

# The Auchensaugh Renovation of the National Covenant and eBook

## The Auchensaugh Renovation of the National Covenant and

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# Contents

<a href="#">The Auchensaugh Renovation of the National Covenant and eBook.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Table of Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">7</a>
<a href="#">Page 1.....</a>	<a href="#">8</a>
<a href="#">Page 2.....</a>	<a href="#">10</a>
<a href="#">Page 3.....</a>	<a href="#">11</a>
<a href="#">Page 4.....</a>	<a href="#">13</a>
<a href="#">Page 5.....</a>	<a href="#">15</a>
<a href="#">Page 6.....</a>	<a href="#">16</a>
<a href="#">Page 7.....</a>	<a href="#">17</a>
<a href="#">Page 8.....</a>	<a href="#">18</a>
<a href="#">Page 9.....</a>	<a href="#">19</a>
<a href="#">Page 10.....</a>	<a href="#">20</a>
<a href="#">Page 11.....</a>	<a href="#">21</a>
<a href="#">Page 12.....</a>	<a href="#">22</a>
<a href="#">Page 13.....</a>	<a href="#">23</a>
<a href="#">Page 14.....</a>	<a href="#">24</a>
<a href="#">Page 15.....</a>	<a href="#">25</a>
<a href="#">Page 16.....</a>	<a href="#">26</a>
<a href="#">Page 17.....</a>	<a href="#">27</a>
<a href="#">Page 18.....</a>	<a href="#">28</a>
<a href="#">Page 19.....</a>	<a href="#">29</a>
<a href="#">Page 20.....</a>	<a href="#">30</a>
<a href="#">Page 21.....</a>	<a href="#">31</a>
<a href="#">Page 22.....</a>	<a href="#">32</a>



Page 23..... 33  
Page 24..... 34  
Page 25..... 35  
Page 26..... 36  
Page 27..... 37  
Page 28..... 38  
Page 29..... 39  
Page 30..... 40  
Page 31..... 41  
Page 32..... 42  
Page 33..... 43  
Page 34..... 45  
Page 35..... 46  
Page 36..... 47  
Page 37..... 48  
Page 38..... 49  
Page 39..... 50  
Page 40..... 51  
Page 41..... 52  
Page 42..... 54  
Page 43..... 55  
Page 44..... 56  
Page 45..... 57  
Page 46..... 58  
Page 47..... 59  
Page 48..... 60



[Page 49..... 61](#)

[Page 50..... 62](#)

[Page 51..... 64](#)

[Page 52..... 65](#)

[Page 53..... 66](#)

[Page 54..... 67](#)

[Page 55..... 68](#)

[Page 56..... 69](#)

[Page 57..... 70](#)

[Page 58..... 71](#)

[Page 59..... 72](#)

[Page 60..... 73](#)

[Page 61..... 74](#)

[Page 62..... 75](#)

[Page 63..... 76](#)

[Page 64..... 77](#)

[Page 65..... 78](#)

[Page 66..... 79](#)

[Page 67..... 80](#)

[Page 68..... 81](#)

[Page 69..... 83](#)

[Page 70..... 84](#)

[Page 71..... 85](#)

[Page 72..... 86](#)

[Page 73..... 87](#)

[Page 74..... 88](#)



[Page 75..... 89](#)

[Page 76..... 90](#)

[Page 77..... 91](#)

[Page 78..... 92](#)

[Page 79..... 93](#)

[Page 80..... 94](#)

[Page 81..... 95](#)

[Page 82..... 96](#)

[Page 83..... 97](#)

[Page 84..... 98](#)

[Page 85..... 99](#)

[Page 86..... 100](#)

[Page 87..... 101](#)

[Page 88..... 102](#)

[Page 89..... 103](#)

[Page 90..... 104](#)

[Page 91..... 105](#)

[Page 92..... 106](#)

[Page 93..... 107](#)

[Page 94..... 109](#)

[Page 95..... 111](#)

[Page 96..... 113](#)

[Page 97..... 114](#)

[Page 98..... 115](#)

[Page 99..... 116](#)

[Page 100..... 117](#)



Page 101..... 118  
Page 102..... 119  
Page 103..... 120  
Page 104..... 121  
Page 105..... 122  
Page 106..... 123



# Table of Contents

Section	Table of Contents	Page
Start of eBook		1
Produced by Jordan Dohms and PG Distributed Proofreaders		1
FOOTNOTES:		3
THE AUCHENSAUGH RENOVATION.		3
HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION.		4
FOOTNOTES:		93
ACT OF COVENANT RENOVATION, BY THE		95
AFTER THE APPROVED EXAMPLE OF OUR FATHERS, AT COVENANT RENOVATION.		95
PREFACE.		95



# Page 1

## Produced by Jordan Dohms and PG Distributed Proofreaders

The Auchensaugh renovation  
*of the  
national covenant and solemn league and covenant;  
with the  
acknowledgment of sins and engagement to duties,  
as they were  
renewed at Auchensaugh, near Douglas,  
July 24, 1712.*  
*(Compared with the editions of Paisley, 1820, and Belfast, 1835.)*  
Also,  
*the renovation  
of these  
public federal deeds  
ordained at Philadelphia, October 8, 1880,  
by the  
reformed presbytery,  
with accommodation of the original covenants, in both transactions,  
to their times and positions respectively.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Philadelphia 1880.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Preface.*

The Reformed Presbytery, at a meeting in Philadelphia, October 6th 1880, “*Resolved,* That another edition of the Auchensaugh Deed be published,” and appointed the undersigned a committee “to attend to this business with all convenient speed.”

This Presbytery, after forty years’ experience, during which opportunities have been afforded for examining the opinions and practices of all parties, professing any regard for the Covenanted Reformation, is still deeply impressed with the conviction that the transaction at Auchensaugh 1712, is the only faithful renovation of our Covenants, National and Solemn League. The fidelity of our fathers in that hazardous and heroic transaction, it is believed, has ever since been the *occasion* (not the *cause*) of all opponents manifesting their hostility to the whole covenanted cause, by first assaults upon that detested Bond. And that this is the real state of the case we proceed to prove by the following historical facts. *First.*—In connection with remodeling the Testimony; or



rather by supplanting it in 1806, the Terms of Communion, without submitting an overture, were also changed to harmonize with *Reformation Principles Exhibited*, by excluding the Auchensaugh Renovation from the fourth Term, where it had stood for nearly a century. The same party have for years excluded from their abstract of Terms the *Covenants themselves*. *Second*.—In Scotland this faithful document was expunged in 1822, obviously to prepare the way for the adoption of a "*New Testimony*"(!), which appeared 1837-9. The majority of the actors in that work who survive, are now in the Free Church!

## Page 2

*Third.*—At the time when defection was progressing in the R.P. Synod of Scotland, the sister Synod of Ireland strenuously resisted an attempt to remove the foresaid Bond from its place in the Terms. The Rev. Messrs. Dick, Smith and Houston in 1837, were faithful and successful for the time in resisting that attempt. Mr. Houston “*would ever resist any alteration* in respect of the Auchensaugh Bond, regarding the objection laid against it as in reality aimed at the Covenants themselves.” Yet as a sequel to their Renovation of the Covenants at Dervock 1853, the Auchensaugh Bond was subsequently “shown to the porch”—removed from the Terms! *Fourth.*—At what was called covenant-renovation at Pittsburgh 1871, we believe no one spoke in behalf of their fathers’ noble achievement in 1712. Indeed this could not be rationally expected in a body who could tolerate members vilifying the very Covenants which they pretended to renew. *Fifth.*—Other parties farther removed from the position of their reforming progenitors; but who still claim ecclesiastical affinity with John Knox, and commonly prefix to the symbols of their faith the historical word *Westminster*, give very strong expression to their feelings of hostility—not to the Auchensaugh Bond, of which probably they never heard, but to the British Covenants expressly; yea, to the very ordinance of public social covenanting itself. But we shall let them speak for themselves. One Doctor of divinity is reported as saying—“I am opposed to the whole matter of covenanting. Covenants do an immense sight more harm than good. Those Scotch Covenanters brought persecution upon themselves by their covenants.”[1]

Another Dr. said, “I have always been opposed to covenanting. One generation of God’s people have no right to enter into bonds that entail obligations upon future generations.”[2] A third Dr. said, “I hold it is a sin for men to go into the august presence of God and enter into covenant with him. It is base presumption.”[3] A fourth Dr. said, “I hold that the church as an organization is not a responsible moral agent. Neither is the nation!” These sentiments may well excite astonishment and alarm, when proclaimed by accredited teachers of morality and religion. *Sixth.*—Seceders have all along their history claimed to be the sole heirs of the Scottish covenanted inheritance. They are not ignorant of the Auchensaugh Renovation. How they view that transaction may be best ascertained from their own language. The *Original Secession Magazine* for November 1880, p. 861, speaks thus, “The distinction drawn between ‘Covenanters’ and ‘Seceders,’ we have shown to be groundless. Are Reformed Presbyterians covenanters at all? There is not an *actual* Covenanter among them. They renewed the Covenants after a fashion in 1712. In our view the Covenants were not renewed, they were only mangled,” &c. These sentiments are sufficiently strong and explicit to be intelligible.

## Page 3

The writer's feelings evidently interfered with judicial discrimination, while openly expressing that hostility to the Auchensaugh Bond which is concealed by others. The Rev. John McMillan, whom the Lord honored to take the lead at Auchensaugh, is especially branded by this writer who asserts,—“he did not secede and retire, he was expelled; nor was the position of his early associates in the ministry of the purest water.” Moreover, this writer asserts “that they (Seceders) have actually renewed the Covenants, from time to time, during the whole period of their existence.” How could this be, since Seceders have all along rejected “the civil part of the Covenants?” But these documents bear on their face a direct aim at personal, domestic, ecclesiastical, and civil reformation. No party can intelligently and honestly renew the National Covenant and Solemn League, while eulogizing the “Glorious Revolution” of 1688, while in allegiance to the British throne—that “bloody horn of the beast;” or whose political principles will identify them with any other horn which may have power to scatter “Judah.” Zech. i: 21.

We have thus attempted by an induction of particulars, as concisely as we could, to point out existing opposition to our Covenanted Reformation, by various parties who assail the British Covenants directly, or by a first assault upon the Auchensaugh Bond, would reach a fatal stroke at the Covenants themselves. We believe with our predecessors that those who reject the Auchensaugh Renovation, by logical necessity will relinquish the Covenants themselves.

The reader may be assured that neither we nor the Reformed Presbytery, whose committee we are, claim Papal infallibility or Christian perfection; nor do we ask implicit faith in any uninspired documents. But we sincerely believe ourselves that the Auchensaugh Renovation and the Bond, to which the foregoing statements are prefixed, will be found on examination to be sound, faithful, and “in nothing contrary to the word of God.”

DAVID STEELE,  
ROBERT ALEXANDER,  
JOHN CLYDE.  
*Committee*

## FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote 1: This gentleman does not seem to know that infidels use similar argument against Christianity. Or, did he never read—“I came not to send peace on the earth, but a sword.” His logic also is as faulty as his theology—*non causa pro causa*.]



[Footnote 2: On what principle does this minister dispense the ordinance of baptism to subjects in their minority? Is baptism a mere ceremony, involving no obligation upon the children of believers? Gen. xvii: 14.]

[Footnote 3: No *presumption*, when graciously invited to do so. Is. lvi: 4, 6, 11. This teaching tends to the subversion of social order—the moral order of the universe. 2 Pet. ii: 10.]

\* \* \* \* \*

## **THE AUCHENSAUGH RENOVATION.**



## Page 4

THE NATIONAL COVENANT AND SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT, WITH THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SINS AND ENGAGEMENT TO DUTIES: AS THEY WERE RENEWED AT AUCHENSAUGH, NEAR DOUGLAS, 24th JULY, 1712, WITH ACCOMMODATION TO THE (THEN) PRESENT TIMES.

PSALM lxxvi: 11. Vow and pay unto the Lord your God.

ISAIAH xxiv: 5. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof: because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.

EZEK. xvii: 18. Seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant (when, lo, he had given his hand), and hath done all these *things*, he shall not escape.

2 TIM. iii: 3. Truce-breakers—or Covenant-breakers.

### HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION.

It is the ineffable product of eternal love, and infinite condescension in God toward his rational creatures, that ever he was pleased to make a covenant with them, and not to command and require obedience to his holy and just will, by virtue of his most absolute supremacy and rightful dominion only; but even to superadd sweet and precious promises, as a reward of that obedience, which he might of right have required, without giving any such incitements or persuasives to it. And as no tongue of men or angels is sufficient to express, no strength of imagination to conceive, no sublimity of intellectual faculties to comprehend the depth of that spring, and breadth of that ocean of unbounded love, which hath exerted itself in God's covenanting with man; yea, with sinful man, by means of a Mediator: so shall it always afford matter of wonder and admiration to all finite and intelligent beings, to the ages of eternity, and shall never be comprehended by any, but by him whose understanding is infinite; wherefore He, who is all-sufficient and self-sufficient, should invite, yea, press and entreat unworthy indigent nothings, the sinful children of men to such an incomparable degree of honor, dignity and advancement, as that is, to enter into a covenant relation, and come into a solemn treaty of peace and conjunction with Him, who is infinitely removed beyond all blessing and all praise. To have this invitation, is indeed the honor and privilege of all within the visible church, to whose ears the joyful sound of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ hath come; but few are so wise as to accept and approve it. Many, too many, account themselves unworthy of this honor, and by despising this privilege, and rejecting this dignity, deprive themselves of the greatest happiness; but as all nations, upon whom the day-star of the gospel hath arisen, have had the invitation to this duty, and all sound and real believers have actually participated of this honor, to have God making a covenant with them, and they striking hands with Him through a Mediator (which covenant is

commonly termed the *Covenant of Grace*,) so these three kingdoms of Scotland, England and Ireland



## Page 5

conjunctly, and Scotland by itself, as an independent nation, had in an eminent way and manner the honor, above most nations in the world, to dedicate and surrender themselves to the Lord, by a most voluntary, free and deliberate choice, and to come under the bond of a most solemn oath, in a most religious manner, devoting their all to Christ, his interest and honor, the flourishing and thriving of his kingdom, the success of his gospel, and reformation of his churches; and openly avouching him for their Lord and Master, to the honor of his name, and confusion of his enemies; which *Covenants National* and *Solemn League*, though we look not upon them to be the same with the covenant of grace, yet we conceive of them as a solemn superadded and new obligation, tying us to all the duties, as well of a particular Christian conversation, as these which tend to the public and national advancement of reformation in religion, whereof the covenant of grace is the spring and foundation.

These covenants, as they were the effects and consequents of many remarkable and signal expressions of divine love and goodness, many singular mercies and deliverances vouchsafed to these nations, as the return of many earnest prayers and wrestlings of the Lord's people with him; so they were the occasions of many blessings, and great indications of God's favor and loving-kindness. Then the Lord delighted to dwell in the nations; then did he beautify the place of his sanctuary; then did he fill his people's hearts with joy and gladness, by the familiar intimations of his special love and down pourings of his Spirit's gracious influences, as our land can afford many instances. Then did he enlarge his people's affections, and animate their spirits with zeal and courage, attended with knowledge, prudence and discretion to act for him, and advance his kingdom. Then did he illustrate his churches in these kingdoms, as bright and sparkling stars arising out of the thick clouds of antichristian darkness, and getting out from under Prelatic and Erastian yokes of bondage and slavery, and made them go forth as the meridian sun glorious and excellent; *terrible as an army with banners*. Hence it came to pass that these nations sent out a savory report to all the neighboring reformed churches, a report which comforted, revived, strengthened, animated and encouraged all the true and loyal subjects of Christ's kingdom; which struck terror and amazement to the hearts of his enemies; which shook and caused to tremble the pillars of Antichrist's kingdom, and disquieted the very foundations of the *seat of that beast*; which made malignants at home and abroad to be ashamed and confounded, and even forced the haters of the Lord to *feign submission to him*. Numberless were the advantages and privileges which did redound to these nations by, and were the lovely attendants and sweet consequents of, these covenants; whereby God did set to his seal of approbation, and

## Page 6

gave clear evidence and demonstration of his acceptance of his people's cheerful and willing adventures in this duty of covenanting with him: and as these blessings and mercies, which, as the dew of Hermon, were distilled upon his people's heads and hearts, while they abode steadfast with him, and faithful in his covenant were so many irrefragable proofs of his acquiescence in their first and laudable undertakings; so the many sad and fearful plagues, distractions, confusions and miseries, which have attended and followed the many gross breaches and violations of these covenants and departures from God, are no less evident discoveries, undeniable signs and pregnant convictions of the Lord's most just displeasure and indignation with the bypast and present courses of revolting and backsliding from him; which courses of declension and grievous apostatizing from God and his covenant, all the three kingdoms and in special this nation, and every individual therein capable of such a work, are, without all controversy, called to bewail and confess before God, and by speedy amendment to turn from them, in order to avert judgments, and turn away justly impendent wrath and long threatened strokes.

The consideration of these blessings and benefits, on the one hand, which followed the zealous entering into, and sincere performing of these sacred oaths; and upon the other hand the sense we desire to retain of the plagues and curses, threatened by God in his word against covenant-breaking inflicted upon covenant-breakers in former ages, and foreign nations, and visibly impending upon us in these nations, for our perfidious dealing in God's covenant; hath moved us a *poor insignificant handful of people*, unworthy indeed to be called the posterity of our zealous reforming ancestors, though heartily desirous to be found adhering to the same standard of doctrine, worship, discipline and government to which they adhered, to attempt this solemn and weighty duty of renewing (in our capacities and stations) these covenant obligations, that we might at least give some discovery of our respect to the cause of God, for the advancement and preservation whereof these covenants were first entered into, and afterwards again and again renewed by our religious progenitors, and by the whole representative body of the three kingdoms, who had any zeal for the interest of religion. And that we might, for our parts, be in some measure instrumental to transmit a testimony for the work of God in our land to the succeeding generation. Neither do we want, besides these general motives, some special inducements to this undertaking. As 1. Because these national covenants, having been nationally broken, and their funeral piles erected by wicked and perfidious rulers in the capital cities of the kingdom, with all imaginable ignominy and contempt, have long lien buried and (almost) quite forgotten under these ashes; most people either hating the very name and remembrance of them, or at least being ashamed

## Page 7

honorably to avouch their adherence to them, and afraid to endeavor a vigorous and constant prosecution of the duties contained in them: So that it is high time that every one should do his utmost towards a reviving of them. 2. Because many openly declare their sorrow and grief that ever these covenants should have been entered into: malignants calling them a conspiracy, attributing every miscarriage of the persons engaged in them to the covenants themselves as their native effects; and others, who would take it ill to be called malignants, making them the causes of all the tyranny, rapine, bloodshed and persecution of the late reigns, as having raised the spleen of the enemies of religion, and accounting it safer that they should lie still in their graves, than that they should irritate malignants any more by their resurrection.[4] Therefore we judge it our duty to renew them, that we might evidence, that notwithstanding all these malicious calumnies and false consequences cast upon them, we are still of the same judgment with our reformers, that they are the most sovereign means, under the blessing of God, for the reviving and preserving the work of God in the land. 3. Because of the courses that are carried on in direct opposition to these covenants; the nations, formerly cemented in peace and love in conjunction with truth and righteousness, having broken these bonds, and united themselves upon another footing, by the late sinful incorporating union: and imposing new oaths in opposition to the covenant; such as abjuration, &c. granting license, protection and toleration to all the evils abjured in the covenant; as heresies and errors in doctrine, superstition in worship, Prelacy and Erastianism in government, and overthrowing all good discipline. 4. Because of our own sinful miscarriages in, and woful declinings from our covenanted duties, our proneness to break covenant with God, and to be indifferent, lax, negligent and unsteadfast in the cause and work of God, and to be led away with the error of the wicked, and to fall from our steadfastness; wherefore we thought it necessary to bind ourselves by a new tie to the Lord, and one to another in a zealous prosecution of covenanted duties, that the covenant might be as a hedge to keep us from running out into the paths of destroyers. 5. We being sincerely desirous and having an earnest longing to celebrate the sacred ordinance of the Lord's Supper, whereof many had unjustly called us despisers and contemners, and finding it to have been the laudable practice of the church of Scotland formerly, that all such as were admitted to that holy table should swear and subscribe the covenant before their coming thereunto; we judged it a fit preparation for our receiving a sacramental confirmation of God's covenanted love and favor to us, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that we should avouch Him for our God, and testify our adherence to His cause and truth, by our renewing our national covenants with Him.



