, for they were granted the opportunity to retire on a government-sponsored pension that required the abjuration of their Protestant faith.

1. Martin I. Klauber, ed. *The Theology of the French Reformed Churches: From Henry IV to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2014); Martin I. Klauber, ed. *The Theology of the Huguenot Refuge: From the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes to the Edict of Toleration* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2020); Martin I. Klauber, ed. *The Theology of the Early French Reform: From the Affair of the Placards to the Edict of Nantes* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2023).

The pastors who fled primarily found refuge in Holland, where many joined the Walloon congregations which needed more pastors to minister to the 35,000 French refugees. They had an abundance of good choices as there were about four hundred pastors who left France for the Dutch Republic.[2] The Walloons were a French-speaking people from Wallonia, a region in the southern part of the Netherlands (modern-day Belgium). Many of the Walloons converted to Protestantism and later fled to such places as Holland to escape religious persecution. The exiled Huguenots preferred to go to French-speaking churches and when the Huguenots were fleeing persecution, many joined the existing Walloon churches in Holland.[3]

The year 1685 proved an eventful one in England as well, when King Charles II died and was succeeded by his openly Roman Catholic brother, James II. Although James was fifty-one years old when he assumed the throne, his children remained Protestants and Parliament resisted his calls for tolerance for Roman Catholic worship throughout the land. In 1688, he had a son (also named James), whom he would raise as a Catholic. James was legally ahead in the line of succession to his Anglican sister Mary and her Protestant husband William of Orange. Suddenly, a real possibility developed that England would become a Roman Catholic nation.

During such political and religious turmoil, exiled Huguenot pastors saw an imperiled Reformed faith and needed to comfort their flocks that God remained in control. The most prominent of these refugee pastors was Pierre Jurieu, the so-called "Goliath of the Protestants."[4] According to Owen Stanwood, "Jurieu served as 'a gatekeeper of the Refuge,' and one of the key go-betweens linking ordinary refugees…to the avenues of power occupied by the Bishop of London or the Prince of Orange…. Alongside a network of pastors, military officers, and gentlemen stretching from London to Geneva, Jurieu attempted to organize and mobilize the masses of new arrivals who crowded into northern and central European cities. His first task was to seek the refugees' physical survival."[5]

2. Young Joon Chae, "*Beaucoup Plus Pasteur Que Théologien*: Huguenot Pastor and Professor Pierre Jurieu (1637–1713) and His Polemics in Context" (PhD diss., Westminster Theological Seminary, 2023), 76.

3. David van der Linden, *Experiencing Exile: Huguenot Refugees in the Dutch Republic, 1680–1700* (Farnham, U.K.: Ashgate, 2015), 2.

4. Guy Howard Dodge, *The Political Theory of the Huguenots of the Dispersion: With Special Reference to the Thought and Influence of Pierre Jurieu* (New York: Octagon, 1972), 11.

5. Owen Stanwood, *The Global Refuge: Huguenots in an Age of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 26; Chae, "*Beaucoup Plus Pasteur Que Théologien*," 53.

Jurieu was born in Mer, a town in the Loire Valley of central France. His father, Daniel Jurieu (1601–1663) served as a pastor there. His mother, Esther du Moulin (1604–1638), was the daughter of one of the most prominent Reformed theologians of the era, Pierre du Moulin (1568–1658). Jurieu married his first cousin, Hélène du Moulin (1644–1720), the daughter of Pierre du Moulin's son, Cyrus du Moulin (1608–ca. 1638), who served as a Reformed pastor at Châteaudun, a town southwest of Paris near the city of Orléans.[6]

After he was ordained (possibly in England), Jurieu returned to France to succeed his father as the pastor of the Reformed church in Mer. He enrolled in the Reformed Academy of Saumur, where he earned his Master of Arts degree in 1656. After completing his studies, Jurieu spent some time studying in Holland and then in England, where his two uncles resided—one of whom served as a priest at Canterbury Cathedral, the highest bishopric in the country.[7]

After receiving his doctorate at the Reformed Academy of Sedan in northeastern France, Jurieu became a pastor and professor of theology and Hebrew there in 1674. Ironically, his grandfather, Pierre Du Moulin (1568–1658), had held the same positions at the academy. However, Louis XIV ordered the school to close in 1681, so Jurieu left and served for the rest of his career as pastor at the Walloon church in Rotterdam and professor at the newly formed École Illustre.