## Page 8

Upon these and the like weighty considerations we resolved to set about this solemn and tremendous duty; and being assured that we have no sufficiency in ourselves for any such undertaking, after frequently imploring the Lord for light and direction, strength and assistance, and seeking for ourselves a right way in the performance of the duty, upon days of humiliation, both in our private societies and publicly in the fields, we did condescend upon the following *acknowledgment of sins*, the more to enable us to remember our own and the land's breaches of covenant, in our solemn public confession thereof; and did draw up the following *engagement to duties*, not to superadd any new oath and obligation to the covenants, but only to adjust the articles of the covenant to the circumstances of the time, and to explain in what sense the covenant binds us against the present evils that are now prevalent in the land, and to the contrary duties. As for the covenants themselves, we made no material alteration in them, as judging it a work more proper for an assembly of divines, or representative body of church and state (had they been upright and faithful in this cause) than for us, who, as we are called by others in contempt, must own ourselves in truth to be, *but a handful of weak and most illiterate people*, and but as babes in comparison of the first framers of our covenants; only that we might make them in some measure accomodable to the present lamentable circumstances, whereinto we are involved by our iniquities, we have annotated some few necessary alterations upon the margin, wherein the judicious will find that we have in nothing receded from the scope and substance of the covenant, but only in the phrase; for instance, where the covenant binds to *the defence and preservation of the king's majesty and government*, in regard we have no king nor supreme civil magistrate so qualified, as God's law and the laudable laws of this realm require, to whom we might, for conscience sake, subject ourselves, in a consistency with our defending the true reformed religion in all its parts and privileges: Therefore, we can only bind ourselves to *defend and preserve the honor, authority and majesty of lawful sovereigns, or supreme magistrates, having the qualifications aforesaid, when God shall be pleased to grant them to us*. Where no judicious person will say that there is any substantial alteration as to the *matter of the duty*, but only as to the object to whom the duty is to be performed; there being none such in being as can justly claim, or to whom we may with a good conscience pay such an allegiance.

Having mutually agreed concerning these prerequisites to this sacred action, that the same might be orderly gone about, and might not be performed in a clandestine way, so as to preclude any upright-hearted friends to the covenanted reformation from joining with us in that so necessary a duty, there was public intimation made of the design a competent space of time before, upon a day of humiliation, and likewise upon the Lord's day immediately preceding the work.

## Page 9

As for the particular way and manner, method and circumstances of the work, we had not given any narrative of them; but that some, who came with an evil eye, to spy out our liberty, for criticizing, not for joining or profiting, have in part misrepresented the same, and may further do so; therefore, to obviate all such misreports, we have thought fit to make this brief relation thereof.

Upon Wednesday, July 23d, those who had the work in design being met together, the minister began the day's work with prayer for special assistance to attain due preparation, and a suitable frame, throughout the whole solemnity: and thereafter had a prefatory discourse to the people, showing the nature of the work in general, its lawfulness, expediency, and necessity, from scripture precedents and approven examples of the people of God, adducing the 9th chapter of Ezra, Neh. Ezek. Dan. and Neh. x. 28, 29, for proof thereof; and of the day in particular, that it was a day of fasting and supplication, with preaching of the word, in order to preparation for the solemnities intended, both of renewing the covenants and celebrating the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. After which a part of the lxxviii. Psalm, from the 5th to the 12th verse being sung, Mr. John M'Neil, preacher of the gospel, had a sermon upon Jer. 1. 4, and 5. "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, saying, Come and let us join ourselves to the Lord, in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten." From which text he raised and prosecuted largely, and particularly the two following observations, as most pertinent for the work of the day; the first implicitly supposed, the other more explicitly asserted in the words; viz. 1. *That, a people in covenant with God may be forgetful of and deal falsely in their covenant; or that covenant-takers may be covenant-breakers.* 2. *That, it is the duty of a people who have broken covenant with God to engage themselves again to the Lord by the renovation of their covenant.* Where in prosecuting the former, he showed by what gradual steps of declension a people usually come to deal falsely in God's covenant, such as, (1.) By forgetfulness, Deut. iv. 23. There being a connexion between forgetting and forsaking, or dealing falsely in God's covenant, so the church intimates, Psal. xlv. 17, 18. "All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant; our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way." And the returning remnant of Israel being sensible of this connexion, resolve to bind themselves to the Lord *in a perpetual covenant that may not be forgotten.* (2.) By seeking shifts and arguments to elude and evade the obligation of the covenant and to defend



## Page 10

the breaches thereof; which is after vows to make inquiry. (3.) By despising the bond of it; Ezek. xvi. 59. "Which hast despised the oath in breaking the covenant." (4.) By defection to the iniquities which are sworn and engaged against in the covenant, Jer. xi. 10. "They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to hear my words; and they went after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant, which I made with their fathers." (5.) By changing the government, laws, and ordinances sworn to be maintained in the covenant; either the government of the state, without consulting divine direction, and due inspection into the qualification of the persons set up, Hos. viii., compare the 1st and 4th verses. "They have transgressed my covenant, &c. They have set up kings, but not by me, princes and I knew it not;" that is, without consulting me to know my will, and without my approbation and consent; or the government of the church, without regard to the revealed will of God. Thus, Abijah justly chargeth Jeroboam that he had "cast out the priests of the Lord, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites," and that he had "made priests after the manner of the nations of other lands;" but encourages himself that he and Judah had the Lord for their God, because they had not forsaken him; "and the priests which ministered unto the Lord were the sons of Aaron." 2 Chron. xiii. 6, 10. (6.) By an entire forsaking and disowning the obligation of the covenant, Dan. xi. 30. "He-----shall have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant." (7.) By a stated opposition to the covenant, and persecuting of these who adhere thereunto. Thus Elijah justly charges Israel, 1 Kings xix. 10, that they had forsaken God's covenant, because they had thrown down his altars, slain his prophets, and sought after Elijah's life. And in a use of lamentation deduced from the foresaid doctrine, he showed, that all ranks in the land had reason to mourn over their breach of covenant, in regard that some of all ranks, from the throne to the dunghill, in church and state, are, or have been guilty of dealing falsely in God's covenant, in all and every one of these diverse ways, and of declining from it: and in regard that there has been so much ignominy and contempt cast upon these sacred covenants, not only by breaking them openly, but also avowedly disowning and disdaining their obligation, and making the adherence to them criminal; and, which is above all, burning them by the hand of the hangman, and burying them so long in forgetfulness. This guiltiness he applied not to great persons only, but also to professors, to ministers, and particularly to ourselves, who are called dissenters from the present establishment; pressing upon us no less than others, the absolute and indispensable necessity of being convinced of, and mourning over these, not as the sins of others only, but also as our own—we having a chief hand in the trespass; pressing upon all present concerned in the work the duty of self-examination, and putting themselves to the trial, concerning their knowledge of the covenant obligations, both as to their nature and extent, as well as their sense of the breaches of these obligations.



## Page 11

In the second head of doctrine, *viz.*, *That it is the duty of a people who have broken covenant with God, to engage themselves again to him by renovation of their covenant*; after proving the proposition by several heads of arguments deduced—1st, From the lawfulness of entering into covenant with God, whether personal, as Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 20, 21, or economical, as Joshua and his family, Josh. xxiv. 15, or national, as God brought his people Israel under a covenant with himself, Exod. xix 5. The consequence holding undeniably, that if it be lawful and necessary, in any of these respects, to enter into covenant with God, it must needs be also lawful and a duty to renew the same after the breach thereof. 2dly, From Scripture precedents of the people of God, who, after breaking off and declining from God's covenant, renewed the same. As for instance, the covenant made with Israel at Horeb, was renewed at the plains of Moab, Deut. xxxix;—by Joshua, chap, xxiv.;—by Asa, 2 Chron. xv. 13, 14;—by Jehoiada, 2 Kings xi. 17;—by Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxix. 10;—by Josiah, 2 Kings, xxiii. 2;—by Ezra and Nehemiah, Ezra, x. 3;—Neh. ix ult. and x. 28, 29. 3dly, From Scripture precepts, Deut. xxix. 1—“These are the words of the covenant which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb.” Psalm, lxxvi. 11—“Vow, and pay unto the Lord your God.” 4thly, From Scripture promises, wherein the Lord promiseth as a blessing and mercy to his church and people, that they should renew their covenant with him, Isaiah xix. 21, 23—25; Zech. ii. 11. For further opening of the proposition, these two questions were proposed and solved—*First*, Whether all persons who have broken covenant with God may be admitted to renew the same? *Answer*, All sorts of persons in the three kingdoms are under the obligation of the covenant, and consequently, bound to renew and keep it inviolable; but all are not in present capacity, and therefore have no actual right to enter into covenant: such as are obstinately wicked, living in error, profanity, or malignancy, have not God's call and right from him, as such, to renew a covenant with him; for, Psal. 1. 16, 17—“God says to the wicked, What hast thou to do to take my covenant in thy mouth?” But all such as are reformed, or reforming from all iniquity, and namely from the defections and compliances of the time; who have some suitable sense of the breaches, and competent knowledge and understanding of the duties engaged unto in the covenant, Neh. x. 28, have a right and an immediate call to the duty of renewing the covenant. 2dly, If any number of people may renew a national oath and covenant without the consent and concurrence of royal authority, or at least, without the concurrence of some chief and principal men in church and state? *Answer*, Without the concurrence of church and state, a covenant cannot be taken or renewed nationally,



## Page 12

speaking strictly; yet a few may publicly declare their adherence to their covenant-engagements by renewing them, not only without the consent and concurrence of authority, but against it; and there are several precedents for so doing, both before and since the established reformation. As for instance, that covenant at Edinburgh, Anno 1557; at Perth, 1559; at Stirling, the same year; another at Leith, Anno 1560; another at Ayr, 1562. And at Lanark, a small handful of the Lord's people renewed it in direct opposition to, and at Lesmahago, without the consent or concurrence of authority; which instances may be both an inducement and encouragement to us to renew, and in our mean capacity, to testify to the nation our approbation of, and adherence to these covenants.

In the prosecution of this doctrine, he had occasion also to insist upon the *reasons*, or *motives*, and *manner* of entering into covenant. The scope and argument of the reasons adduced as motives to the duty of covenanting was to this effect:—

1. The turning away of the Lord's wrath and anger from a land, or people, which covenant-breaking hath deserved, may be a motive to renewing covenant with God; this was the motive that prompted the good reforming King Hezekiah to make a covenant with the Lord, 2 Chron. xxix. 10—"Now it is in mine heart to make a covenant with the Lord God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us." And Nehemiah, with the returned captives, Neh. ix. 38—"And because of all this, we make a sure covenant."

2. Reviving and advancement in reformation, being the ordinary consequent and effect of upright covenanting with the Lord, may be another motive and inducement thereunto; this appears both in personal and national covenanting—In personal, Psal. cxix. 106—"I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments." The Psalmist's having sworn, was a very quickening consideration to excite him to the performance of his duty. In national covenanting, we always find, after the people of Israel and Judah had covenanted with the Lord, they made progress in reformation, and the land was purged of abominations and idols. Thus it was in Asa's covenant, 2 Chron. xv. 12 to 19; for there, the people have entered into a covenant with the Lord, "and sworn with all their soul, and with all their heart," the Lord was found of them; and Asa removed his mother, Maachah, from her royal dignity, and stamped the idol which she had made, and burnt it at the brook Kidron; and he brought into the house of the Lord the things that his father and himself had dedicated. Thus it was also in Jehoiada's covenant, which he made "between the Lord, and the king, and the people, that they should be the Lord's people," 2 Kings xi. 17, 18, 20; for, immediately after the making of his covenant, "all the people of the land went into the house of Baal, and brake it down—his altars, and his images brake they in pieces thoroughly; and the priest appointed officers over the house of the Lord;" and they slew Athaliah with the sword. The like is evident in Hezekiah's covenanting, 2 Chron. xxxiv., xxxv. chapters.



## Page 13

3. This upright renewing of covenant with the Lord is a way and mean to procure many mercies, both spiritual and temporal, from the hand of the Lord; which should be a strong inducement and motive to engage us thereunto. Spiritual mercies are entailed upon it, Deut. xxix. 12, 13. "That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day: that he may establish thee to-day for a people to himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." Temporal mercies are also promised to this upright renewing and keeping covenant, Deut. xxix. 9—"Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do." And, it is remarked, 2 Chron. xv. 15, that after Asa's covenant, "the Lord gave them rest round about."

4. The malice and opposition of the Popish, Prelatical, and malignant party against the covenants, and their doing what in them lies, to make their obligation void and null, may be a motive and argument for the people of God so much the more to avouch their respect to them by a public adherence, especially after long continued breaches.

5. Upright entering into, or renewing covenant with God, is a most sovereign medicine for healing a people's breaches, as well as their backslidings, the covenant being a cement, as well to join and unite the people of God one to another, as all of them in their duty to God; and, as it flows from the nature of the covenant to unite the friends of reformation, so it is observable as one of the peculiar fruits of covenant-renewing, that union in the Lord has followed thereupon: thus it was with Israel and Judah in the text, who united together in making a covenant with the Lord. Whence all the people of God, who are called to be united and "perfectly joined together in the same spirit, and in the same mind;" and especially they who have been lamentably divided one from another, by their manifold defections from God, and from their covenant-engagements, ought to be strongly inclined, moved, and engaged to this duty; from this consideration, the upright covenant-renewing is a usual mean of land-uniting and church-uniting dispositions amongst the people of God.

As for the manner of renewing covenant with God, and how the duty ought to be gone about, he propounded and opened it in the following particulars, to this effect:—

1. That it must be done with understanding and judgment, both in relation to the nature of the duties we engage to perform in the covenant: grossly ignorant persons being justly deprived of the privilege of engaging in covenant, though bound to inform themselves of its nature and obligation; and also in relation to the breaches, such as would engage into it being called to have some suitable sense and understanding, both how it has been violated, and by what means persons come to be guilty of the breach thereof. So, Neh. x. 28, 29—"Every one that had knowledge and understanding entered into the covenant."



## Page 14

2. This duty must be gone about with sincerity and uprightness of heart; thus Joshua, when making a covenant with the people, that they should serve the Lord, exhorts them—“Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and truth,” Joshua, xxiv., compare the 25th verse with the 14th. The want of which qualification in covenant-renewing, causes unsteadfastness and perfidy in covenant-performing—Psal. lxxviii. 36, 37.

3. This duty of covenant-renewing requires, as a qualification towards the right performing of it, that there be a due consideration, and some suitable impression of the solemnity and weightiness of the work: which ariseth, partly from the *object or party covenanted with*, the holy and jealous God, Joshua xxiv. 19—“He is a holy God, he is a jealous God, he will not forgive your transgressions, nor your sins,” and partly from the *subject matter covenanted, or engaged to*. The articles of the covenant of grace, which we have professedly, at last, yielded to in our baptism, are weighty; for therein, as God engages to give us himself, his Son Christ Jesus, and in him all temporal and eternal blessings; so we engaged to be obedient children, and faithful subjects to him all the days of our lives. And the articles of these national covenants are weighty, for therein we engage to great things relating to the glory of God, and the good of our own and other’s souls. And, partly, this weightiness ariseth from the great *danger and dreadful punishment of breaking the covenant*; which is threatened in many places of Scripture. The same is also intimated to us in the customs both of the Jews and Heathens, in entering into covenant; particularly, we find that the Jews used to cut a calf, or some other clean beast, in twain, and pass between the parts of it—using this, or the like form of speech, as the Jewish doctors relate—“So God divide or separate me, if I keep not this covenant.” Jer. xxxiv. 18, compared with verse 20—“I will give the men into the hands of their enemies who have transgressed my covenant, which they had made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof.” Nehemiah also, chap. v. 12, 13, when he took an oath of the priests, shook his lap and said—“So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise,” &c. And all the covenanters said—“Amen.”

4. Much tenderness and heart-melting is requisite to the right performing of this duty. So it was with covenant-renewing Israel and Judah, who were “weeping as they went to seek the Lord their God, and to make a covenant never to be forgotten.” This brokenness of heart, and tender-melting frame may arise, both from the consideration of the many sins and iniquities whereby persons have provoked the Lord their God to anger, whence they come “to be like doves of the valley, every one mourning for his iniquity:” and likewise from the consideration



## Page 15

of the grace and mercy of God, manifested in Christ Jesus, his condescension to enter into a covenant with sinful men, and readiness, upon his people's repentance, to pardon their former breaches; from the consideration of this transcendently free grace, an humble and sincere covenanter will be transported into an ecstasy of wonder and admiration; as the church is, Mic. vii. 18, 19, 20—"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage?" &c.

5. Dependency and recumbency upon the Lord by faith, for strength to perform covenant engagements, is requisite to right covenanting, Isa. xxvii. 5—"Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me." This is to "take hold of" God's covenant, Isa. lvi. 4.

6. Affection to God and the duties whereunto we engage, is requisite to right covenanting, and that in its flower and vigour, height and supremacy. Thus, 2 Chron. xv. 12, 15, Asa and the people "entered into a covenant, to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart, and with all their soul:—And all Judah rejoiced at the oath; for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire." They had an affection to the work, and did it with complacency, not in dissimulation, so as not to design to perform it: nor through compulsion, with an eye to secular profit or preferment, as many in these lands did.

7. It is necessary, in order to right covenanting, that the work be gone about with a firm purpose and resolution (through grace enabling us) to adhere to our covenant engagements, notwithstanding whatever opposition and persecution we may meet with from the world for so doing, and whatever difficulties and discouragements may arise from the multitude of those, who prove unsteadfast in, or ffully forsake their covenant. We must stand to our covenant, as it is said of Josiah, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 32, that "he caused all that were present in Judah and Benjamin, to stand to" the covenant, which implies as well a firm resolution to perform, as consent to engage, as in the latter part of the verse, it is remarked, that "the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers;" where *doing according to the covenant* is exegetical of *standing to it*. David also joins the resolution of performance with swearing; Psal. cxix. 106. "I have sworn, and I will perform, that I will keep thy righteous judgments."

From the doctrine thus confirmed and explained, he drew this inference, by way of information, that seeing it is a people's duty, who have broken covenant with the Lord, to engage themselves again to him, by renewing their covenant, that it is not arbitrary for us (as many are apt to think) to renew, or not to renew our covenant; but that there is a plain and positive necessity for our repenting and returning again to the Lord, by entering anew into covenant

## Page 16

with him, whether personal made in baptism, or at the Lord's table, or under affliction and trouble, or national vows and covenants entered into by ourselves or our fathers. And in a use of lamentation, he bewailed the backwardness of these lands, and particularly of this nation, to this duty; in that, now after sixty years and upwards of great defections from, and grievous breaches of our covenants by people of all ranks; yet there appears so little sense of either the obligations or breaches of them, and of a disposition to reviving them, even amongst those who not only profess some love to the reformation of religion, but even some belief of their perpetual binding obligation; and that notwithstanding, as the Prophet Isaiah saith, concerning Judah, chap. xxiv. 5, "The earth (or the land) is defiled under the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant;" our land having been denied with Popery and Prelacy, and with a flood of abomination and profanity, the natural consequent of perfidy, the ordinances having been changed, perverted and corrupted, and the covenant not only broken, but burnt ignominiously, and the adherence to it made criminal; yet, for all this, there has not been a time found for renewing them these twenty-three years; and that ministers, at whose door it chiefly lay to stir up the land to this work, have many of them been as careless as others, waiving and putting off a stumbled and offended people, expressing some concernedness for this duty, with these and the like pretexts, that it was not a fit time, nor the land in a case for it (too sad a truth), but not laboring to get the land brought to be in a case and disposition for it, by pressing the obligation, and plainly discovering the violations thereof; so that, instead of being brought to a fitter condition for this duty, the covenants are almost forgotten and quite out of mind, so that the succeeding generation is scarce like to know that ever there was a covenant sworn in Scotland. And more particularly, that the godly, who are dissatisfied with, and dissent from the defections and corruptions of the times, have discovered so little concern about the work of reformation, and cause of God, which the covenants oblige us to own, defend, and promote. All which laxness and remissness is for a lamentation, and ought to be lamented and mourned over by the people of God.

In the exhortation, he pressed upon us who are embodied together to renew our *covenant-engagements*, by giving an open and public testimony of our adherence to the *covenants, national and solemn league*, that we should labor to attain a suitable frame, and serious consideration of the weightiness, solemnity, and awfulness of the work we were then undertaking: enforcing the same by several cogent motives, as namely, because in renewing these covenants we are called to remember our baptismal and personal vows, whereby



## Page 17

we had renounced the devil, the world and the flesh, and devoted ourselves to the Lord to be his people; which if they were slighted and forgotten, there could be no right, acceptable, and comfortable entering into *national covenants*. And likewise because of the weightiness of the duties engaged to in our *national covenant*, and in the *solemn league and covenant*, which he proved to be a covenant that ought to be renewed by us in this nation no less than our *national covenant*, in regard it was a religious, just, and holy covenant made betwixt God and the three kingdoms, though it cannot now be taken in the same consideration and extent, as at the first framing it was, *viz.*: As a league betwixt us and the representative body of the kingdoms of England and Ireland: where he took occasion to go over the several articles of the covenant, showing the nature and weightiness of the duties.

Beside these two more general doctrines which were chiefly insisted upon, he observed several others pertinently deducible from the words, as first, *That unfaithful dealing in God's covenant will breed distance and estrangement from God*. This is implied in the children of Israel and Judah seeking the Lord, asking the way to Zion, &c.; their asking the way to Zion, importing that they had forgotten the right way of worshipping God, and that their sins had made a sad separation between them and their God. Secondly, That it is necessary that persons become sensible of their sin against God, and of his anger against them, and lay these things to heart, that they may be concerned about reconciliation with God, and reform their lives. Thirdly, That the kindly exercise of repentance in a backsliding people lamenting after the Lord, and setting about to renew their covenant with him, hath an effectual influence to unite and cement the divided people of God: thus in the text the children of Israel and Judah, whom their iniquities had long and sadly divided, are uniting together in this desirable frame of weeping and seeking the Lord their God, and making a perpetual covenant with him. This doctrine he proved and applied briefly as the time would permit, both because of its native result from the text, and because of his own, and our sincere desire to see a holy union and communion, in the way of truth and duty effected by returning to the Lord, and renewing the covenant with him, as among all the godly, so especially among those that profess their dissent from, and dislike of the corrupt courses of the times.

Sermon being ended, after prayer, the covenants were first read according to the *Directory for renewing the solemn league and covenant*, prescribed by the Act of the General Assembly at Edinburgh, 6th October, 1648, post meridiem, entitled, *Act for renewing of the Solemn League and Covenant*; and, thereafter, the following Acknowledgment of Sins was also read: after which, prayer was made, containing



## Page 18

a comprehensive confession of the more general heads of the foresaid Acknowledgement of Sins; and a part of the 78th Psalm, beginning at the 36th verse, was sung; and the minister dismissed the congregation with a short reprehension and advice, reproving them for their unconcerned carriage and behaviour during the reading of the acknowledgment of the breaches of these covenants, which had been first entered into at the expense of so much blood and treasure, and confirmed and sealed with the blood of many honourable martyrs of all ranks in the land; withal, exhorting all present to labour after a heart-melting frame for the right performance of the work in hand.

Upon Thursday, July 24th, after singing a part of the 105th Psalm, from the 6th to the 12th verse, and prayer—Mr. John M'Millan preached upon Isaiah, xliv. 5—“One shall say I am the Lord's: and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob: and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel.” Whereupon, after the unfolding of the context, and explication of the words, showing that they clearly contain an intimation of a covenant relation betwixt God and a people, and their avouching of the same upon their part; the words seeming to have a reference to the state of the New Testament Church, and conversion of the Gentiles, who, being allured by the great gospel blessings and mercies bestowed by God upon the Jews, to join themselves to the church, should avouch their interest in the Messiah and covenant of grace, by taking the Lord for their God, and owning themselves to be his people. So that the words may be taken up as an answer to such a presupposed question as this, *Whose are you? and what is your name?* To which question, one shall answer, *I am the Lord's*; another, *I am one of old Jacob's family and offspring*; another, if you desiderate my name, look the covenant subscriptions and you will find it there; another shall say, whatever my name was before, *my surname now is an Israelite*. So sweetly should a shower of gospel grace engage the hearts of the New Testament converts to avow their covenant relation to the Lord, and glory in their union with his church and covenanted people. Having taking up the sense of the words to this effect, he deduced from them these two observations:

1. *That the Lord is graciously pleased sometimes to privilege his people with very remarkable tokens of his gracious presence.* This doctrine is clear from the context, verses 3d and 4th—“For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring. And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the watercourses.”



## Page 19

Under this head of doctrine, he gave the following marks to evidence whether the present time of renewing our covenant with God was indeed to us a time of the Lord's privileging us with his gracious presence—1st, That a time of God's privileging his people with his gracious presence, and with a shower of gospel grace, is a very inviting and alluring time; wherein, as the Lord invites his people to their duty, by engaging their hearts and souls, through his Spirit's gracious influences, to fall in love with him and his commandments, so they mutually invite one another to covenant with God. 2d, That such a time proves a soul-engaging and taking time, wherein souls are engaged to fall in love with the covenant, and with Christ the Mediator of the covenant, and are taken in the net of the gospel. 3d, That a time of the letting out of God's gracious presence is ordinarily a time of many sweet and excellent resolutions, the people of God resolving to walk more accurately and circumspectly in the ways of new obedience. 4th, That this usually is a time of ridding marches, and clearing of evidences. 5th, That it is a time of many and special confirmations of God's love to the soul. 6th, That this time of God's letting out much of his gracious presence to his people, is a very uniting and healing time to them amongst themselves. Having given these marks, to show whether the Lord were, at the occasion, letting out his gracious presence, he added, by way of caution, that seeing (no doubt) the people of God would be expecting something of all these, upon the undertaking of so great a work; if so be that they found it not, they should not thence be induced to have hard thoughts of the Lord, and to conclude that he keeps not his usual method with his people, or is not so good to them as formerly he hath been: for whatever defects there are upon his people's part, there is none upon the Lord's, for he remains the same to them, providing they do so to him; the change of his dispensations towards his people being from the change of his people's deportment towards him.

The Second Doctrine, resulting more directly from the words, was, *That the Lord's Spirit poured out in plenty upon his people will quickly bring them to an embracing of him, and to a public acknowledgment and avouching of the same.* Thus it was with the people of God in the text—no sooner does the Lord “pour water upon the thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground,” even his Spirit upon the spiritual seed of Israel, but presently they are at covenanting work and subscribing work; “One shall say, I am the Lord's,” etc. In prosecuting this doctrine he shewed first negatively that he was not for that occasion largely to treat of the several ways that the Spirit useth to manage this work of engaging the hearts of his people to embrace Christ, and so to make a public avouchment of the same; whether he doth it by representing to their views the sweet and precious promises made in



## Page 20

the covenant of grace, thereby sweetly alluring and drawing them with the cords of love to himself, or by holding forth to their consciences the terrors and threatenings of the law, and thereby powerfully constraining them to fly to him as to the city of refuge from the face of Divine Justice pursuing them: for seeing the Spirit is a free agent and blows both how and where he listeth, he may engage a soul to close with Christ by either of these ways, though most usually he doth it by a conjunction and concurrence of both. Only this ought to satisfy us, that what way soever the Spirit taketh in bringing a soul to embrace Christ upon the gospel terms, he so manageth the work as that the end is effectually and infallibly attained.

Nor Secondly, Was he to enquire into the measure of the outpouring of the Spirit's graces and operations, which is effectual for attaining the end, this being one of the deep things of God which the Spirit alone searcheth, and therefore is not necessary for us further to know, save only that we understand so much to be needful as may serve to empty the creature of all confidence in or dependence upon itself, or any other creature-helps whatsoever, and bring it to rely upon Christ alone, for acceptance with God; so much is necessary, and less cannot be sufficient.

Nor Thirdly, Was he to handle the material differences between those who are brought really and sincerely to accept, embrace and acknowledge the Lord for their Lord, and to avouch the same publicly, which presupposeth a mighty power of the Spirit manifested in the sweet impressions which he maketh upon the soul, moving them sweetly and readily to comply with and yield to Christ without any longer resistance, and these who only in semblance and shew profess to avouch Christ to be their Lord, and feign submission to him, not from the Spirit's effectual and saving operations, but either from carnal and external considerations, or at most from the Spirit's common motions and convictions; which differences commonly arise from the different natures, motives, manner or ends of this their acknowledging and avouching Christ for their Lord, and covenanting with Him.

These things, as not so immediately proper for the work in hand, though natively involved in the doctrine, being only cleared in transition; he came in the second place more positively to insist upon and handle the following heads. First, More generally to propose some considerations which make such a great work as renewing covenant with the Lord a weighty, hard and difficult work. And upon the other hand, to lay down some counterbalancing considerations which render such a work more easy and light, and may afford matter of encouragement toward the undertaking of it. Secondly, More particularly in application to ourselves and the work in hand, to lay before those who were resolved to enter into covenant with the Lord, what were the things that seemed to speak against us in



## Page 21

the work, and might prove matter of discouragement in the undertaking of it. And what, upon the other side, might speak for us, and be ground of encouragement to us to go forward in humble and sincere endeavors to renew our covenant with the Lord. Thirdly, To give some advices and directions to such as were resolved upon the work. As for the first: The considerations which make covenanting work weighty and difficult. The *first* consideration was drawn from the greatness of the party to be covenanted with, the great and glorious Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, who is a holy and jealous God, and who will not forgive the iniquity of such as are false hearted and perfidious in his covenant, obstinately persisting in their false dealing; so Joshua premonisheth a people making very fair resolutions and promises to serve the Lord, that it was a harder work than at the first sight they apprehended; "That they could not serve the Lord, in regard he is an holy God, he is a jealous God, and would not forgive their transgressions nor their sins; and that if they should forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods, then he would turn and do them hurt and consume them, after he had done them good," Josh. xxiv. 19, 20. 'Tis a part of his name, Exod. xxxiv. 7. *That he will by no means clear the (obstinately and impenitently) guilty.*

A *second* consideration that makes the work of covenanting with God to appear a hard and difficult work, was taken from the nature of the work itself, which is to serve the Lord in a covenant way, and in the capacity of covenanted children, this covenant relation involving in it a walk and conversation in all things like the chosen of the Lord; and 'tis no small matter, so to walk, and so to behave as to be accounted worthy of a covenanted union with the Lord and interest in him, this covenant relation being confirmed with such awful sanctions, as in scripture we find, Neh. x. 29. "They----- entered into a curse and into an oath, to walk in God's law," &c. This consideration, that covenanting work is weighty in its own nature, was further illustrated and amplified from the difficulty both of the things to be engaged against, and of the things to be engaged unto. As for the former, the things to be engaged against, which is sin in all its kinds and degrees, and in all the inducements to it, both with reference to ourselves, and also as to participation in the sins of others. This must first be put away, if one would be a right covenanter. Well did old Jacob understand the necessity of this, who being resolved to go up to Bethel, to renew his covenant with God, that answered him in the day of his strait, advises his family first "to put away the strange gods that were amongst them, and to be clean." Gen. xxxv. 2. So David assures us, Psal. xxxiv. 14, that departing from evil must precede doing of good. A man that would lift up his face without spot in renewing covenant with God, must first "put



## Page 22

iniquity far away, and not suffer wickedness to dwell in his tabernacles," as Zophar advises Job, chap. xi. 14, 15. They that would take on with a new master must be fairly parted from the old, there is no way of pleasing both Christ and mammon, and therefore no possibility of serving both; whence the nature of covenanting work requires, that there be an upright putting away of all sin; for if the soul have any secret reserves in favor of a beloved sin, it has no ground to think that Christ will accept it, as his covenanted spouse and bride. Nor is this all, but 2dly, it must be mourned over and truly bewailed, especially upon the account of the offence done to a gracious God thereby; which sorrow must not be of an ordinary sort, but an extraordinary and most intense sorrow, for it cannot be an ordinary kind of sorrow, provided it be in any suitable measure proportioned to the offence. And 3dly, which follows upon the former, there must be a "loathing of the person's self because of these its ways and doings that have not been good in his sight," Ezek. vi. 9, even to that degree as to fill the soul with wonder and astonishment, that ever it should have an occasion of renewing covenant with God again. 4thly, There must be a sincere and hearty resolving against all sins, consequent upon this loathing; the soul saying with a steady purpose, "if I have done iniquity I will do so no more," Job xxxiv. 32.

2dly, As to the latter, the things engaged unto render the nature of covenanting work difficult and weighty, which are duties of various kinds, such as, 1st, Holiness towards God, which is one special and chief part of the covenant, and that not for a time only, but for ever; both in regard that God, the party covenanted with, is holy and unchangeably so, and calls his people to imitate him in this attribute especially; and also in regard that the covenant itself is for its nature holy, all the articles being morally good and consonant to the royal law, the scriptures of truth; and for the extent of its duration, of perpetual force and obligation. This duty of holiness towards God, engaged to in the covenant, comprehends in it a zealous endeavor to maintain the purity of the doctrine, worship, discipline and government of his institution, in opposition to all those who would corrupt it, or decline from it. 2d, Righteousness towards our neighbor, and more especially to our covenanted brother; which righteousness should discover itself both in reference to sin and duty, by reproofing him for sin; or upon his rejecting reproof, by withdrawing from him, that he may be ashamed, and so come to be reclaimed from his evil course; and by affording him all that help and assistance to covenanted duties, that may be warrantably called for, and generally by uprightness towards him in all our transactions and dealings of any kind. 3d, Faithfulness towards our nation, which comprehends a constant endeavor to advance and promote in our station the common good thereof; and a stedfast opposition to the courses that tend to take away the privilege of the same. 4th, Uprightness towards ourselves, in everything relating to the real good of our own souls and bodies; by walking in all the duties of soberness, temperance, and moderation; for as others are to have their due, so ourselves are not to be neglected.



## Page 23

A *third* consideration, whereby the duty of renewing covenant with God appears to be difficult and weighty, was deduced from *the manner and way of engaging*; whereunto several things of great difficulty to be attained were showed to be absolutely necessary, as, 1st, *Judgment*, to know, and in some measure comprehend, the nature of the duties to be engaged to, and the advantages flowing from the right entering into, and keeping of the covenant, and the losses redounding to the breakers thereof. 2d, *Seriousness*, which, if ever it be in exercise, will certainly then be most lively, when the soul is entering upon a work of so high import, as making a covenant with God; for then the creature has one of two things to look for, either covenant blessings, or covenant curses, according as it performs or not performs the tenor of the covenant. 3d, *Deliberation*; rashness in covenanting is of dangerous consequence: 'tis not the example of others only, nor raw flashes of conviction or love, nor external considerations, as gain, honor, men's approbation, &c., that must induce to this duty; but a fixed permanent purpose of heart and soul, rationally and deliberately entered into. 4th, *Heart-integrity*, That it be done with all the heart, 2 Chron. xv. 15, for the man brings himself under a curse, that "having a male in his flock, sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing." Mal. i. 14.

A *fourth* consideration, from whence the work of covenanting comes to be a difficult and hard work, was deduced from the *way and manner of performing* the duties engaged to; which is (as 'tis expressed in the covenant) with sincerity, reality, and constancy; the difficulty of attaining to these qualifications in the performance of covenant-duties, arising partly from the strength of corruption within, the law of sin and death, which opposes the law of God; and partly from the strength of snares and temptations from without; which requires, that (as becomes covenanted children) there be a daily recourse to Jesus Christ, for light to discover, and strength to overcome these corruptions and temptations; and life, that the soul turn not dead and insensible under them.

A *fifth* consideration, from whence the difficulty of covenanting with God is sometimes heightened, was taken from *the meanness of such as attempt the work*. When the great ones, the nobles that are called *the shields of the earth*, do not afford their authority and patrociny, as an encouragement to the undertaking; and when the wise and learned will not employ their learning, parts, and abilities for the facilitating thereof; but the mean and weakest are left to do the work alone. This was no small difficulty and discouragement to the Tekoites, in their building and repairing the wall of Jerusalem, "That their nobles put not their necks to the work of their Lord." Neh. iii. 5.

A *sixth* consideration, which may sometimes render such a work hard and difficult, was drawn from *the want of the concurrence of civil authority; and the opposition made thereunto by the laws of the land*; which, when it happens to be the case of a people designing to renew national engagements cannot but be a very difficult and discouraging ingredient amongst others in their cup.



## Page 24

On the other hand, these counterbalancing considerations were adduced, which are as so many props and pillars to support his people, and to allay the difficulties of the duty of entering into covenant with God, and to make it the more light and easy. 1st, *That the work is the Lord's*, and he is greatly concerned in it; and, therefore, his people may safely lean to him for help, he having enacted no law against it, as men have. 2d, *That he looks not upon his people in such undertakings, as in themselves*, for then it were impossible for creatures, having the least sinful imperfection in them, to covenant with their spotless Creator, and come so near a jealous God, who is a consuming fire to the workers of iniquity; *but he considers his people in their covenanting with him, as in their head, Christ, his eternal Son*; whence we may safely say, That our national covenant wants not a Mediator more than the covenant of grace, in this sense, as it is through him we have access to make this covenant with God. 3d, *That the Lord has promised his presence to his own work*; thus we find through the whole of the covenants made, and renewed by the people of Israel and Judah, that the Lord discovered his gracious presence with them, by some remarkable effect of his goodness. Thus it is remarked of Hezekiah, that after he had entered into covenant, "That the Lord was with him, and he prospered whithersoever he went forth," 2 Kings xviii. 7, compared with 2 Chron. xxix. 10. 4th, *That the Lord puts none of his people to any piece of his work upon their own proper expense and charges, but upon his own*; and whatever complaints his people may have of want of necessary charges, he both has wherewith to supply them, and has undertaken to make it actually forthcoming for them, having commanded his people to open their mouths wide, and he has promised to fill them. 5th, That the covenant has a greater entail of blessings, than what will sufficiently compensate whatever expense and pains a people may be at, in undertaking and performing it. In regard, that though a Christian should lose all, yea, even life itself, upon the account of it, yet the covenant will bring in all with advantage to a hundred fold, and glory to the overplus, when it is duly observed. 6th, *That the undertakers have God's call and commandment to set about it*; this is that which, above all other considerations, inspires a Christian with undaunted courage and alacrity in the undertaking of a duty, when it is made clear that the person has God's call and command for a warrant; otherwise the want of this may make the duty to be heartlessly and doubtingly entered upon, and lamely performed.