The years immediately following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes were ones of sadness and hope for many of the Huguenots who fled abroad, especially those who fled to Holland. Hubert Bost has asserted that the Huguenots generally considered themselves as refugees from France, at least for the first ten years after they fled their homeland. Protestants were not technically exiles, says David van der Linden, for they left France of their own accord so that they could seek a better life where they could worship God freely. The only true exiles were the pastors who were expelled.[8] Many displaced Huguenots hoped that Louis XIV would change his mind or that God would personally intervene to bring the Huguenots back to their homeland. The hope for God's direct aid was bolstered in 1688 by

6. Hubert Bost, *Pierre Bayle* (Paris: Fayard, 2006), 117.

7. Harry M. Bracken, "Pierre Jurieu: The Politics of Prophecy," in *Continental Millenarians: Protestants, Catholics, Heretics*, ed. John Christian Laursen and Richard H. Popkin, vol. 4, *Millenarianism and Messianism in Early Modern European Culture*, International Archives of the History of Ideas 176 (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 2001), 85.

8. Van der Linden, *Experiencing Exile*, 10–11.

the Glorious Revolution in England when King James II, a Roman Catholic, was ousted and replaced with a Protestant monarch, William III. The Huguenots hoped that William would intervene and convince Louis XIV to allow them to worship in France as they saw fit.[9]

These historical factors helped shape many aspects of Jurieu's theology, particularly in his *eschatology*, his view of *religious toleration*, and his approach to *Nicodemism*.

Eschatology

As a bridge to his *Accomplissement des propheties* (1686), Jurieu not only identified the papacy with the Antichrist, but also argued that the Reformed churches were the two witnesses in Revelation 11, who would be resurrected after three and a half years. By insisting that the Reformed movement would eventually return to France, Jurieu provided hope and comfort for Reformed believers who had suffered there. Jurieu supported the clandestine assemblies being held in Languedoc, where hundreds flocked to hear lay preachers despite intense persecution. These meetings supported Jurieu's vision of the resurrection of the Reformed movement in France, as well as his beliefs in the popular sovereignty of the people.

As evidence of such a restoration, Jurieu pointed to many alleged miraculous events, such as the sounds of heavenly or angelic singing of the Psalms even though no one was present. A second group of miracles surrounded the activities of the young prophets in the Dauphiné, Vivarais, and Languedoc regions including the young shepherdess, Isabeau Vincent.[10] At the beginning of the *Accomplissement*, Jurieu set out his purpose to provide consolation for the "afflicted" churches in France by supporting the controversial appearance of prophecy among uneducated laypeople.[11]

Furthermore, Jurieu predicted that the overthrow of the Antichrist, who the Reformed identified with the papacy, would take place in 1689.[12]

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9. Hubert Bost, "L'Apocalypse et les Psaumes dans l'arsenal des *Pastorales* de Jurieu," in *Ces Messieurs de la R. P. R.: Histoires et écritures de Huguenots XVIIe–XVIIIe siècles*, ed. Hubert Bost (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2001), 178; Van der Linden, *Experiencing Exile*, 30.

10. Pierre Jurieu, *Lettres pastorales adressées aux fidèles qui gémissent sous la captivité de Babylon* (Rotterdam: Abraham Acher, 1688), 1:145; 3:59; F. R. J. Knetsch, "Pierre Jurieu: Theologian and Politician of the Dispersion," in *Acta Historie Neerlandica*, ed. J. Nordholt, W. Schulte, and D. van Arkel (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 218–21.

11. Pierre Jurieu, *L'Accomplissement des Propheties, ou La Delivrance Prochaine de l'Eglise* (Rotterdam: Abraham Acher, 1686), 1:3. See also Olivier Fatio, *Louis Tronchin: Une transition calvinienne* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2015), 567.

12. Hubert Bost, "Entre melancolie et enthousiasme: Pierre Jurieu, prophète de

In fact, he was so strident in labeling the papacy as the Antichrist that he called this belief a fundamental doctrine and questioned whether a person could be saved without believing it. Jurieu said that one would be confusing the kingdom of Christ with that of the Antichrist. He resolved, "Now is the time, when we must endeavor to open the eyes of the princes and the people of the earth; for, behold! The time is coming quickly when they are to eat the flesh of the beast and to burn it with fire; strip naked the whore of Babylon, tear off her ornaments, and make a full end of her, within a little while, great things must come to pass."[13]

In Jurieu's theology, the dragon is Satan, the beast is the Roman Empire, and the false prophet is the pope. There are two beasts mentioned in Revelation 13. The first, which has seven heads (representing the seven hills of Rome) symbolizes the Roman Empire *proper*, while the second, which has two horns, symbolizes the *religion* of the empire. Together, they symbolize the papacy.[14]

According to Hubert Bost, the most innovative aspect of Jurieu's apocalypticism was his interpretation of the two witnesses in Revelation 11. The French Huguenots, Jurieu taught, collectively were the witnesses who prophesized for 1,260 days under the reign of the Antichrist. At the end of this period, the beast who rises from the abyss kills them and openly displays their bodies for public view. After three and a half days, God brings them back to life and they ascend to heaven. The execution of the witnesses, Jurieu taught, represented the eradication of the French Protestants by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The key is that the bodies were never buried but remained in public view. For that reason, the true believers in France only appeared to be dead since they were not buried. Then a cataclysmic event would destroy one-tenth of the city, and the true French church would come back to life in glory and strength. The date of

l'Apocalypse," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français* 147, no. 1 (January–March 2001): 103–12; Jean Hubac, "Tyrannie et tyrannicide selon Pierre Jurieu," *Bulletin de la société de l'histoire du protestantisme français* 152, no. 4 (October–December 2006): 583–609; R. J. Howells, *Pierre Jurieu: Antinomian Radical* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963); Walter Rex, *Essays on Pierre Bayle and Religious Controversy* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1965); Elisabeth Labrousse, "Les Idées politiques du Refuge: Bayle et Jurieu," in *Conscience et conviction: études sur le XVIIe siècle* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1996), 135–237.

13. Jurieu, *L'Accomplissement*, 1:32.

14. Jurieu, *L'Accomplissement*, 1:205.

the death of the two witnesses would not be precise because it took place over a period of time, presumably during the era of the *dragonnades*.[15]

In his discussion of Revelation 14:14–20, Jurieu made a distinction between God harvesting the crops and then throwing the grapes into the winepress to make the vintage. The harvest represents the Protestant Reformation, while the vintage was the Reformation of his own time (the post-Reformation period). The persecution that the French Protestants endured was near a conclusion, Jurieu believed. He wrote,

> Now, the space of time that has already run out, since the reformation of the last age, does already equal the proportion of time, that is between the natural harvest and vintage: and consequently we must be very near the vintage, i.e. the time when God will begin the first blows, in order to complete the final destruction of the Babylonian kingdom. These things being so, this persecution must be the last, immediately after it shall be ended, we will begin the first events, which shall bring the popish kingdom to its final fall.[16]

The 1,260 years represent the reign of the Antichrist (the Roman papacy), but the key question was identifying the starting date. Jurieu proposed several possibilities—360 AD, 430 AD, or 450 AD—with a preference for the latter date. Jurieu preferred the starting date of 450 AD (during the papacy of Leo I) because that was around the time that the old Roman Empire fell in the West and was reconstituted under the papacy. As a result, the end date could be 1620, 1690, or 1710. Therefore, the end of this reign, Jurieu predicted, would come between 1710 and 1715. This would represent the harvesting of the crops that began with Luther and the Reformation.