Seeing, therefore, that sometimes a work may be the Lord's, and yet the Lord's call to such a particular person, or people to undertake it, may be wanting; he came necessarily (which was the *second* head proposed) to enquire, what were the several things that might seem to speak against us, as not having this call from the Lord, and what were the things that spake for us, and might give us matter of encouragement in undertaking the work before us.—In solution of which the following considerations were proposed.



## Page 25

1st, As to the things that might seem to speak against us: 1st, *Our darkness*, not whether covenanting be a duty, but in regard of the want of right apprehensions of the nature and greatness of the duty, which cannot be a sufficient ground to neglect the duty, unless there were some duties from which a Christian is exeemed and that this is one of them, which indeed will not be found in the whole Bible. 2d, *Our want of a frame suitable for the greatness and weightiness of the work*, which speaks sadly against us, but is not to be a ground to neglect the duty, we being commanded to look to the God of the covenant for it.

Upon the other hand, the things which seemed to speak for us, and yield matter of encouragement, that not only the work was the Lord's, but also that we had his call to the same, were, 1st, The many, palpable, plain, and open breaches of these covenants, are a loud call to renew them. 2d, The undervaluing account that the nations have made of them, is a call to all such as have any respect to the sacred name of the Lord invoked in these covenants, to do their utmost to vindicate them from that disgrace, by showing how high a price and value they put upon them. 3d, The lands enacting the perpetual banishment of these covenants, and imposing oaths contrary and opposite to them; which brings double perjury upon the nation, both by disregarding and omitting the performance of this just, lawful, and commendable covenant, and by making unjust, sinful and hateful covenants, for opposing the growth and success of Christ's kingdom, even the reformation of these many abuses that have corrupted the holy religion of his institution: And perjury drawing wrath after it, as a native and necessary fruit consequent; they that would stand in the gap, to turn away national wrath, cannot otherwise make up the hedge, that the land should not be destroyed, but by renewing and keeping national covenants. 4th, That so many are speaking against them everywhere, accounting them a conspiracy against royal authority, a popular combination for advancing private ends and interests under the cloak of religion, or at least unnecessary and unprofitable for the end intended by them, binding to things of such a heterogeneous nature, as renders the keeping of them, and keeping within the sphere of our own activity and station, inconsistent and impossible, and such things as whereof we now have no occasion, and the like; which is a loud call to us, or any that retain other thoughts of their nature and ends, than the generality do, to speak for them; which cannot be done more fitly, honorably, nor conspicuously any other way, than by renewing and observing them. 5th, The practice of the godly in such a juncture of time, as what ours appears to be, is a call and encouraging consideration to set us upon this work: the godly usually in times of great defection from the purity and power of religion, and corruption of the ordinances of God's worship,



## Page 26

set about renewing their covenant, thereby to prevent covenant curses, and procure covenant blessings; as we find both in scripture record, 2 Chron. xv. 12, 13; xxix. 10; xxxiv. 30, 31; Ezra x. 3, and in our own ecclesiastic history. And the practice was justified by the success, for the most part terminating in some reviving and reformation. 6th, The time being come to such a crisis, that such as would keep the word of Christ's patience cannot any longer do it in a distinguishing way from those that are covenant-breakers, but by renewing covenant, and thereby making a test and trial of the well-wishers to the covenanted interest in the land, is a call to set about this work: in former times the godly held fast this their profession, by suffering for their adherence to covenanted duties, resisting unto blood, striving against the sin of covenant-breaking; whereas now our call seems to be more clear to do it, by renewing those covenant-obligations. 7th, The covenants themselves have, as it were, a loud voice to call us, and all who own their obligation, to set about renewing of them; they call by the justness and intrinsic goodness of the matter, which is of binding force by virtue of the law of God, prior to any covenant-tie, and by the holiness and excellency of the end, to wit, the reformation and preservation of religion. Yea, the covenant seems to say to us, and to every true hearted son of the church of Scotland, as Job said in another case, "Have pity upon me, O my friends," &c. So says the covenant: Have pity upon me, all ye that have any respect for me, for church and state have forsaken me.

The *third* thing proposed was to give some advices and directions for right managing the duty intended. The scope and substance whereof briefly follows:

1st, Such as would make a covenant with God aright, so as the same may never be broken nor yet forgotten, must labor to know if they be in good terms with the God of the covenant, and with the Mediator of the covenant; if they sincerely closed with the terms, and acquiesced to the proposals of the covenant of grace; this personal and particular acceptance of Christ in the new covenant being the only fountain of acceptable entering into national covenants. Hence it concerns all that would be right Covenanters, to search and see how it may be betwixt God and them, because 'tis but a profanation of the covenant to have the hand and tongue at it, and the heart from it: a well informed head without a reformed heart is not sufficient: a good opinion and liking of the covenant without a heart and affection to the covenant avails nothing in God's sight.



## Page 27

2d, Such as would rightly renew covenant with God, must be well resolved concerning the motives leading them to covenant; which motives must neither arise wholly from without, nor yet wholly from within, for if these motives arise wholly from without, it discovers a great deal of treachery in the persons covenanting, as not beginning at the heart, not duly considering the inward case of the soul, but being moved from some external considerations, as a name amongst men, or affectation of zeal for public concerns, or such like; if they arise wholly from within it betrays much weakness and lowness of spirit, as not being able at the same time both to have a concern about the inward frame of the heart, and eternal state and condition of the soul, and likewise a zeal for the public good of the nation, and thriving of the work of God and kingdom of Christ. Both which interests ought to be in their due proportion before the eyes of a sound and real Covenanter; a right engager in covenant must be moved thereto, both from a due sense of the strength and power of corruption within, and also from the consideration of the lowness of God's work through defection without.

3d, A right covenanter must be well resolved concerning the terms of the covenant; that it excludes all coming and going, according to the revolutions of the times, and the ebbing and flowing of worldly interests: One that has given up his name to the Lord in covenant, and called himself by the name of Israel, must not, like the Samaritans, be an Israelite only in the time of Israel's prosperity, but he must be one in adversity too: The things engaged to in the covenant being of an everlasting and permanent duration, in their nature, must be lasting also in their observation.

4th, A right renewer of covenant must be well resolved anent the cost and expense of steadfast keeping of covenant. This should be first counted and deliberately resolved upon before engaging, lest after persons have engaged they want sufficiency to finish and fulfil the undertaking; and the Wise man assures us, it is better not to vow, than to vow and not pay. The covenant may come to require the cost both of doing and suffering to finish it: there must, therefore, be a resolving upon both, before engaging.

5th, A right covenanter must be well resolved concerning the separating nature, and the uniting tie and bond of the covenant, for as it distinguished between friends and foes, so it unites covenanters amongst themselves in duties, interests, and concerns. So that they become one society, having an identity of common duties and privileges, common crosses and rejoicings; and must rejoice together and weep together.

He closed the Sermon with a two-fold advice or exhortation, to two sorts of persons.



## Page 28

1st, To those who had some good opinion of, and some love for the covenant, but yet were not resolved to join in covenant with us, because of many entanglements in a world; some estate, farm, or place of employment would be forfeited thereby; and hence, though the covenant be, in their opinion, a lawful and commendable engagement, yet not for them; they are in a course inconsistent with it, and could not be otherwise without foregoing some worldly accommodation. Those he advised to consider the matter duly; not to engage without a resolution to forsake all interests that might interfere with covenanted duties; for to engage in the covenant, and yet to walk in a course opposite to it, would be exceedingly sinful; but to labour rather after old Jacob's spirit and disposition, who looked to and trusted in the God of the covenant when he had nothing else to look to—no outward encouragement, Gen. xxxii. 10—He had but his staff in his hand when he passed over Jordan, and the Lord made him to return with two bands. For, if a person could attain Jacob's spirit, name and surname would be lovely in their eyes, covenant and covenanting.

2dly, To those who had put their hands to many sinful covenants in opposition to this covenant, and such as being in a natural and unrenewed state, in league with sin and Satan, and in covenant with hell and death. Those he advised and earnestly obtested to break all their sinful covenants, to loathe and abhor them, and be humbled for them: and to come and fall in with this covenant, to say in sincerity that whereas other lords have had too long dominion over them, henceforth they would make mention only of the name of the Lord as their Lord; and that their name should henceforth be *Jacob*, and their surname *Israel*, and to sign and seal the same with their oath and subscription. This exhortation he enforced by the several calls to the work mentioned before, and by the two following motives: 1st, Because right entering into, and steadfast keeping of this covenant is the way to a holy life, and a holy life tends to make a holy nation; for, if we would observe this covenant sincerely, uniformly, and constantly, we could never be an unholy, and consequently, never an unhappy people; but it should be written as a motto upon our walls and gates, JEHOVAH SHAMMAI, *the Lord is there*. 2d, Because the entering rightly into and due observance of this covenant would be our strength in the midst of all perplexing thoughts, whether arising from inward corruptions, or from outward temptations or dangers; the covenant yielded more satisfaction to David when dying than a royal diadem, a melodious harp, a puissant army, strong cities, a numerous offspring, or any earthly comforts could do, when, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5, he supports himself with this, That "though his house was not so with God," yet He had made with him "an everlasting covenant, well-ordered in all things, and sure." The keeping of this covenant had been to our nation a Samson's lock, whereby we should have been able to oppose all our enemies; whereas the breach of it hath opened a door to all sorts of enemies to creep in amongst us, and hence is verified that which the Lord has threatened his people with for their breach of covenant, Deut. xxviii. 44, that the enemy shall be the head, and his people the tail.



## Page 29

Sermon being closed by prayer, the Acknowledgment of Sins was again read, as preparative to the engaging part; and the minister, in the first place, admonished all such as were guilty of such public steps of defection as are confessed in the Acknowledgment, to make full and free confession thereof before the congregation, with such a due sense of, and sorrow for these public sins, as might evidence a hearty design of abandoning them and of adhering more closely to covenanted duties, which accordingly many did, both with respect to the perjurious oaths of the late times and defections of the present.

Because many have made a handle of this, above any other part of the action, to reproach and render the whole of the work contemptible, calling it Jesuitic superstition, enthusiasm, advancing our own confessions into the room of Christ's satisfaction, and expecting pardon upon the score of superficial public acknowledgments:—therefore, to vindicate this part of the work from such groundless calumny, we desire it may be adverted. 1st, That this is a commanded duty, that such as have violated the law and commandments of God, and being guilty of false and unfaithful dealing in his covenant, should unfeignedly confess their iniquity, which, if they do, God is faithful and just to forgive. 2d, That according to the nature of the offence, as the same has been acted secretly or publickly, and is of a secret or public nature and concern, so it ought to be confessed. If the offence be in its nature and way of perpetration a secret sin, known only to God and the person's own conscience, secret repentance sufficeth: nor can the church require any thing else, in regard such sins come not within the sphere of her cognizance;—but if the sin be public and national, or only personal, but publickly acted, so as the same has been stumbling, scandalous, and offensive to others; then it is requisite, for the glory of God and good of offended brethren, that the acknowledgment be equally public as the offence. These are *first principles* that will not need to be proved, but may be taken for granted. But, 3dly, To make it appear that it is consonant to the practice of the godly to make public confession of national backsliding, we will advance two or three Scripture instances. Joshua, chap. vii. 19, compared with verse 11, commands Achan, who had broken God's covenant which he commanded Israel, and so brought upon the whole nation the Lord's anger, that he would give glory to God, by making confession to him. Whence it appears, that such sins as are national in their consequences, and bring national judgments upon a people, ought to be publickly confessed for turning away these judgments, and vindicating the honour of the Supreme Lawgiver, Ezra x. 1,2—“Now when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping, and casting himself down before the house of God, there assembled unto him out of Israel a very great congregation of men, women, and children: for



## Page 30

the people wept very sore.” Verse 2d, And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, answered and said unto Ezra, We have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land. Verse 3d, Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God, to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them. Verse 10, And Ezra the priest stood up and said unto them, Ye have transgressed and taken strange wives, to increase the trespass of Israel. Verse 11, Now therefore make confession unto the Lord God of your fathers, and do his pleasure. Verse 12, Then all the congregation answered, and said with a loud voice, As thou hast said, so must we do.” Neh. ix. 1—“Now, in the twenty and fourth day of this month, the children of Israel were assembled with fasting and with sackclothes, and earth upon them. Verse 2d, And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers. Verse 3d, And they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the Lord their God, one fourth part of the day, and another fourth part they confessed and worshipped the Lord their God.” Acts xix. 18—“And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds.”

These Scripture examples, as we conceive, do sufficiently evince, that such public confession, for the substance of it, is not only expedient, but also necessary for such as would renew their covenant with God. As for some circumstances of the manner thereof, neither are we to vindicate them, nor can they justly be charged upon the whole of those who made those confessions; far less upon the minister, who, though he exhorted such as were guilty of scandalous defection, to glorify God by a public confession, yet obliged none thereunto *authoritatively*: and such as confessed the sin of their thoughts, or any other sins not scandalous or offensive to others; he exhorted to be serious in mourning over these things secretly before the Lord; but withal told them that these things are not the subject matter of such a public acknowledgment. Such as were unconcerned in their confessions, and seemed rather to do it from the examples of others, than from a real and deep sense of their guiltiness before God (as it must not be dissembled, there were too many,) he exhorted to attain a sense of the things confessed, and posed their consciences, whether they were convinced of what they pretended to confess. If any was so ignorant and weak in their apprehensions of the nature of right repentance and justification, as to put their acknowledgment of sin in the room of Christ's satisfaction, and to rely thereupon for peace and acceptance with God, as it is alleged they did, it must be owned that they woefully erred in a matter of the highest consequence: but to affix this either upon all in general, or upon any particular person by name, is against the law of charity, and a judging of the heart, which is not obvious to man, but only to God, and so an usurping of God's prerogative; wherefore it appears, that the objecting of these and other such like things against this duty, is the effect of an impotent malice, and passion against the whole design of the work, which is too shrewd an evidence of a malignant spirit.



## Page 31

Whereas, some have taken occasion to pass injurious reflections upon the minister, because he made confession and acknowledgment of his own personal miscarriage; as though he did it with design to please the people, and to excite them to make confession of the things whereof they had no due sense, and that he should have proposed himself, as an example to the people; therefore, to discover the falsehood of such reports, we must declare plain matter of fact upon this head. The minister did indeed acknowledge his own iniquities in general, with others, and also particularly at the entry of the work; but without any design to please party or person; but only for the glory of God as himself declared, which if any shall say was but hypocritical self-seeking, we must remit them to the apostle's interrogation, to prepare an answer, *Who art thou, O man, that judgest?* Neither did he say that he did it to be an example to others, though, even in that case, he had not been to be blamed, seeing the best of God's saints, in public employment in church and state, have done the like in public assemblies, as Josiah, Ezra, Nehemiah, in sacred record, and in our church history, the Rev. John Davidson, who, at the renewing of the covenant, March 30th, 1596, not only exhorted the brethren of the ministry to a serious confession of their sins, but did also make confession of his own, and excited the rest by his example, as is related by Mr. Calderwood in his history of the church of Scotland, page 317. Wherefore, seeing he has the command of God, and the most eminent of his saints for his warrant and precedent, he may be perfectly unconcerned, what are the constructions that such persons as are indifferent either about national sins or judgments do put upon this action,

The Acknowledgment of Sins being read, the minister prayed, confessing therein the sins which had been publicly confessed in the said Acknowledgment, and begging assistance to know and do the duties engaged unto, then the Engagement to Duties was likewise read in the audience of the congregation; where he showed that the design of these engagements was to accommodate the covenants to our case and circumstances. And advised the mixed multitude to beware of entering into the covenant, unless they were duly resolved concerning the performing of the same, according as our fathers understood it, as the same was explained and applied to the present condition of things in these engagements. After which the minister having prayed for the gracious presence and assistance of the divine Spirit, to enable us both to engage and perform; commanding those who were to renew their covenant to stand upright, and hold up their right hands, he proceeded to the administration of the oath, causing the people to elevate their hands at the end of each article. The covenants being renewed, the minister addressed himself to those that had entered into covenant to this purpose. Now, you who have renewed your covenant with God must not



## Page 32

imagine that you may sit down upon your performance and rest yourselves as though your work was perfected and finished; nay, but you must consider with yourselves that now it is but beginning; your race is before you, the greatest, part of the work is before your hand: covenanting is relative to performing; you must, therefore, meditate upon, and ponder your engagements more now than before; for now you have put a new bond upon your souls, to walk with God in all the ways of new obedience. In order therefore to your performing, as you have undertaken, I would put you in mind of several particulars, which you must have much and frequently upon your hearts, and before your eyes.

1st, You must know that a holy life is what becomes Covenanters; it is not holiness in name, show and appearance, but holiness in reality, in truth and substance, that must be interwoven with all your actions and duties; though others should not look to conscience, yet you must; though others slight and neglect religion, you must by no means do it; you must put on a Joshua's generous and holy resolution, "That whatever others do, you and your house will serve the Lord." You must consider upon it, that well-set speeches concerning the covenant, is not what you are principally to study, but well-set hearts; you must shake off laziness as well as hypocrisy.

2d. You must be very regular in your walk; an uniform conversation in the way of holiness is that which greatly adorns a Christian, and consequently, a Covenanter. And if you endeavor such a regular course of life, you will not shape yourselves according to the company you fall into. As some have a religion for every company, so they have one for man and another for God, and will be more careful and afraid lest their hypocrisy be discovered by men, than they are afraid to be made manifest to the Lord. But so it must not be with you who have renewed your covenant with the Lord: you must be the same in the closet as in the public assembly, and have a greater regard to the eye of Jehovah, and the answer of a good conscience, than the approbation of fellow creatures.

3d, You must be careful to perform all things which you have engaged to, within your sphere and station, but must not go without it: God is a *God of order*, and as he hath placed the stars in their proper orbs for the order and ornament of the universe, so hath he assigned to Christians their diverse stations, for the beauty, order, and union of the Church; Christ, the Captain of salvation, hath marshalled his soldiers into rank and file, and it were a disordering of his army if any should break their ranks.

4th, You must slight no opportunity of pursuing the ends of your covenant; whatever it may cost you when the occasion offers, suffering must not deter you from it; and if the times be such now as spare both your persons and purses, yet you must not be sparing in your prayers for the reviving of the work of God in the land, which is the very end of covenanting.



## Page 33

5th, You must be careful that you do not forget the covenant; forgetting (as you heard before) is a step towards forsaking, and, therefore, you must endeavour to have the covenant nearer to you than the Israelites had it—they had it written upon the posts of their doors, you must have it written upon the tables of your hearts.

6th, You must evidence a great deal of cheerfulness and patience under your crosses, which may occur to you for your adherence to this your covenant; you must neither weaken your own hands in the discharge of covenanted duties, by drooping and discouragement under these crosses, nor stumble others, by repining at these losses, or by any carriage and deportment under them that may import your repenting of what you have now done. And because you are impotent and weak in yourselves, therefore,

7th, You must see that faith be in exercise in all your performances of covenanted duties. If this be wanting you will perform nothing to purpose, “for without faith it is impossible to please God.” By this grace you must keep up acquaintance with Christ, and have frequent recourse to him, both for cleansing you from your defilements, when you break the covenant, and for strength to perform what you are obliged to by covenant; both for recovering grace, to raise you up when fallen, and for preventing grace, to preserve you from falling or relapsing again.

8th, That you may be the more active and vigilant in keeping covenant, you must labor to maintain a constant fear of breaking it, and have a fixed impression of the tremendous threatening denounced against covenant-breakers; and you must know that all are such in God’s account, who satisfy themselves with the form of godliness, denying the power thereof. For this end read and ponder these and the like scriptures.

Lev. xxvi. 25, “And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant, and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you: and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.” Neh. v. 13—“So God shall shake out every man from his house, and from his labor, that performeth not this promise; even thus be he shaken out and emptied.” Jer. xi. 3, “Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant, which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them forth from the iron furnace.” Ezek. xvii. 15, “Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doth such things? or shall he break the covenant and be delivered?” Verse 18, “Seeing he hath despised the oath, by breaking the covenant, when lo, he had given his hand, and hath done all these things, he shall not escape.” Verse 19th, “Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, as I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head.”

The minister having given these exhortations, closed the day’s work with prayer, and singing a part of the ciii. Psalm from the 17th to the 19th verse. And having intimated the time of meeting for more immediate preparation for the *holy communion*, putting the people in mind to be preparing for the work, by fervent prayer and supplication, joined

with serious and upright self-examination, he dismissed the congregation after the usual form.

## Page 34

This true and unbiassed account of the work in its design, progress and issue we have given, not to pre-occupy false reports only, which we cannot rationally suppose an entire freedom from, unless we fall in with the opposers of our covenanted reformation, and to purchase the good opinion and commendation of men at the rate of losing the favor of God. The main end of relating some of the more material heads, scope and argument of the *sermons* is because there are some things handled in them which behoved to have been inserted in this *preface*, to clear up our motives and call to the work, which could not be better done than as the same was cleared then to the people. And this brief relation, though falling short of the matter then delivered, may serve to bring things to the memories of those that found sweet satisfaction in hearing them in the public. As for what may be the observations of censorious critics, either *of the sermons* in particular, or of the *work* in general, we are perfectly unconcerned about them, seeing we equally value their approbation or disapprobation; providing true matter of fact be not misrepresented, and so truth injuriously wronged. Nor are we willing here to make any observation of our own concerning the issue and on-carrying of the work, though all the godly there present ought to observe the Lord's gracious assistance and favor (so far as they found the same afforded to themselves, or displayed in others), lest we may either be in danger to diminish the grace of God by complaining, or incur the suspicion of self-flatterers by commending, but shall leave it to the judgment of such as were then present, and the candid interpretation of others that may read this preceding account thereof.

There have been many objections made against the *design, matter and form* of the *covenants*: more against subjects covenanting to defend the purity and promote the reformation of religion, without the royal concurrence of their sovereign princes; most of all against private persons entering into covenant, or renewing thereof, for the said end without the general concurrence of the representative body of the church and state. Those which concern the former two, have been fully answered by the greatest of our reformers, whose piety and learning set them sufficiently above the snarling censures of whatsoever cavilling pens or tongues: As for what are made against the last, they are also answered better than we can pretend to, in the analysis upon the 19th chapter of Deuteronomy, prefixed to the National and Solemn League and Covenant renewed at Lesmahago, whereunto we refer the reader. Only because that book may not be at hand to every one that would desire these objections solved, we shall here transcribe the answers to two or three of the most material of these objections, making but small, if any, variation from the author's words.

*Object.* 1. "In all the national covenants whereof we read in scripture, there was still the concurrence of either the sovereign authority then in being, or at least of the Captains, Elders, Officers, and Heads of the tribes; And, therefore, it cannot be done by private subjects, without either royal or parliamentary authority."



## Page 35

*Ans.* Certainly the obligations of the Covenant, held forth Deut. xxix. 10, 11, 12, being so extensive as to reach all the members of church and commonwealth, of all qualities, ranks, vocations, ages, sexes; is to be understood *positively*, that all these are obliged to enter into covenant, but not *negatively*, that without any of these the covenant should not be entered into. The motives mentioned are to the small as well as to the great; and without them as well as with them; the articles of it, and the keeping and doing them, are common to both alike: The relation that the small and meaner sort of people have to God (the other contracting party) is the same that the nobles and great ones have, and the privileges of it, to be established as a people unto himself and to have him for their God, do no more belong to the one than the other; And consequently the small may renew it, as well as the great; but not nationally to bind the whole nation formally, to which indeed the concurrence of the representatives is necessary. As for precedents of this practice, see them above, in the narrative of the sermons, [p. 9].

*Object.* 2. "This covenant having been disclaimed by the political father, and made void by law, never again revived by authority of parliament, nor the law rescinded by which it was declared not obligatory; is therefore of no binding force upon us, who have never personally sworn it; and to renew it, and bring ourselves under the bond of it, when we are free, without the concurring or imposing authority of our rulers, is high presumption in private subjects."

*Ans.* If any engagements can be supposed binding to posterity, certainly national covenants to keep the commandments of God, and to adhere to his institutions, must be of that nature. It cannot be denied, that several obligations do bind to posterity; such as public promises with annexation of curses to breakers, Neh. v. 12, 13. Thus Joshua's adjuration did oblige all posterity never to build Jericho, Josh. vi. 26. And the breach of it did bring the curse upon Hiel the Bethelite, in the days of Ahab. 2dly, Public vows: Jacob's vow, Gen. xxviii. 21, did oblige all his posterity, virtually comprehended in him, Hos. xii. 4. The Rechabites found themselves obliged to observe the vow of their forefather Jonadab, Jer. xxxv. 6, 14, for which they were rewarded and commended. Public oaths do oblige posterity: Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, to carry up his bones to Canaan, Gen. i. 25, which did oblige posterity some hundred years after. Exod. xiii. 19. Josh. xxiv. 32. National covenants with men before God, do oblige posterity, as Israel's covenant with the Gibeonites, Josh. ix. 15, 19. The breach whereof was punished in the days of David, 2 Sam. xxi. 1. Especially National Covenants with God, before men, about things moral and objectively obliging, are perpetual; and yet more especially (as Grotius observes) when they are of an hereditary nature, *i.e.* when the subject is permanent, the matter moral, the end good, and in the *form* there is a clause expressing their perpetuity.



## Page 36

All which ingredients of perpetual obligations are clear in Scotland's Covenants, which are *national promises*, adjuring all ranks of persons, under a curse, to preserve and promote reformation according to the word of God, and extirpate the opposite thereof. *National vows*, devoting the then engaging, and succeeding generations to be the Lord's people, and walk in his ways. *National oaths*, solemnly sworn by all ranks, never to admit of innovations, or submit to usurpations, contradictory to the word of God. *National covenants*, wherein the king, parliament and people did covenant with each other, to perform their respective duties, in their several places and stations, inviolably to preserve religion and liberty: Yea, more, *national laws*, solemnly ratified by the king and parliament, and made the foundation of the people's compact with the king, at his inauguration: And, finally, they are *national covenants with God*, as party contracting, to keep all the words of his covenant. The subject or parties contracting are permanent, to wit, the unchangeable God and the kingdom of Scotland, (the same may be said of England and Ireland,) which, whilst it remains a kingdom, is still under the obligation of these covenants. The *matter* is *moral*, antecedently and eternally binding, albeit there had been no formal covenant: the *ends* of them perpetually good, to wit, *the defence of the true reformed religion, and the maintenance of the King's Majesty's person and estate*, (as is expressed in the National Covenant,) *the glory of God, the advancement of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ; the honor and happiness of the King's Majesty and his posterity, and the public liberty, safety, and peace of the kingdoms*, as it is expressed in the Solemn League. And in the *form* of them there are clauses expressing their perpetuity. In the National covenant it is said, *that the present and succeeding generations in this land are bound to keep the foresaid National Oath and Subscription inviolable*. And in the Solemn League, Article 1, *That we and our posterity after us, may, as brethren, live in faith and love*. And Art. 5, *That they may remain conjoined in a firm peace and union to all posterity*.

We may add also the sanctions of rewards and punishments descending to posterity, prove the obligation perpetual: Which is, alas! too visible in our case as to the punishments inflicted for the breach of our covenants, and like to be further inflicted, if repentance prevent not; so that as we have been a taunting proverb, and an hissing, for the guilt, we may look to be made a curse and an execration for the punishment of it. The distinction which some make use of to elude this obligation, "That suppose they be materially bound, yet seeing they have not sworn the covenants personally, they are not formally bound," is both false and frivolous; for our father's oath

## Page 37

having all the aforesaid qualifications, binds us formally as an oath, though we have but virtually sworn it; and whether the obligation be material or formal, implicit or explicit, it is all one in God's sight, if it be real, seeing even virtual obligations have frequently brought rewards and punishments upon the head of the observers or breakers of them, as well as formal. Seeing, then, the obligation of the covenant upon us is evident to a demonstration, it cannot, in justness, be called a rebellious action against lawful authority, to declare in our station that we believe so much and resolve to practice accordingly. It is indeed too true that the wicked laws enacting the perpetual breaches of these covenants have never been rescinded; but seeing they are wicked and opposite to the commandment and covenant of the Lord, the supreme legislator, they are naturally void and null, and have been still so esteemed by us.

*Object.* 3. "Albeit the National Covenant should be granted to be binding upon us the people of Scotland, and, therefore, may be renewed: yet, to renew the Solemn League with England and Ireland, as matters now stand, is ridiculous and impossible."

*Ans.* This objection is partly answered before in the Sermons, [page 14,] and may be further cleared, if we consider, that the Solemn League and Covenant may be taken under different respects, *either as a league amongst men or a covenant between God and men*: in the former sense, as it notes a *league offensive and defensive* made betwixt the collective bodies of these kingdoms, it is certain it cannot be taken by us, who are but a poor insignificant handful of people, far from any authority, or influence in church or commonwealth; the collective and representative body of the three kingdoms having basely abandoned their covenant with God, and united in a sinful compact opposite thereto, so that to make a league with England or Ireland in this sense, were to enter into a sinful confederacy with apostate covenant breakers; but in the latter acceptation, as it is a covenant with God, not as a witness only, but also as a party contracting, there is no absurdity or impossibility why Scotland, or any part thereof, may not renew it, obliging themselves by a solemn vow to perform what they are bound to antecedently by the law of God. And if it be considered as an association, it respects those only who now do, or hereafter shall, adhere unto it, whether here or in the other two kingdoms. Hence, the words in the preamble of the Solemn League and Covenant, expressing the several ranks and the extent of the Covenanters, were not read at the renewing of it at Douglass, because we own ourselves to be under a league with none but such as own the covenanted Reformation; these, and these only, we heartily embrace as our colleagues, into the nearest and dearest bonds of Christian union and fellowship, according to this League and Covenant.

## Page 38

As the revolt of the ten tribes from the true religion and covenant of the Lord their God, hindered not the godly of Judah, nor the small party that joined in the sincere worship of God, out of Ephraim and Manasseh, to renew their covenant under the auspicious reigns of Asa, Hezekiah, Josiah; Nor did the horrid apostacy of the Sectarian party in England impede our ancestors to renew this Solemn League and Covenant in Scotland, Anno, 1649. So neither can the defection of the generality of the three kingdoms, which is to be bewailed, if possible, with tears of blood, hinder us from testifying our adherence to the covenant, or invalidate what we have done therein.

*Object.* 4. "Albeit the action should be granted to be for the main, lawful and right, yet it was most unseasonable to undertake it at such a time, when the parliament and ministry is composed of a set of men that evidence no good affection to the present established church in Scotland, who will be ready to interpret the action of a few immoderately and unseasonably zealous people, as the deed of the whole Presbyterians in Scotland, and to make a handle thereof against them, to impose upon them some new burdens; or to take such measures as will effectually put a stop to the more general renovation thereof throughout the land."

In answer to this objection, we shall only desire the gentlemen that made it to remember, That now for the space of 24 years they have been crying, the time is not come wherein we should set about covenant-renewing; one while they have pretended that the time was not seasonable, because such as were in authority were friends to the church; and it would look like a suspecting of their integrity, to enter into covenant for defence and reformation of religion, as if they would not show themselves active enough for these ends, and prove an irritation to them to turn enemies to Presbyterian government; it would cause them to think the Presbyterians to be a people of indiscreet and ungovernable zeal, and so disgust them at the establishment. Another, while they excuse themselves from this duty, because these in authority are unfriendly to the Presbyterian establishment, they must walk cautiously now and manage prudently, lest they give any umbrage to Jacobites and Episcopalians to represent them ill at court, and so occasion the overthrow of the great security founded in the Union Treaty. Formerly they needed not renew the covenant, because religion was not in danger; now they dare not attempt to do it because it is; they must wait till a well-affected parliament and good counsellors set it out of danger again, and then they will not need to covenant for its safety. These shifts are too shrewd discoveries of neutrality in this cause. It is to be feared that the godly have too long been hoodwinked with such frivolous pretexts; and it is high time for every one that has the low case of the work of God in the land at heart, to be awakened to renew their covenant with God and keep the same. The motives and calls to the work above mentioned will sufficiently, we hope, demonstrate the seasonableness of it. But if there was a defect as to the seasonableness, it was not because it was so soon set about, but because it was no sooner.



## Page 39

We shall not dwell any longer upon these and the like objections; there will not want mountains of difficulties in the way till such time as the Lord, coming by his Spirit in a day of his power, shall be pleased to level them and say, “Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubabel thou shalt become a plain.” In that day (we doubt not) there shall be a willing people to enter covenant with the Lord, even a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten; but, in the mean time, they would do well to consider the hazard they bring themselves into who wilfully raise objections against the covenant, because they are unwilling to enter into it, or be bound by it.

It may be some will desiderate an account of the other *solemn holy action* that followed upon the back of this, in regard there were some circumstances in it not so ordinary in this church in former times, because of the paucity of public instruments; but neither do we think it needful to give any large account of it, nor will it fall so properly into this preface, which concerneth only national covenanting, and, it is likely the reader's patience is too far transgressed upon already; nor was there any *substantial or formal* difference betwixt it and the comely order of the Church of Scotland observed in our purest times of reformation in the celebration of that sacred ordinance, except what in the form arose from the circumstances we were in, and the reason now mentioned. The work was awful and great, the persons employed about it few, insignificant in their own eyes, as well as mean in the eyes of others; and hence the Lord's power and grace was the more conspicuous, who (we must not dissemble it) was present to the sensible experience of many, sealing instruction upon the hearts of some, and granting, strengthening, and confirming grace to others, for which he ought to have all the glory.

But because there has been, as we are informed, no small clamor raised anent some expressions used in debarring the ignorant and scandalous from the holy table of the Lord; *That the Minister should have unreasonably and presumptuously excommunicated the Queen and Parliament, and the whole Ministers of the established church of Scotland*; Therefore, we shall here insert the very words relating to that affair, as they were uttered by him without any alteration. In warning the ignorant, scandalous and profane to beware of presuming to approach to the holy table of the Lord, the minister observed (as the manner is) the order of the decalogue, where, in the sins forbidden in the second commandment, as they are enumerated by the very Reverend the Assembly of Divines sitting at Westminster, in their humble advice concerning a Larger Catechism, we find these amongst others—“All devising, counseling, commanding, using, and any ways approving any religious worship not instituted by God himself, tolerating a false religion.— All superstitious devices, corrupting the worship of

## Page 40

God, adding to it, taking from it, whether invented and taken up of ourselves, or received by tradition from others, though under the title of antiquity, custom, devotion, good intent, or any other pretence whatsoever.” Hence, he expressed himself in these words—“I excommunicate and debar from this holy table of the Lord, all devisers, commanders, users, or approvers of any religious worship not instituted by God in his Word, all tolerators and countenancers thereof; and by consequence I debar and excommunicate from this holy table of the Lord, Queen and Parliament, and all under them, who spread and propagate or tolerate a false superstitious worship, ay and until they repent,” And in relation to the opposing of the covenants and work of reformation, he had these words—“I excommunicate and debar all who are opposers of our covenants and covenanted Reformation, and all that have taken oaths contrary to our covenants, and such particularly as are takers of the Oath of Abjuration, whether Ministers or others, until they repent.”

That this was no presumptuous and rebellious arrogance is evident, because the sins for which he debarred Queen and Parliament, and all others guilty of them, are proven from Scripture to be gross breaches of God’s law, and every violation thereof persisted in without repentance, is a sufficient cause (in the opinion of Protestant Divines) to debar and exclude from the Lord’s table. Now, it is certain that even those ministers of the established church who make such obloquy against the work for this particular, do the same thing in effect every time that they administrate this ordinance, for (as can be proved if they please to require it, or do deny it,) they excommunicate from the table all guilty of such sins as are forbidden in the second commandment, according as they are specified in the forsaid Catechism; and so, by an infallible consequence, they excommunicate the Queen and Parliament, who are grossly guilty of the most of them, only they have not the courage ingenuously and freely to own and express the consequence, but that it follows natively and necessarily from the premises, even according to their own principles, they will never be able to disprove.

Now, Reader, thou hast a just and true account as far as was necessary, of our poor and weak endeavours in this matter, which we hope will, at least, stand as a witness and testimony (without arrogance we desire to speak it) against the apostacy of some and indifferency of others, who should have been to us as the *he-goats before the flock* in paving our way to Zion, but are rather *making to themselves captains* to carry us back to Babylon, and pollute our land with idolatry and superstition; and, as a pledge to posterity that the Lord has not yet utterly deserted the land, though we rather wish, (if so it may consist with his holy purpose, *who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working*) that it might tend to excite, some



## Page 41

to bethink “whence they have fallen, and repent, and to do their first works, lest the Lord come quickly, and utterly remove his candlestick from us:” and engage them to renew these covenants in a more public way, and prosecute the ends of them with more zeal, fidelity, and constancy, “that the Lord may yet delight to dwell amongst us, make our judges peace, and our exactors righteousness,” and make us to be called *Hephzibah*, and our land *Beulah*.

The reader may please to cast his eye upon the following passages, quoted from the writings of some of the ablest divines, wherewith these kingdoms have been blessed, since the first reformation from Popery; wherein he will see, how far different an opinion they have entertained of the Covenant, from what are the thoughts of the learned Latitudinarians of our age.

*A Testimony to the truth of JESUS CHRIST and to our Solemn League and Covenant, &c., subscribed by the Ministers of Christ, within the province of London, December 14, 1649 Head IV.*

“In order unto reformation and defence of religion within these three kingdoms, we shall never forget, how solemnly and cheerfully the Solemn League and Covenant was sworn with hands lifted up to the most high God.—We were, and are abundantly satisfied, that our Solemn League and Covenant of September 27, 1643, is not only warrantable for the matter of it and manner of entering into it, but also of such excellency and importance,—That it will be very hard in all points to parallel it; and, therefore, as we did sincerely swear this covenant with God, with all our heart, and with all our soul, much rejoicing at the oath with a true intention to perform it, and not for promoting any politic design; so we do believe and profess to the world that we still stand as firmly engaged to the real performance of it, and that it is not in the power of any person or persons on earth to dispense with it or absolve from it.”

*The harmonious consent of the Ministers of the county Palatine Lancaster with their Reverend Brethren the Ministers of the province of London. Head V.*

“We shall never forget how solemn it (the Solemn League and Covenant) was sworn, and what rejoicing there was at the oath, sundry at the taking of it weeping for joy; and when the Covenant was thus taken, we thought with ourselves, that surely now the crown is set upon England’s head: We judged the day of entering into this Covenant to be England’s coronation-day, as it was the day of the gladness of our hearts.”