At this point, France would break from the papacy and gradually, other countries would follow suit. The pope would take refuge in Spain, which would be the last country to abandon his rule. The end of the harvest period would be marked by the last great persecution of the true church as epitomized by the Reformed churches in France following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The reunion of Christendom under the flag of the Reformation would take place around 1740. The union would serve as a pathway for the non-Christian nations to rally to its cause since the pagan nations would not join a divided faith. These last forty-five years or

15. Bost, "L'Apocalypse et les Psaumes," 180. Jurieu, *L'Accomplissement*, 2:156–57.
16. Jurieu, *L'Accomplissement*, 2:148–49.

so would be analogous to the work of Judas Maccabeus who took forty-five days after the purging of the temple to prepare its vessels for dedication.[17]

The vintage would begin, Jurieu explained, around the year 1690. If one were to divide the 1,260 years of the reign of the anti-Christian empire into seven periods, that would make 180 years per period. If the last period of the reign started with Luther's posting of the *Ninety-Five Theses* in 1517, or the *Bull of Excommunication* by Pope Leo X in 1520, the vintage would start around 1700. Jurieu then subtracted ten years. He wrote,

> [I]n our climates, harvest ordinarily begins at the end of July, the vintage at the middle of September. The same proportion is everywhere found: where harvest begins sooner, the vintage begins sooner also. They are about fifty days distant from one another, or little more; let us take fifty, which is a sacred number, made up of seven times seven. Fifty days make the seventh part of the year, (which is the period of the sowing, budding, springing, growth, and whiteness of grains and fruits) only there are ten days over.[18]

Therefore, 1690 would mark the beginning of the period in which France would throw off the shackles of the papacy.[19]

Once the harvest reached its fullness, it would still take a few years for the vintage to be produced and the earthly reign of Christ to begin. If one adds seventy years, the beginning of Christ's physical millennial reign on earth would start around 1785. During the era of the vintage after the reign of the Antichrist ended, there would be a mass conversion of both Jews and Muslims by a miraculous appearing of Christ. In addition, all schisms and divisions among Christians would be dissolved and all would come together in unity.[20]

Religious Toleration

Typically, persecuted religious minorities support some form of religious toleration. In fact, the Edict of Nantes went beyond mere toleration and granted subsidies for the Reformed churches from public funds. Once the edict was revoked, Protestantism was no longer a legal or tolerated minority religion. One would think that Jurieu would argue that Protestants should be tolerated, and he did so. He based his argument, in part, on the idea that

17. Jurieu, *L'Accomplissement*, 2:60.
18. Jurieu, *L'Accomplissement*, 2:133.
19. Jurieu, *L'Accomplissement*, 2:133.
20. Jurieu, *L'Accomplissement*, 2:60.

the people of the country should be allowed to choose their religion, rather than a king with absolute power. The people, he argued, should be the ultimate source of state authority.[21]

In Holland, the state preferred Reformed churches to other groups, such as Roman Catholics, Mennonites, and Arminians (although the Dutch government still tolerated them). Jurieu, however, did not believe that such toleration should be extended to these disaffected groups. The reason he wanted religious toleration for Protestants was that he believed that the Reformed churches stood for the truth of the Bible rather than these other groups.[22] Jurieu wanted the state to enforce the Reformed faith because he believed that it was the one true faith. He was concerned, however, that granting religious toleration to other groups would promote heterodoxy.

However, Jurieu allowed for toleration in matters of secondary importance. He even extended tolerance to the Jews because of their importance in his eschatological system.[23] In accepting this position, he ran into conflict with his colleague at the *École Illustre*—the enigmatic Pierre Bayle (1647–1706). Bayle argued that one should be free to follow one's conscience, even if that conscience remained flawed. It would be pointless to try to force someone to believe against his or her conscience. For Bayle, to disobey one's conscience was sinful.[24] However, Jurieu noted that following an erring conscience could lead to all kinds of heterodox ideas. He wrote,

> If this principle is true that one never sins by following the movements of one's conscience, a man who has persuaded himself that tyrants must be killed: a papist who will be of the opinion of those who say that every prince who does not obey the Church must be exterminated, and that each particular person has the right to do so, may assassinate the sovereign without being guilty before God, and without one even having the right to oppose it. The ancient Gnostics were persuaded that the spiritual man could commit all sorts of

21. F. R. J. Knecht, "Pierre Jurieu: Réfugié unique et caractéristique: Récit d'une assimilation involontaire mais partielle," in *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français* 115, no. 4 (October–December 1969), 464.

22. Fiormichele Benigni, "The 'Hereticide': Freedom of Conscience and Popular Indignation in a Debate around Pierre Jurieu," Intellectual History Review 32, no. 2 (2002), 219–37.

23. Chae, "*Beaucoup Plus Pasteur Que Théologien*," 163; Jurieu, *Lettres pastorales*, 1:33.

24. Pierre Bayle, *A Philosophical Commentary on These Words of the Gospel, Luke 14:23, "Compel Them to Come in, That My House May be Full,"* ed. John Kilcullen and Chandran Kukathas (Indianapolis: Liberty, 2005), 220; Chae, "*Beaucoup Plus Pasteur Que Théologien*," 154.

> abominations without crimes; fornication, adultery, incest, sodomy, brutality. They were then obliged in conscience to commit these crimes, they were not guilty in committing them. One cannot help conceiving that this maxim is detestable in morality."[25]

Jurieu contended that if Bayle were correct, God would not be able to hold people accountable for all kinds of sins and heresies, if they were acting according to conscience.[26]

Furthermore, many suspected Bayle of having written a work entitled *Avis aux réfugiez sur leur prochain retour en France* (1690) under a Roman Catholic pseudonym. This work was critical of the Huguenots' response to the revocation. The author of the work accused the refugees of conspiring with Protestant powers abroad against the French king.[27] The work also criticized Jurieu's approach to popular sovereignty and denied that state authority lied in the people themselves rather than in the king.[28] Ironically, Jurieu's Reformed predecessors had supported the monarchy even during the Fronde under the young Louis XIV, but this occurred under the protection of the Edict of Nantes.[29]

To some extent, Bayle proved correct in his accusations. Many among the Huguenots in refuge in the Netherlands rallied around William III of Orange and clung to the possibility of promoting a Protestant holy war against Louis XIV.[30] Bayle held out hope that by supporting Louis XIV, the king might change his mind and welcome back the Protestant exiles to their homeland, where they would be free to worship as they pleased.[31]

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25. Chae, "*Beaucoup Plus Pasteur Que Théologien*," 164; Jurieu, *Le vray systeme de l'eglise & la veritable analyse de la foy* (Dordrecht: Theodore Goris, 1686), 191.

26. Pierre Jurieu, *Des droits des deux souverains en matière de religion, la conscience et le prince, contre un livre intitulé: Commentaire philosophique* (Rotterdam: Henri de Graef, 1687), 27–33.

27. Gianluca Mori, "Introduction," in Pierre Bayle, *Avis aux réfugiés: réponse d'un nouveau converti*, ed. Gianluca Mori (Paris: H. Champion, 2007), 10–23.

28. Bracken, "Pierre Jurieu," 87.

29. The Fronde was a series of rebellions by rebels among the French nobility, the general population, and the regional parliaments between 1648 and 1563 over taxation to support the French war with Spain. The term *Fronde* literally means "slings," and refers to the slings which the people in Paris used to hurl stones at the windows of the homes some of the supporters of the chief minister, Cardinal Mazarin (1602–1661). See Richard J. Bonney, *Society and Government in France under Richelieu and Mazarin, 1624–1661* (London: Macmillan Press, 1988).