*Mr. Philip Nye’s Exhortation at the taking of the Covenant, September 29th, 1649, p. 2.*

“This Oath is such, and in the matter and consequence of it of such concernment, as I can truly say, it is worthy of us, yea, of all the kingdoms of the world; for it is swearing



fealty and allegiance to Christ the King of kings, and giving up of all these kingdoms which are his inheritance, to be subdued more to his throne, and ruled more by his sceptre, upon whose shoulders the government is laid.”



## Page 42

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### *THE NATIONAL COVENANT, OR THE CONFESSION OF FAITH OF THE KIRK OF SCOTLAND;*

Subscribed at first by the King's Majesty and his Household, in the year of God 1580; Thereafter, by persons of all ranks, in the year 1581; By Ordinance of the Lords of the Secret Council, and Acts of the General Assembly. Subscribed again by all sorts of persons in the year 1590, by a new Ordinance of Council, at the desire of the General Assembly, with a Band for the maintenance of the true religion, and the King's person: And subscribed in the year 1638, by the Noblemen, Barons, Gentlemen, Burgesses, Ministers and Commons, then under-subscribing; together with their resolution and promises for the causes after specified, to maintain the True Religion, and the King's Majesty, according to the Confession aforesaid and Acts of Parliament; And upon the supplication of the General Assembly to his Majesty's High Commissioner, and the Lords of his Majesty's honorable Privy Council. Subscribed again in the year 1639, by Ordinance of Council, and Acts of General Assembly, &c., &c. The Tenor whereof here followeth.

We all, and every one of us underwritten, protest, that after long and due examination of our own consciences in matters of true and false religion, we are now thoroughly resolved in the truth by the Word and Spirit of God: And, therefore, we believe with our hearts, confess with our mouths, subscribe with our hands and constantly affirm before God and the whole world, that this only is the true Christian faith and religion pleasing God, revealed to the world by the preaching of the blessed evangel; and is received, believed, and defended by many and sundry notable kirks and realms, but chiefly by the *Kirk of Scotland, and sometimes by the King's Majesty, and the three estates of this realm*, as God's eternal truth and only ground of our salvation, as more particularly is expressed in the Confession of our Faith, established and publicly confirmed by sundry Acts of Parliaments, and now of a long time have been openly professed by the King's Majesty, and whole body of this realm, both in burgh and land. To the which Confession and form of religion, we willingly agree in our own consciences, in all points, as unto God's undoubted truth and verity, grounded only upon his written word. And, therefore, we abhor and detest all contrary religion and doctrine; but chiefly all kind of Papistry in general, and particular heads, even as they are now damned and confuted by the word of God, and Kirk of Scotland. But in special we detest and refuse the usurped authority of that Roman Antichrist upon the Scriptures of God, upon the Kirk, the civil Magistrate, and consciences of men: All his tyrannous laws made upon indifferent things against our Christian liberty: His erroneous doctrine against the sufficiency of the written word, the perfection of the law, the offices of Christ, and his blessed evangel: His



## Page 43

corrupted doctrine concerning original sin, our natural inability and rebellion to God's law, our justification by faith only, our imperfect sanctification and obedience to the law; the nature, number, and use of the holy sacraments: His five bastard sacraments; with all his rites, ceremonies, and false doctrine, added to the ministration of the true sacraments, without the Word of God: His cruel judgment against infants departing without the sacrament: His absolute necessity of baptism: His blasphemous opinion of transubstantiation, or real presence of Christ's body in the elements, and receiving of the same by the wicked, or bodies of men: His dispensations with solemn oaths, perjuries, and degrees of marriage forbidden in the Word; His cruelty against the innocent divorced: His devilish mass: His blasphemous priesthood: His profane sacrifice for the sins of the dead and the quick: His canonization of men; calling upon angels or saints departed; worshipping of imagery, relics and crosses; dedicating of kirks, altars, days; Vows to creatures: His purgatory, prayers for the dead; praying or speaking in a strange language; with his processions and blasphemous litany, and multitude of advocates or mediators: His manifold orders, auricular confession: His desperate and uncertain repentance; His general and doubtful faith: His satisfactions of men for their sins: His justification by works, *opus operatum*, works of supererogation, merits, pardons, peregrinations and stations: His holy water, baptizing of bells, conjuring of spirits, crossing, earning, anointing, conjuring, hallowing of God's good creatures, with the superstitious opinion joined therewith: His worldly monarchy, and wicked hierarchy: His three solemn vows, with all his shavellings of sundry sorts: His erroneous and bloody decrees made at Trent, with all the subscribers and approvers of that cruel and bloody bond, conjured against the Kirk of God.

And finally, we detest all his vain allegories, rites, signs, and traditions brought into the Kirk, without or against the Word of God and doctrine of this true reformed Kirk; to the which we join ourselves willingly, in doctrine, faith, religion, discipline, and use of the holy sacraments, as lively members of the same in Christ our head: Promising and swearing by the *Great Name of the Lord our God*, that we shall continue in the obedience of the doctrine and discipline of this kirk, and shall defend the same according to our vocation and power, all the days of our lives, under the pains continued in the law and danger both of body and soul, in the day of God's fearful judgment. And, seeing that many are stirred up by Satan and that Roman Antichrist, to promise, swear, subscribe, and for a time use the holy sacraments in the Kirk deceitfully against their own consciences, minding thereby, first, under the external cloak of religion, to corrupt and subvert secretly God's true religion within the Kirk, and afterwards, when the time may serve, to become open enemies and persecutors of the same, under vain hope of the Pope's dispensation devised against the Word of God, to his greater confusion, and their double condemnation in the day of the Lord Jesus.

## Page 44

We, therefore, willing to take away all suspicion of hypocrisy, and of such double dealing with God and his Kirk, protest, and call *the Searcher of all hearts for witness*, that our minds and hearts do fully agree with this our *Confession, Promise, Oath, and Subscription*, so that we are not moved with any worldly respect, but are persuaded only in our own consciences, through the knowledge and love of God's true religion, imprinted in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, as we shall answer to him in the day when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed. And because we perceive that the quietness and stability of our religion and kirk, doth depend upon the safety and good behaviour of [the<sup>[5]</sup> King's Majesty,] as upon a comfortable instrument of God's mercy, granted to this country, for the maintaining of this kirk, and ministration of justice amongst us, we protest and promise with our hearts, under the same oath, hand-write, and pains, that we shall defend [his<sup>[6]</sup> person and authority,] with our goods, bodies, and lives, in the defence of Christ's evangel, liberties of our country, ministration of justice, and punishment of iniquity, against all enemies within this realm, or without, we desire our God to be a strong and merciful defender to us in the day of our death, and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. To whom with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory eternally. Amen.

Likeas, many Acts of Parliament not only in general do abrogate, annul, and rescind all laws, statutes, acts, constitutions; canons, civil or municipal, with all other ordinances and practise penalties whatsoever, made in prejudice of the true religion and professors thereof; or of the true kirk-discipline, jurisdiction and freedom thereof; or in favor of idolatry and superstition; or of the Papistical kirk; as Act. 3, Act. 31, Parl. 1; Act. 23, Parl. 11; Act. 114, Parl. 12, of King James VI. that Papistry and superstition may be utterly suppressed, according to the intention of the Acts of Parliament, repeated in the 5th Act, Parl. 20, King James VI. And to that end they ordain all Papists and priests to be punished with manifold civil and ecclesiastical pains, as adversaries to God's true religion, preached, and by law established within this realm, Act 24, Parl. 11, King James VI.; as common enemies to all Christian government, Act 18 Parl. 16, King James VI.; as rebellers and gainstanders of our sovereign Lord's authority, Act 47 Parl. 8, King James VI.; and as idolaters, Act 104, Parl. 7, King James VI. But also in particular, by and attour the Confession of Faith, do abolish and condemn the Pope's authority and jurisdiction out of this land, and ordain the maintainers thereof to be punished, Act 2, Parl. 1; Act 51 Parl. 3; Act 106, Parl. 7; Act 114, Parl. 12, King James VI., do condemn the Pope's erroneous doctrine, or any other erroneous doctrine repugnant to any of the articles of the true and Christian religion, publicly preached,

## Page 45

and by law established in this realm; and ordain the spreaders and makers of books, or libels, or letters, or writs of that nature, to be punished, Acts 46, Parl. 3; Act 106, Parl. 7; Act 24, Par. 11, K. James VI. do condemn all baptism conform to the Pope's kirk, and the idolatry of the mass; and ordains all sayers, wilful hearers, concealers of the mass, the maintainers and reseters of the priests, Jesuits, trafficking Papists, to be punished without any exception or restriction, Act 5, Parl. 1; Act 120, Parl. 12; Act 134, Parl. 13; Act 139, Parl. Act 1, Parl. 19; Act 5, Parl. 20, King James VI., do condemn all erroneous books and writs, containing erroneous doctrine against the religion presently professed or containing superstitious rites and ceremonies Papistical, whereby the people are greatly abused; and ordains the home-bringers of them to be punished, Act 25, Parl. 11, King James VI., do condemn the monuments and dregs of the bygone idolatry, as going to crosses, observing the festival days of Saints and other superstitious and Papistical rites, to the dishonour of God, contempt of true religion, and fostering of great error among the people; and ordains the users of them to be punished for the second fault as idolaters, Act 104, Parl. 7, King James VI.

Likeas, many acts of parliament are conceived for maintenance of God's true Christian religion, and the purity thereof in doctrine and sacraments of the true church of God, the liberty and freedom thereof in her national synodical assemblies, Presbyteries, sessions, policy, discipline, and jurisdiction thereof, as that purity of religion and liberty of the church was used, professed, exercised, preached, and confessed according to the reformation of religion in this realm. As for instance, the 99th Act, Parl. 7, Act 23, Parl. 11; Act 114, Parl. 12; Act 160, Parl. 13, King James VI., ratified by the 4th Act of King Charles. So that the 6th Act, Parl. 1, and 68th Act, Parl. 6, of King James VI., in the year of God 1579, declares the ministers of the blessed evangel, whom God of his mercy had raised up, or hereafter should raise, agreeing with them that then lived in doctrine and administration of the sacraments, and the people that professed Christ as he was then offered in the evangel and doth communicate with the holy sacraments, (as in the reformed kirks of this realm they were publickly administrate) according to the Confession of Faith, to be the true and holy kirk of Christ Jesus within this realm, and decerns and declares all and sundry who either gainsay the word of the evangel, received and approved as the heads of the Confession of Faith, professed in parliament in the year of God 1560, specified also in the first Parliament of King James VI, and ratified in this present parliament; more particularly do specify, or that refuse the administration of the holy sacraments as they were then administered, to be no members of the said kirk within this realm, and true religion presently professed, so long as



## Page 46

they keep themselves so divided from the society of Christ's body; and the subsequent Act 69, Parl. 6. of King James VI. declares, that there is none other face of kirk, nor other face of religion, than was presently at that time by the favour of God established within this realm, which therefore is ever styled, *God's true religion—Christ's true religion—the true and Christian religion—and a perfect religion*; which, by manifold acts of parliament, all within this realm are bound to subscribe the articles thereof, the Confession of Faith, to recant all doctrine and errors repugnant to any of the said articles, Act 4 and 9, Parl. 1; Act 45, 46, 47, Parl. 3; Act 71, Parl. 6; Act 106, Parl. 7; Act 24, Parl. 11; Act 123, Parl. 12; Act 194 and 197, Parl. 14, of King James VI. And all magistrates, sheriffs, &c. on the one part, are ordained to search, apprehend, and punish all contraveners; for instance, Act 5, Parl. 1; Act 104, Parl. 7; Act 25, Parl. 11, King James VI.; and that notwithstanding of the King's Majesty's licence to the contrary, which are discharged and declared to be of no force, in so far as they tend in any ways to the prejudice and hinder of the execution of the acts of parliament against Papists and adversaries of true religion, Act 106, Parl. 7, King James VI. On the other part, in the 47th Act, Parl. 3, of King James VI. it is declared and ordained, seeing the cause of God's true religion and his highness' authority are so joined, as the hurt of the one is common to both; and that none shall be reputed as loyal and faithful subjects to our sovereign lord or his authority, but be punishable as rebellers and gainstanders of the same, who shall not give their confession, and make their profession of the said true religion, and that they who, after defection, shall give the confession of their faith of new, they shall promise to continue therein in time coming, to maintain our sovereign lord's authority, and at the uttermost of their power to fortify, assist, and maintain the true preachers and professors of Christ's evangel against whatsoever enemies and gainstanders of the same; and namely, against all such (of whatsoever nation, estate, or degree they be,) that have joined and bound themselves, or have assisted, or assist to set forward, and execute the cruel decrees of Trent, contrary to the preachers and true professors of the Word of God, which is repeated, word by word, in the articles of pacification at Perth, the 23rd of February, 1572; approved by Parliament, the last of April, 1573; ratified in Parliament, 1587; and related, Act 123, Parl. 12, of King James VI., with this addition, that they are bound to resist all treasonable uproars and hostilities that are raised against the true religion, the King's Majesty, and the true professors.



## Page 47

Likeas all lieges are bound to maintain the King's Majesty's royal person, and authority, the authority of Parliaments, without the which neither any laws, or lawful judicatories can be established, Act 130, Act 131, Parl. 8, K. James VI. and the subjects' liberties, who ought only to live and be governed by the King's laws, the common laws of this realm allenary, Act 48, Parl. 3, K. James I. Act 79, Parl. 6, K. James IV. repeated in the Act 131, Parl. 8, K. James VI. Which, if they be innovated or prejudged, the commission anent the union of the two kingdoms of Scotland and England, which is the sole Act of the 17 Parl. of K. James VI. declares such confusion would ensue, as this realm could be no more a free monarchy, because by the fundamental laws, ancient privileges, offices and liberties of this kingdom, not only the princely authority of his Majesty's royal descent hath been these many ages maintained, but also the people's security of their lands, livings, rights, offices, liberties, and dignities preserved, and therefore for the preservation of the said true religion, laws and liberties of this kingdom, it is statute by the 8 Act, Parl. 1, repeated in the 99 Act, Parl. 7, ratified in the 23 Act, Parl. 11, and 114 Act, Parl. 12, of K. James VI. and 4 Act K. Charles I. That all kings and princes at their coronation and reception of their princely authority, shall make their faithful promise by their solemn oath in the presence of the eternal God, that enduring the whole time of their lives; they shall serve the same eternal God to the uttermost of their power, according as he hath required in his most holy word, contained in the Old and New Testaments. And according to the same word, shall maintain the true religion of Christ Jesus, the preaching of his holy word, the due and right ministrations of the sacraments now received and preached within this realm (according to the Confession of Faith) and shall abolish and gainstand all false religion contrary to the same, and shall rule the people committed to their charge, according to the will and command of God, revealed in his foresaid word, and according to the laudable laws and constitutions received in this realm, no ways repugnant to the said will of the eternal God; and shall procure, to the uttermost of their power, to the kirk of God and whole Christian people, true and perfect peace in all time coming; and that they shall be careful to root out of their empire all heretics, and enemies to the true worship of God, who shall be convicted by the true kirk of God, for the foresaid crimes, which was also observed by his Majesty<sup>[7]</sup> at his coronation in Edinburgh, 1633, as may be seen in the order of the coronation.



## Page 48

In obedience to the commandment of God, conform to the practice of the godly in former times, and according to the laudable example of our worthy and religious progenitors,——which was warranted also by Act of Council, commanding a general bond to be made and subscribed by his Majesty's subjects of all ranks, for two causes: one was, for defending the true religion as it was then reformed, and is expressed in the Confession of faith above-mentioned, and a former large Confession established by sundry acts of lawful General Assemblies, and of Parliament, unto which it hath relation, set down in public Catechisms, and which had been for many years (with a blessing from heaven) preached and professed in this kirk and kingdom as God's undoubted truth, grounded only upon his written Word. The other cause was, for maintaining the King's Majesty, his person, and estate; the true worship of God and the King's authority being so straitly joined as that they had the same friends and common enemies and did stand and fall together; and finally, being convinced in our minds, and confessing with our mouths, that the present and succeeding generations in this land are bound to keep the foresaid national oath and subscription inviolable. We,-----under subscribing, considering divers times before, and especially at this time, the danger of the true reformed religion -----, and of the public peace of the kingdom; by the manifold innovations and evils generally contained and particularly mentioned, [in supplications, complaints, and protestations,[8]] do hereby profess, and before God, his angels, and the world, solemnly declare, that with our whole hearts we agree and resolve, all the days of our life, constantly to adhere unto and defend the foresaid true religion; and (forbearing the practice of all novations already introduced in the matters of the worship of God, or approbation of the corruptions of the public government of the kirk, or civil places and power of kirkmen,[9] till they be tried and allowed in free assemblies and in Parliaments,) to labor by all means lawful to recover the purity and liberty of the gospel, as it was established and professed before the foresaid novations; and because, after due examination, we plainly perceive, and undoubtedly believe, that the evils contained in our [supplications, complaints, and protestations,[10]] have no warrant of the Word of God; are contrary to the articles of the foresaid Confessions, to the intention and meaning of the blessed reformers of religion in this land, to the above-written Acts of Parliament, and do sensibly tend to the re-establishing of the Popish religion and tyranny, and to the subversion and ruin of the true reformed religion, and of our liberties, laws and estates. We also declare, that the foresaid confessions are to be interpreted, and ought to be understood of the foresaid novations and evils, no less than if every one of them had been expressed in the foresaid Confessions, and that we are obliged



## Page 49

to detest and abhor them, amongst other particular heads of Papistry abjured therein; and, therefore, from the knowledge and conscience of our duty to God, [to our King and country,[11]] without any worldly respect or inducement, so far as human infirmity will suffer, wishing a further measure of the grace of God for this effect, we promise and swear by the *great name of the Lord our God*, to continue in the profession and obedience of the foresaid religion; that we shall defend the same, and resist all these contrary errors and corruptions, according to our vocation, and to the uttermost of that power that God hath put in our hands, all the days of our life; and, in like manner, with the same heart, we declare before God and men, that we have no intention nor desire to attempt any thing that may turn to the dishonour of God, or to the diminution of [the King's[12]] greatness and authority; but on the contrary, we promise and swear, that we shall, to the uttermost of our power, with our means and lives, and to the defence of [our dread sovereign, the King's Majesty, his person and authority[13]] in the defence and preservation of the foresaid true religion, liberties, and laws of the kingdom; as also, to the mutual defence and assistance every one of us of another, in the same cause of maintaining the true religion [his Majesty's[14]] authority, with our best counsel, our bodies, means, and whole power, against all sorts of persons whatsoever. So that whatsoever shall be done to the least of us for that cause, shall be taken as done to us all in general, and to every one of us in particular; that we shall, neither directly nor indirectly, suffer ourselves to be divided or withdrawn, by whatsoever suggestion, allurements, or terror, from this blessed and loyal conjunction; nor shall cast in any let or impediment that may stay or hinder any such resolution, as by common consent shall be found to conduce for so good ends;—but, on the contrary, shall, by all lawful means labour to further and promote the same, and if any such dangerous and divisive motions be made to us by word or write, we, and every one of us, shall either suppress it, or if need be, shall incontinent make the same known that it may be timeously obviated; neither do we fear the foul aspersions of rebellion, combination, or what else our adversaries from their craft and malice would put upon us, seeing what we do is so well warranted, and ariseth from an unfeigned desire to maintain the true worship of God, the majesty of [[15] our King,] and peace of the kingdom, for the common happiness of ourselves and the posterity.