30. Mara van der Lugt, *Bayle, Jurieu and the Dictionnaire Historique et Critique* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 72.

31. Van der Lugt, *Bayle, Jurieu and the Dictionnaire Historique*, 73.

Bayle argued that if Jurieu were in charge, intolerance would continue, only with the persecuted Reformed movement becoming the persecutors of others. Jurieu countered by insisting that the act of requiring someone to believe true doctrine is not in fact persecution since it would lead to that person's salvation.[32] The hostility between the two men grew more and more intense and Jurieu persuaded the city council to have Bayle removed from his position at the École Illustre in 1693.[33] Bayle would ultimately have his revenge on Jurieu exacted in his famous *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique*, wherein Bayle excoriated Jurieu time and again as a fanatic in both direct and more subtle ways.[34]

Nicodemism

The term *Nicodemism* comes from the Pharisee, Nicodemus, came to Jesus by night—presumably to escape the watchful eye of his religious colleagues (John 3:1–2). When someone lived in a country where the Reformed faith was illegal (like France in the seventeenth century), many chose to outwardly conform to Roman Catholicism while maintaining their true faith in secret. John Calvin addressed Nicodemism in his *Answer to the Nicodemites* (1544). Calvin considered it idolatrous to participate in the Mass. So, one had two choices: either flee the country to a place where one could worship freely or refuse to participate in idolatry and face the consequences. It seemed relatively easy for Calvin to provide such counsel while he lived in Geneva, but he had once been a Nicodemite himself before fleeing France in 1534. It should be noted that not all the Huguenots who fled did so immediately. Some stayed behind in France for a few years and attended the Mass before fleeing the country. Those who escaped to Rotterdam and wanted to join a Walloon congregation were required to confess their sin of Nicodemism before the consistory and then make a more public appeal for forgiveness.[35]

Jurieu wanted to encourage the Huguenots who stayed behind in France after the revocation to keep the faith. While in exile, Jurieu attempted to console them through his biweekly publication of the *Pastoral*

32. Dodge, *The Political Theory*, 174; Pierre Jurieu, *La politique du clergé de France: ou entretiens curieux de deux catholiques Romains, l'un Parisien et l'autre Provincial, sur les moyens dont on se sert aujour d'hui, pour destruire la religion protestante dans ce royaume* (Cologne: Pierre Marteau, 1681), 237.

33. Van der Lugt, *Bayle, Jurieu and the Dictionnaire Historique*, 71–77.

34. Van der Lugt, *Bayle, Jurieu and the Dictionnaire Historique*, 89–90.

35. Van der Linden, *Experiencing Exile*, 17.

Letters beginning in September 1686. As one of the most prolific writers of the dispersed Huguenot pastors after the revocation, Jurieu's *Pastoral Letters* stands out as one of his most important works of the period. Those left behind in France did not have any pastors and they had the difficult choice of either fleeing the country or converting to Roman Catholicism. However, it was illegal for the Huguenots to leave the country and, if caught, they could be arrested and sent to work as galley slaves in the French Navy. If they converted, they would be forced to attend the Mass even though they believed that it was idolatrous. Many of the Huguenots who remained behind in France tried to resist passively by not attending the Mass at all or by holding private devotionals. They were often subjected to increased pressure from the Intendants who tried to force them to attend the Mass and threatened to send their children to receive Catholic instruction.[36]

Nicodemites justified their stance by minimizing the differences between the Reformed faith and the Roman Catholic faith. Bishop Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet (1627–1704) contributed to this tendency with his own series of letters to these so-called *nouveaux convertis* (new converts) in support of Catholic doctrine. Jurieu responded in his letters by refuting Bossuet. He usually listed a copy of Bossuet's letters with his own refutations and pointed out that outward conformity would be an insult to God and damaging to the faith. Some preferred to attend just the sermons of the priests while skipping the Mass. However, Jurieu saw no difference between attending the sermon and participating in the Mass, for the continued attendance of Catholic sermons would inevitably influence the *nouveaux convertis* who would fall victim to their sophistries, lies, and deceptions. Jurieu advised them to meet in secret, read the Word of God, and pray together despite the risk.[37]

Jurieu argued that to conform outwardly would not just be an insult to God, but would also denigrate Protestants who were suffering in prison or serving as galley slaves on French ships. Jurieu provided lurid details of those who had been publicly mutilated, hung, burned, and yet they sang the Psalms on the way to their deaths, counting it a privilege to die for their faith. The joy that these martyrs showed amid such suffering served as a testimony to the truth of their faith. He pointed to entire congregations who were murdered by the dragonnades as they worshipped the Lord.[38]

36. Van der Linden, *Experiencing Exile*, 34.
37. Jurieu, *Lettres pastorales*, 1:77–78.
38. Jurieu, *Lettres pastorales*, 1:13–18.

Jurieu pointed to the thousands of Protestants who fled the country illegally. They needed to leave behind their homes, possessions, livelihoods, businesses, and sometimes even family members. He pointed to forty thousand who were apprehended and thrown into prison or who were forced to serve as galley slaves on French ships. Many of them were tortured brutally on the rack. Some were wealthy men, such as the Marquis of Bordage who was condemned to the galleys and, if he survived, to serve life in prison. They could have easily converted to Roman Catholicism, but they refused.[39]

In addition to those who fled, Jurieu pointed to the endurance of those who stayed behind and continued to profess their faith. He urged the Nicodemites to consider the Huguenots who found refuge in the Cévennes, a mountainous region in southern France. These believers, Jurieu pointed out, defied the French authorities by holding clandestine assemblies—even though many of them had lost their pastors to death or exile. God had raised up uneducated laypeople, even children, to teach and edify the faithful. Hundreds of believers met all night despite the real possibility that they would be discovered and arrested.[40] When they were caught, they would often sing the Psalms, such as Psalm 31:5. In French it reads,

> Mon ame en tes mains je viens rendre
> Car tu m'as racheté,
> O Dieu de verité![41]

Conclusion

The revocation of the Edict of Nantes, when many French Reformed pastors and laypeople fled France for Holland and other parts of Europe, provided their theologians an opportunity to explain why they believed God had allowed such a tragedy. It was not uncommon for them to look introspectively for personal sin and poor motives. They continued to encourage those who remained in France to keep the faith during times of persecution. Other theologians besides Jurieu attempted to make sense of the circumstances and to provide hope for a brighter future. For example, Jacques Basnage (1653–1723), who fled from Rouen to Rotterdam as Jurieu's fellow pastor, composed his *Lettres pastorales* to comfort his compatriots in France.[42] Another example is Daniel de Superville (1657–1728)

39. Jurieu, *Lettres pastorales*, 1:14.
40. Jurieu, *Lettres pastorales*, 1:70–71.
41. Jurieu, *Lettres pastorales*, 1:81.
42. Jacques Basnage, *Lettres pastorales sur le renouvellement de la persecution, ou*

who went to Rotterdam where he published his work entitled *On the Duties of the Afflicted Church* (1691).[43] The unique circumstances of persecution and forced exile in France provided the occasion for French Reformed pastors and theologians to frame their theology, as well as to accommodate the emerging needs of both those were left behind in France and those who had fled.

Exhortation à la Pérsevérence (Rotterdam: Abraham Archer, 1698). See Martin I. Klauber, "The *Lettres pastorales* of Jacques Basnage (1653–1723)," in *The Theology of the Huguenot Refuge*, 183–200.

43. Daniel de Superville, *Douze lettres de l'eglise affligée* (Rotterdam, 1691). See Martin I. Klauber, "Daniel de Superville (1657–1728) and the Theology of Comfort," in *The Theology of the Huguenot Refuge*, 225–40.