## Page 50

And because we cannot look for a blessing from God upon our proceedings, except with our profession and subscription, we join such a life and conversation as beseemeth Christians who have renewed their covenant with God: We, therefore, faithfully promise, for ourselves, our followers, and all other under us, both in public, in our particular families and personal carriage, to endeavor to keep ourselves within the bounds of Christian liberty, and to be good examples to others of all godliness, soberness and righteousness, and of every duty we owe to God and man. And that this our union and conjunction may be observed without violation, we call the living God, the searcher of our hearts, to witness, who knoweth this to be our sincere desire and unfeigned resolution, as we shall answer to Jesus Christ, in the great day, and under the pain of God's everlasting wrath and of infamy, and loss of all honour and respect in this world: Most humbly beseeching the Lord to strengthen us by his Holy Spirit for this end, and to bless our desires and proceedings with a happy success, that religion and righteousness may flourish in the land, to the glory of God, the honour of [our King[16]] and peace and comfort of us all. In witness whereof we have subscribed with our hands all the premises, &c.

The article of this covenant, which was at first subscription referred[17] to the determination of the General Assembly, being now determined, and thereby the five articles of Perth, the government of the Kirk by Bishops, the civil places and power of kirkmen upon the reasons and grounds contained in the Acts of the General Assembly, declared to be unlawful within this kirk, we subscribe according to the determination foresaid.

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### *THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT, FOR REFORMATION AND DEFENCE OF RELIGION, ETC.*

We, having before our eyes the glory of God, and the advancement of the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the honour and happiness of [the[18] King's Majesty and his posterity] and the true public liberty, safety, and peace of the kingdoms, wherein every one's private condition is included; and calling to mind the treacherous and bloody plots, conspiracies, attempts and practices of the enemies of God against the true religion and professors thereof in all places, especially in these three kingdoms, ever since the reformation of religion; and how much their rage, power, and presumption are of late, and at this time increased and exercised, whereof the deplorable estate of the church and kingdom of Ireland, the distressed estate of the church and kingdom of England, and the dangerous estate of the church and kingdom of Scotland, are present and public testimonies. We have now at last [[19] after other means of supplication, remonstrance, protestation and suffering] for the preservation of ourselves and our religion from utter ruin and destruction, according to the commendable practice of these kingdoms in former times, and the example of God's people in other nations, after mature deliberation, resolved and determined to enter into a mutual and Solemn

League and Covenant: Wherein we all subscribe, and each one of us for himself, with our hands lifted up to the Most High God, do swear—



## Page 51

1. That we shall sincerely, really, and constantly, through the grace of God, endeavour in our several places and callings, the preservation of the reformed religion in the church of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, against our common enemies; the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, according to the Word of God, and the example of the best reformed churches; and shall endeavour to bring the churches of God in the three kingdoms, to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, Confession of Faith, Form of Church-government, Directory for Worship and Catechizing; that we and our posterity after us, may, as brethren, live in faith and love, and the Lord may delight to dwell in the midst of us.

2. That we shall, in like manner, without respect of persons, endeavor the extirpation of Popery, Prelacy (that is, church government by arch-bishops, bishops, their chancellors and commissaries, deans, deans and chapters, archdeacons, and all other ecclesiastical officers depending on that hierarchy), superstition, heresy, schism, profaneness, and whatsoever shall be found to be contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness; lest we partake in other men's sins, and thereby be in danger to receive of their plagues; and that the Lord may be one, and his name one in the three kingdoms.

3. We shall, with the same sincerity, reality and constancy, in our several vocations, endeavor with our estates and lives mutually to preserve the rights and privileges of the parliaments<sup>[20]</sup> and the liberties of the kingdoms; and to preserve and defend [the King's<sup>[21]</sup> Majesty's] person and authority, in the preservation and defence of the true religion and liberties of the kingdoms; that the world may bear witness with our consciences of our loyalty, and that we have no thoughts or intentions to diminish [his<sup>[22]</sup> Majesty's] just power and greatness.

4. We shall also with all faithfulness endeavor the discovery of all such as have been, or shall be, incendiaries, malignants, or evil instruments, by hindering the reformation of religion, dividing [the<sup>[23]</sup> King] from his people, or one of the kingdoms from another, or making any faction or parties amongst the people, contrary to this League and Covenant, that they may be brought to public trial, and receive condign punishment, as the degree of their offences shall require or deserve, or the supreme judicatories of both kingdoms respectively, or others having power from them for that effect, shall judge convenient.

5. And whereas the happiness of a blessed peace between these kingdoms, denied in former times to our progenitors, was by the good providence of God granted unto [[<sup>[24]</sup>us] and—concluded, and settled by both parliaments, We shall, each one of us, according to our place and interest, endeavor that they may be and remain conjoined<sup>[25]</sup> in a firm peace and union to all posterity, and that justice may be done upon the wilful opposers thereof, in manner expressed in the precedent article.



## Page 52

6. We shall also according to our places and callings this common cause of religion, liberty and peace of the kingdoms, assist and defend all those that enter into this league and covenant, in the maintaining and pursuing thereof; and shall not suffer ourselves, directly or indirectly, by whatsoever combination, persuasion or terror, to be divided and withdrawn from this blessed union and conjunction, whether to make defection to the contrary part, or to give ourselves to a detestable indifferency or neutrality in this cause which so much concerneth the glory of God, the good of the kingdoms, and honor of [the<sup>[26]</sup> King;] but shall all the days of our lives zealously and constantly continue therein, against all opposition, and promote the same according to our power, against all lets and impediments whatsoever; and what we are not able ourselves to suppress or overcome, we shall reveal and make known, that it may be timely prevented or removed; all of which we shall do as in the sight of God.

And because these kingdoms are guilty of many sins, and provocations against God and his Son Jesus Christ, as is too manifest by our present distresses and dangers, the fruits thereof; we profess and declare before God and the world, our unfeigned desire to be humbled for our own sins, and for the sins of these kingdoms, especially that we have not, as we ought, valued the inestimable benefit of the gospel, that we have not labored for the purity and power thereof, and that we have not endeavored to receive Christ in our hearts, nor to walk worthy of him in our lives, which are the causes of other sins and transgressions so much abounding amongst us; and our true and unfeigned purpose, desire and endeavor for ourselves, and all others under our power and charge, both in public and private, in all duties we owe to God and man, to amend our lives, and each one to go before another in the example of a real reformation; that the Lord may turn away his wrath, and heavy indignation, and establish these churches and kingdoms in truth and peace. And this Covenant we make in the presence of Almighty God, the searcher of all hearts, with a true intention to perform the same, as we shall answer at the great day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed; most humbly beseeching the Lord to strengthen us by his Holy Spirit for this end, and to bless our desires and proceedings with such success as may be deliverance and safety to his people, and encouragement to other Christian churches that may be groaning under, or in danger of, the yoke of Antichristian tyranny, to join in the same, or like association and Covenant to the glory of God, the enlargement of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and the peace and tranquility of Christian kingdoms and commonwealths.

N.B.—These Covenants above-written, formerly nationally taken and renewed, and still nationally binding, We, in our private station only, swear and subscribe in their genuine sense, conform to the Explication and Application thereof, in our present Acknowledgment of the public Sins and Breaches of the same, and Engagement to the Duties contained therein, which do in a special way relate to the present times, and are proper for our capacities therein.



## Page 53

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### *A SOLEMN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF PUBLIC SINS, AND BREACHES OF THE NATIONAL COVENANT AND SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT.*

We all and every one of us—being *by the good hand of our God upon us*, now, after a long and due deliberation, determined to testify to the world, for the glory of God, and the exoneration of our consciences, in the matter of our duty, our adherence to the whole of our attained Reformation, by renewing these our vows and Covenant-engagements with God, and knowing that it is a necessary preparative for the right performance of that so great and solemn a duty, that we be duly sensible of, and deeply humbled for the many heinous breaches thereof, which these nations, and we ourselves in particular are guilty of; do therefore, with that measure of sorrow and repentance which God of his mercy shall be pleased to grant us, desire to acknowledge and confess our own sins and violations of these vows, and the sins and transgressions of our fathers; to which we have also an example left us by the *Cloud of witnesses, which through faith and patience have inherited the promises*, ever since the Lord had a visible national church upon earth, and more especially by our progenitors in this nation; as, for instance, in the year 1596, “Wherein the General Assembly, and all the kirk judicatories, with the concurrence of many of the nobility, gentry and burgesses, did with many tears acknowledge the breach of the National Covenant, and engaged themselves into a reformation, even as our predecessors, and theirs, had done in the General Assembly and Convention of Estates in the year 1567.” As also the more recent practice of the godly renewing the National Covenant, and acknowledging the breaches of it, both before they obtained the concurrence of civil authority, in the year 1638, and again, by authority, in the year 1639. And that noble precedent of that *National Solemn acknowledgment of Public Sins and Breaches of the Solemn League and Covenant, and Solemn Engagement to all the duties contained therein*, (which we are here taking for our pattern, and enlarging the same as the sad sins and transgressions since that time committed, and the circumstances of time give occasion) condescended upon, “by the Commission of the General Assembly, and approved by the Committee of Estates, and publicly owned in all the churches, at the renewing of the Solemn League, Anno 1648, and 1649, together with that solemn renovation thereof accompanied with such confession of sins as did best suit that time, by that small company of the Lord’s people at Lanark, before their discomfiture at Pentland hills. And perceiving by the foresaid instances, that this duty, when gone about out of conscience, hath very often been attended with a reviving out of troubles—or at least out of deadness, security, and formality, under which we and the land are at present sinking, and with a blessing and success



## Page 54

from heaven;—'We do humbly and sincerely, as in His sight who is the searcher of hearts, acknowledge the many sins and great transgressions of the land; we have done wickedly, our kings, our princes, our nobles, our judges, our officers, our teachers, and our people. Albeit the Lord hath long and clearly spoken unto us, we have not hearkened to his voice. Albeit he hath followed us with tender mercies, we have not been allured to wait upon him and walk in his way. And though he hath sticken us, yet we have not grieved: nay, though he hath consumed us, we have refused to receive correction. We have not remembered to render unto the Lord according to his goodness, and according to our vows and promises; but have gone away backward, by a perpetual backsliding, and have most sinfully and shamefully broken the National Covenant, and all the articles of the Solemn League and Covenant, which our fathers sware before God, angels and men.'" Albeit there has been in the land, ever since the reformation of religion, some of all ranks who have been for a testimony unto the truth, and for a name of joy and praise unto the Lord, by living godly, studying to keep their garments pure, and being steadfast in the covenant and cause of God; and there yet continues to be some, though reduced to a very small number, destitute of outward power and ability, and other helps fit for the right managing of a testimony, wanting the countenance of civil authority, and having few to feed or lead them; who are, notwithstanding all these difficulties, labouring in the strength of Christ to keep the good old way of these faithful witnesses who are gone before, in bearing testimony to the truths of Christ. "Yet we have reason to acknowledge, that most of us in this land have not endeavoured with that reality, sincerity, and constancy that did become us, to preserve the work of reformation in the Kirk of Scotland, as we are obliged by the first article of the Solemn League, and by the National Covenant; wherein we promise and swear by the great name of the Lord our God, that we shall continue in the obedience of the doctrine and discipline of this kirk, and shall defend the same according to our vocation and power all the days of our lives, under the pains contained in the law, and danger both of body and soul in the day of God's fearful judgment, and resist all contrary error and corruptions, according to our vocations, and the utmost of that power God hath put in our hands all the days of our life—according to these Scriptures."

Ezra ix. 10, 11, "And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments. Verse 11. Which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets, &c." Isaiah xxiv. 5, "The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, broken the everlasting covenant." Jeremiah ix. 13, "And the Lord saith, because they have forsaken my law, which I set before them,

## Page 55

and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein. Verse 15. Therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, behold I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink." Daniel vii. 25, "And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws." Galatians v. 1, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." I Timothy iv. 16, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine: continue in them: for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." 2 Timothy i. 13, "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith, and love, which is in Christ Jesus." Revelation in. 10, 11, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold I come quickly; hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

"But we have been so far from such endeavours, that there hath been a stupid submission to our rulers and great ones, breaking down and ruining the whole work of reformation, razing the bulwarks thereof, rescinding the laws in favour of the same, and not only breaking but burning the covenants for preserving it, enacting the breaches thereof, and declaring the obligation thereof void and criminal to be, owned; and, upon the ruins thereof, setting up abjured Diocesan Erastian Prelacy, with its concomitant bondage of patronages—a blasphemous and sacrilegious supremacy and arbitrary power in magistrate over church and state. There was little conscience made of constant endeavours to preserve the reformation, when there was not a seasonable testimony exhibited against these audacious and heaven-daring attempts; when our ministers were by a wicked edict ejected from their charges, both they and the people too easily complied with it. Albeit, in the National Covenant, the land is obliged to defend the reformation, and to labour by all means lawful to recover the purity and liberty of the gospel, by forbearing the practice of all novations introduced in the worship of God, or approbation of the corruptions of the public government of the kirk: yet was there given all the approbation required by law of the novation and corruption of Prelacy by hearing the Prelatic curates. Both ministers and people, in a great measure complied with, submitted unto, and connived at the encroachments of the supremacy and absolute power, both in accepting and countenancing the former indulgences and later toleration; the generality took and subscribed oaths and bonds imposed during the reigns of these tyrants, Charles II. and James Duke of York, pressing conformity with the then establishments of church and state, most contrary to the reformation which the nation had sworn to preserve; some of these

## Page 56

oaths and bonds restraining the takers from all endeavours to preserve it, as those that renounced the privilege of defensive arms; some of them abjuring the covenants expressly, and condemning the prosecution of the ends of them as rebellion, viz., the declaration and test; the most part did, Issachar like, crouch beneath all the burthens of maintaining and defending an arbitrary power and absolute tyranny, wholly employed and applied for the destruction of reformation, and paid such subsidies and supplies as were declaredly imposed for upholding the tyrant's usurpations, and suppressing all endeavours to preserve the reformation."

And after the Lord was pleased in mercy to break the rod of oppression, and burst the bands of that horrid tyranny from off his people's necks, and to allow us a time of peace and ease; yet have we not made conscience of keeping this our oath; but instead of all lawful means to preserve the discipline and government of this church, there have been frequent invasions made thereupon by the civil powers, exercising an Erastian supremacy over her assemblies, by indicting, prorogueing, and dissolving them at their pleasure, and in their name and authority; whereby Christ's supremacy and kingly dignity was highly injured. And as the state for their part have, contrary to this article, made these usurpations upon the government of the church, so have backslidden ministers in their stations shamefully succumbed to, been silent at, and pleaded in defence of these usurpations, and have not zealously and faithfully asserted their Master's prerogatives, and the privileges of his church, sacrilegiously encroached upon by the magistrate. And people likewise have, in their stations, been unconcerned about these wrongs and injuries done to Christ, and have not used all lawful endeavour with their superiors (which they own as such,) whether of church or state, in order to reformation thereof, nor made faithful protestations against them, when they could not obtain redress—and as the government of the church has not been duly preserved; so there has been a want of constant endeavours to preserve pure the doctrine of this reformed church; and that ever since that fatal distraction of *public resolution principles* began to creep into the church, which corrupted people in that doctrine of abstaining from association with malignants and enemies to truth and godliness, and so far prevailed that the avowed enemies of religion were brought into places of greatest trust and authority. And these associations have not been made only with the haters of religion at home, but are also entered into with the enemies to the Protestant religion abroad; and many backsliding ministers in the late times of tyranny were very faulty in this point of not labouring to preserve the purity of doctrine, either by express condemning of some important truths then persecuted, or at least in being silent and not asserting them, nor applying their doctrine to the time's corruptions;



## Page 57

whereby many of the people were left to be overcome by snares—"And so laid open to seek out other principles to justify their practices of compliance, or extravagances on the right or left hand, not consistent with the doctrine and rules of the Church of Scotland, others were not constant in confessing those doctrines before men when called to suffer for, and avouch them." Neither are there at this day, nor has there been all along during these years of peace and quiet, suitable endeavours for suppressing all sorts of unsound doctrine, or purging the land of the leaven of erroneous principles. Although there have been many laws made against Popery, yet how have they been put to execution, when Papists are so rife and Popery prevalent?—the idolatrous mass being set up in several places of the kingdom; the maintainers and promoters of Quakerism, Bourignianism, Arminianism, &c, are not punished, but protected by the state, and connived at by the church. And whereas, the right endeavouring of maintaining sound doctrine, doth require uprightness and sincerity in the profession and belief thereof, and a suitable practice accompanying that belief; we have it to lament that the most part of us in this land are but hypocritical in the professing of the doctrines of the gospel, and want a suitable practice and conversation becoming the gospel, cause, and cross of Christ. Many are grossly ignorant of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, or study the circumstantial and controverted more than the fundamental truths. There has also been great short coming of *real, sincere and constant endeavors to preserve the worship of God*, public and private. "In times of hazard, many ministers left off preaching, and the people hearing. We have been negligent and remiss in family worship; and, instead of preserving, many have done much to discourage and hinder it: And in secret we have been formal and careless: Many have satisfied themselves with the purity of the ordinances, neglecting the power thereof, yea, some have turned aside to crooked ways destructive to both." Neither have we been careful to preserve the discipline, church censures being laid aside, and not impartially exercised against scandals, personal and public. Scandalous persons being admitted to hold up their children to baptism, and to partake of the Lord's table and other privileges of the church, without respect to the rules of Christ. The discipline of the church hath also been circumscribed, limited, and bounded by Acts of Parliament, and is now rendered ineffectual by the late Act of the British Parliament, entitled, *Act for preventing the Disturbing of those of the Episcopal Communion in that part of Great Britain called Scotland*. So that ministers could not without transgressing these Acts (which they too punctually observe) draw out the sword of discipline against many covenant-breakers; perjured hireling-curates being allowed to enjoy churches and benefices without censure

## Page 58

or molestation, if subject to the civil government, as is evident from the 27th Act of the fifth Session of William's first Parliament, entitled, *Act concerning the Church*. Ministers have neglected to draw out the sword of discipline, duly and impartially against scandalous persons of every rank and quality; so that many gross offenders have been passed over without censure, as, namely, such as shed the blood of the Lord's people, complied with the tyrants and usurpers in the times of persecution, by testing, bonding, hearing of curates, paying of cess and other taxations, intelligencers, and informers against the people of God, accepters of indulgences and toleration, and such as preached under the covert of remissions and indemnities bought by sums of money from the council, such as had been lack and negligent in testifying against the corruptions of the times, were not brought to an acknowledgment of it; but, upon the contrary, encouraged as well-doers, and advanced to office and public employment in the church without evident signs of repentance. And many other scandalous persons are daily connived at and superficially past, without sufficient discoveries of their repentance and amendment: Many also have been overlooked because of their eminency in the world, or past over for pecuniary mulcts. And, whereas, in the same first Article of the Solemn League, we are bound "to endeavor the promoting and propagating of the Reformation and uniformity of religion, Confession of Faith, Form of Church-government (which as it was primarily understood, so still we own to be only Presbyterian) Directory for Worship and Catechising. According to the Scriptures."

Isa. xix. 18. "In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the Lord of Hosts." Jer. xxxii. 39. "And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them and of their children after them." Zech. xiv. 9. "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one." Acts ii. 46. "And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread, from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." Acts iv. 32. "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and one soul." I Cor. vii. 17. "But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk; and so ordain I in all churches." Gal. vi. 16. "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." Phil. iii. 16. "Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained; let us walk by the same rule; let us mind the same thing."

Yet as our fathers had reason to complain, "that the profane, loose, and insolent carriage of many in their armies, who went to the assistance of their brethren in England, and the tampering and unstraight dealings of some commissioners and others of our nation, in London, the Isle of Wight, and other places, had proved great lets to the work of reformation and settling of kirk government there, whereby error and schism in the land had been greatly increased, and sectaries hardened in their way;" so much more during the time of the late persecution, the offensive carriage of many who went to England is to be bewailed, who proved very stumbling to the Sectarians there.



## Page 59

There hath been little zeal or endeavour for such a uniformity, little praying for it, or mourning over the obstructions of it; but, upon the contrary, a toleration was embraced, introductive of a sectarian multiformity of religion without a testimony against the toleration even of Popery itself, under the usurper James, Duke of York; and since the Revolution the land hath done exceeding much to harden them. 1st, By accepting such persons to the royal dignity over this realm as had sworn to maintain the Antichristian hierarchy of Prelacy, with all the superstitions and ceremonies of the Church of England, and who countenance a multiformity in the worship of God and government of the church, and do not suppress such as are unsound and heterodox in the fundamental articles of the Christian faith. And, next, to put a full stop to all endeavours of uniformity and union in the Lord's way, and to bring the nation under an indispensible necessity of covenant breaking, this nation hath entered into an *incorporating union* with England in such terms, and upon such conditions as formally and explicitly established Prelacy as the Church-government there to all succeeding generations; and that while, in the meantime, all manner of Sectarian errors are there encouraged, maintained, and supported by means of a toleration. By the concluding of which union, this land hath said upon the matter that there is no obligation upon us to tender the advancement of religion in that nation, or to study such means and methods as might tend to bring them to a sense of their breach of covenant, or reduce them to a performance of the duties whereunto they are engaged; and thus this land hath hardened them in their sinful ways and courses, contrary to this Solemn League, and given them ground to think that we look upon the obligation thereof to be loosed. This land hath been wanting in compassion to them as brethren, in not labouring to show them their sin and danger, while persisting in a professed violation of their vows, and refusing them help in their need, when supplication was made by some of them to the first Assembly after the Revolution for ministers to preach the gospel. And though this land hath sought out methods how to entertain amity and friendship with them, yet have they not endeavoured to have it such as that the Lord should, upon that account, delight to dwell amongst us: nay, upon the contrary, unless these methods be repented of and forsaken, it is impossible that reformation should ever amount to that degree of perfection in these kingdoms, to which, through the mercy of God, it once arrived; so that instead of *living together in peace and love, we and our posterity after us*, are like to live in a joint defection from our covenant engagements made to the Most High God.

In the second Article of the Solemn League and Covenant, we swear, "That we shall, without respect of persons, endeavour the extirpation of Popery, Prelacy, Superstition, Heresy, Schism, Profaneness, and whatsoever shall be found to be contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness. And in the National Covenant to abhor and detest the Antichristian wicked Hierarchy," &c. According to the Scriptures.



## Page 60

Exod. xxiii. 32, 33. "Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor with their gods. They shall not dwell in thy land, lest they make thee sin against me: for if thou serve their gods, it surely will be a snare unto thee." Exod. xxxiv. 12, 13. "Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee: But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves." Deut. xiii. chapter throughout. Judges ii. 2. "And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; you shall throw down their altars," &c. Zech. xiii. 2, 3. "And it shall come to pass in that day saith the Lord of Hosts, that I will cut off the names of idols out of the land, and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirits to pass out of the land. And it shall come to pass, that when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him, shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the Lord: and his father, and his mother, that begat him, shall thrust him through, when he prophesieth." I Tim. iv. 1, 2, 3. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils: Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron: Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe, and know the truth." Rev. xvii. 5. "And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. Verse 16. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." Compared with Rev. xviii. 4, 5, 6. "A I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double."

Yet, alas! so far has the land been defective in this, that upon the contrary, it hath been polluted with idolatrous masses; altars, and other monuments of idolatry were suffered again to be erected; the penal statutes were disabled, stopped, and suspended by an absolute arbitrary power by means of a toleration in its own nature tending, and in its design intending to introduce Popery and slavery, which yet was accepted and addressed for by many backslidden ministers, who to this day have made no public acknowledgement of the sin of so doing, notwithstanding all the reformation which is bragged of, and was countenanced, complied, and concurred with by many people without a testimony



## Page 61

or endeavour to withstand it. Yea, the administration of the government and the greatest offices of power and trust were committed into, and permitted to abide in the hands of Papists; and the head of them and great pillar and promoter of Popery, James the VII, was owned as King, contrary to the laws of God and man and covenant obligations, without respect of persons to extirpate Popery and Papists; and few during that time evinced any just zeal or indignation against, or fear of the manifest appearances of the coming in of Popery and intended establishment of it in the land. And not only then, but even to this day, there is too much conniving at Papists; the laws are not put in execution against them in their full extent and latitude: And albeit this land, yea, whole Britain and Ireland, were purged of Popery, yet cannot we be said to have made conscience of performing this part of the oath of God, while there is a confederating with Papists abroad and fighting in their quarrel, and that, whilst in the meantime they are persecuting, with the height of rigour and severity, all such as profess any thing of the reformed religion in their dominions. And as there hath been great failures in respect of extirpating Popery, so especially in the performance of that part of the covenant which binds us to the extirpation of Prelacy—“*i.e.* Church government by arch-bishops, bishops, their chancellors and commissaries, deans, deans and chapters, archdeacons, and all other officers depending upon that hierarchy:” there hath been a most wilful and palpable violation of the oath of God, though it be most clearly our duty prescribed in his word.

Matt. xx. 25, 26. “But Jesus called them unto him, and said, ye know that the Princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them: But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister.” Luke xxii. 25, 26. “And he said unto them the Kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them,” &c. Acts xx: 17. “And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.” Compared with verse 28. “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you observers (bishops) to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” I Peter v. 3. “Neither as being lords over God’s heritage: but being ensamples to the flock.” 3 John verse 9. “I wrote unto the church; but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not.”

And these breaches of it were not only made during the times of persecution, when Charles the II. by an arbitrary power, granted him by a parasitical Parliament, did overturn Presbyterian government, and introduce Prelacy, to which change the greatest part of the ministry did perfidiously yield, and became vassals to the bishops; such as were not willing to conform, were pressed to it by confinement, banishment, imprisonment, confiscation of goods, all manner of tortures, and, finally, death itself.

## Page 62

During which hour and power of darkness, many complied with the enemy, by taking oaths and bonds, indulgencies and toleration, and because so remiss in this matter, that it was all one to them which government had the ascendant, so they might enjoy their worldly accommodations. And not only then, while Satan was let loose in his members and emissaries to persecute and waste the Church of Christ, but since peace and quietness are obtained, this duty continues to be greatly slighted; yea, in place of extirpating Prelacy, have there not been courses taken effectually to establish it? To instance a few—the accepting of William and Mary, and after them the present possessor of the Crown, to be supreme Magistrates, while they are knownly and professedly Prelatical in their judgment, and engaged by oath at their coronation to maintain the same; the swearing oaths of allegiance to them without security for their preserving of the true reformed religion—yea, without any limitation or qualification whatsoever; as also, the taking an oath of adjuration, wherein, by consequence, the takers engaged to do to the utmost of their power to procure that the Kings or Queens of these kingdoms shall be of the communion of the Prelatical Church, and so that they shall contribute to the support of Prelacy.

Again, the Episcopal clergy who subjected to it during the time of its legal establishment, have not been therefore prosecuted by the discipline of the church; but such as did, and yet do profess it as their principle, are allowed equal encouragement with the Presbyterians, only providing they evidence good affection to the civil government. And now, since the late *incorporating union* with England, we of this nation have consented that Prelacy shall be established there to all succeeding generations, (as was observed in the first article); and, moreover, have given into the hands of the Prelatics in England, the power of making laws which must become binding upon this land, they being members of the British Parliament and council; which power has been already improved, to establish a liberty and protection for the whole rabble of the Episcopal Clergy in the free exercise of the Popish ceremonies of the Church of England, without any provision against the grossest heretical opinions that they please to broach, excepting only the denying of the doctrine of the blessed Trinity. Where, then, are our endeavours for the extirpation of the wicked hierarchy?—where is the abhorrence and detestation of it, sworn and engaged to in these Covenants?—Do not many who profess themselves to be Presbyterians show themselves so indifferent in this point, that they can join with either, as may suit their interest?—instance the Sacramental Testers. Few mourn over and pray earnestly for the subversion of that hierarchy. Few doctrinally discover the evils of such a government, and how contrary it is to God's Word—or labour to bring their hearers into a dislike and detestation of it,

## Page 63

and the sad fruits which result from it. Few study to convince others of the evil of such a principle, and following such a course by the Apostle's rule, avoiding all unnecessary company with them, that they may be ashamed; but, upon the contrary, many Presbyterians too familiar and unnecessary converse with them, encourage and harden them; and, particularly, ministers are to be blamed herein, who preach one half of the Lord's day in the church, and allow the curate the other half. Few impartially reprove and warn them of their sin and danger; but, upon the other hand, many professed Presbyterians, by their untender and unchristian walk and conversation, or by their lukewarmness and indifferency in Christ's matters, now called *moderation*, and by their walking contrary to covenant engagements, do exceedingly harden them in their evil way, and scandalize them at their duty. Instead of endeavours to extirpate superstition and heresy, as we are bound by the same article of the Solemn League, and by the "National Covenant to detest all superstition and heresy, without or against the Word of God, and doctrine of this reformed kirk, according to the Scripture."

Duet. xii. 30, 31, 32—"Take heed to thyself, that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee, and that thou inquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God; for every abomination to the Lord which he hateth, have they done unto their gods: for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods. What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto nor diminish from it." Acts xvii. 22—"Then Paul stood in the midst of Mar's-hill, and said—Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious." Gal. iv. 10—"Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years." Gal. v. 20—"Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies." Col. ii. 20—"Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world; why as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances? verse 21, Touch not, taste not, handle not: verse 23, Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body, not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh." Tit. iii. 10—"A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject."

Yet, in the darkness of the times of persecution, many dregs of Popish superstition were observed, many omens and freams too much looked to; Popish festival days—as Pasche, Yule, Fastings-even, &c, have been kept by many; and Prelatical anniversary days, and festivities devised of their own heart, appointed for commemorating the King's and Queen's birthdays, (as May 29th, October 13th, February 6th,) who were born as a scourge to this realm, were complied

## Page 64

with by many. Yes, some have superstitiously made use of the Scriptures as a fortune book, looking to that which first cast up to them, or to impressions borne in upon their minds from such and such places of Scripture as Divine responses, without a due search of them as the Lord hath commanded. And many wavering and unstable souls have been seduced unto damnable and pernicious heresies, as Quakers, and delirious delusions, as those that followed John Gib. All which have been breaches of Covenant, as well as of Divine commands. Yea, even to this very day, the same superstitions are observed and practised, as abstaining from labouring upon the foresaid festivities, and observing presages of good or tad fortune (as it is called,) upon them and other times; as likewise, many practisers of enchantments and users of charms—yea, such as are in actual compact with the devil, are not carefully sought out, nor accurately tried, in order to be brought to punishment, but overlooked and protected.

There has been also since the revolution, as well as before, a great deluge of errors through these covenanted lands, which, to this day, continue and increase: that might be sufficient to convince us that there have not been proper measures taken to suppress them, as this article obliges us to do;—nay, instead thereof, they are tolerated, maintained, and protected by authority, as appears both from the late Act of Parliament, and from the liberty allowed to that pestilent generation of Quakers, who keep their general meetings yearly in Edinburgh, being guarded by a company of the town guards. And as the state do not prosecute the promoters and abettors of these heresies with civil pains, as is the duty of such as call themselves God's vicegerents, and own themselves to be intrusted with keeping of both tables of the law; so the church is nothing speedier or more active in drawing out their ecclesiastical sword to cut off these luxuriant branches, and to take *the little foxes which spoil the wines*. Many whose duty, by virtue of their office, is to give warning from Zion's walls, as watchmen entrusted with the city of God, neglect to discover, and from the scriptures to confute these errors, or to show their flocks by doctrine or writing the danger of being tainted with them. And as suitable endeavours have been wanting effectually to extirpate heresy and error, so schism, its inseparable companion, and necessary consequent, has exceedingly grown and increased, to the great damage of the church of Christ in these kingdoms, and utter subversion of that most pleasant fabric of uniformity in religion, which the League and Covenant binds us to endeavour. The word of God makes schism a very great sin, as is evident from Rom. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. xi. 18, xii. 25; Heb. x. 25; Jude 19.



## Page 65

And all the nation are to be reputed guilty of it who depart from the doctrine and laudable constitutions delivered by Christ and his apostles, and adhered unto by the church of Scotland in her purest times of Reformation. And if we consider schism under this notion, as we ought to do, then will we find that the greatest part of the land is guilty of it. Few are firmly and constantly adhering to the attained Reformation; but many upon the left hand, have turned aside to compliance with Prelacy and Erastianism, and so have by their defection broken the church's *beauty* and *bands*, order and union, in making a faction repugnant to her established order, and, censurable by all her standing acts, in bringing innovations in the government, and making a rent in the bowels of the church; by causing divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine of the church; whereby they have made themselves guilty of schism; and some have fallen into delusions and dotages upon the right hand, who, in seeking to be religious above what is commanded, have come short of the truth of religion, and made a faction repugnant to this covenant. Some, being private persons, have pretended an immediate commission to preach the word, and administer the sacraments. Others, being stumbled with the defection of the time, have turned aside to independency. "Some upon slender and insufficient grounds, have and do separate both from faithful ministers and Christian societies and families, because of difference in judgment and incident debates, wherein the testimony of Christ is not much concerned; or because of personal offences easily removed, not observing the rules of Christ for removing of them, not having respect to his great commands of charity, forbearance, forgiving one another, or condescendency. And among divided parties, which in our day have been long biting and devouring one another, there hath been too much both of sinful union and confederacy in terms prejudicial to truth; as our joinings in the *Angus regiment*, at the *Revolution*, and our guarding and supplicating that corrupt *Convention of Estates*, which consisted mostly of such as had been directly or indirectly guilty of the murder of the Lord's people; and upon the other hand, there hath been too much of sinful heats, animosities, and jealousies, pride, passion, and prejudice, grieving the Spirit of the Lord, and eating out the power and life, and much hindering the holy practice and spiritual exercise of religion."

*We have been so far from endeavouring to extirpate profaneness, another evil engaged against in the covenant, and condemned in the Word of God. Deut. xxix. 19; Job xxi. 14; Jer. xxiii. 15; Ezek. xxii. 26; Hos. iv. 1-3; Heb. vii. 15.*



## Page 66

“That profanity hath been much winked at, and profane persons much countenanced, and many times employed, till iniquity and ungodliness have gone over the land as a flood; and profanity, beginning at the court, hath spread itself through every rank and quality in the land: so that immoralities and sins against every precept of both tables are greatly abounding.” As, namely, great contempt of God and godliness, ignorance, atheism and irreligion, unsuitable walking to the knowledge of him and his perfections which we have, and not labouring in the use of means to attain more. Much neglect of pressing after peace and reconciliation with him, through a Mediator, and of living up to the profession which we make of him. Despising of his holy ordinances and means of worship; deafness and stupidity under the calls of his Word. Profanation of his holy sacraments, neglect of secret prayer (wherein much of the life of religion lies), and of prayer in families, or a negligent, careless and superficial performance thereof; many using a formality of words and expressions learned by custom. Some using our blessed Lord’s prayer as a set form, which ought to be used as a rule of direction in all our prayers, and not as a dead form of words: many seeking more to be seen of men in this and all other duties, than to approve themselves to God, and more careful to come by apposite words and expressions, when praying with others, than to attain and entertain the breathings and influences of the Spirit of God. Much neglect of propagating Christian knowledge in congregations and families; ministers and masters of families not making diligent search into the knowledge of the flocks and families under their charge, and instructing them suitably. Much swearing and profanation of God’s name, by loose and vain oaths in common discourse: yea, swearing by the creatures—as, soul, faith, conscience, and the like, thereby sacrilegiously attributing to them divine honour; as also, by imposing upon all persons in any public trust the unlimited and unlawful oath of allegiance, together with the bond of assurance, and the oath of abjuration, contrary to the oath of the covenant, thereby debauching people’s consciences, and involving them in the guilt of perjury. Great profanation of the holy Sabbath, and neglect or careless performance of the duties therein required; breaking it by unnecessary feasting, walking, idle, vain and impertinent discourse, and such like recreations; yea, by hunting, hawking, riding and going of journeys, sounding trumpets before their lords of Justiciary when going to church, reading of proclamations wholly irrelative to religion, and making publications not necessary nor expedient to be made upon that day. Much disobedience to parents, and undue carriage of persons of all ranks and relations towards each other. Great murder and bloodshed, so that the land is defiled with blood, and that not only the blood of the Lord’s people, who, in the times of persecution, were led



## Page 67

forth like sheep to the slaughter, because of their adherence to their duty, and refusing conformity with wicked courses and subjection to wicked laws, eversive of their covenant engagements, not yet mourned over, nor purged away by the blood of those that shed it; but likewise many through the land are murdered frequently, and the murderers are not prosecuted with due severity: nay, such are the methods that are now taken to embolden the wicked in that and all other crimes, that whatever presumptions of guilt may be had, or how ample confession soever be made, if it be extrajudicial, and the very fact not proved by witnesses, the delinquent is passed over and absolved as a well-doer, and many actually convicted of murder are indemnified and let pass unpunished.

Much uncleanness and filthiness, adultery, fornication, incest, bestiality, sodomy, lasciviousness, promiscuous dancing, stage plays, excessive drinking, vanity in apparel, and the like abominable unchastity and incentives to it. Much stealing, robbery and oppression, grinding the faces of the poor by unjust taxations and heavy impositions, and by hindering the poor from begging, for the support of their lives in times of scarcity, by a wicked edict. Perverting of justice in law suits; lawyers and advocates finding means, for their own gain and worldly advantage, to obtain decisive sentences in favor of the rich, contrary to justice and equity; much cheating and deceiving in bargaining; forestalling of markets in times of scarcity; depriving the poor of their habitations and livelihoods by building of parks and in-closures; tenants taking leases over their neighbor's head, and the like. It is, moreover, to be bewailed that many ministers, who should be examples of charity and good works, are ringleaders in this sin of oppression. Much lying and bearing of false witness, defaming one another's good name, reproaching persons for their adherence to the truths and cause of Christ, or for discovering any piece of zeal and affection that way. Much covetousness and worldly-mindedness, repining, murmuring and discontentment with God's dispensations; revenge, wrath, malice, envy, bitterness and innumerable sins, both against the precepts of the moral law, and the offers of Christ in the Gospel, which plainly says that we have not used the endeavours which in this Article we promise, for "Rooting up profaneness and whatsoever is found contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness, lest we partake of other men's sins, and so be in danger to receive of their plagues." Nay, hath not much unsound doctrine been maintained in the arguments which have been used for defending the lawfulness of the courses of compliance with Prelacy and Erastianism? and these, amongst other unsound notions, have been entertained amongst us—"That lesser and circumstantial truths are not to be suffered for; that confession of these truths hath not been called for in our day; that people are not in hazard of the sins of others, especially of magistrates and ministers, if they do not directly act the same sins themselves; that sins of bypast times (if they be not presently practiced) are not to be confessed, nor the persons guilty to be stood at a distance from, till they give evident documents of their repentance;" contrary to express and plain Scripture.



## Page 68

2 Sam. xxi. 1; 2 Sam. xxiv. 17; 2 Kings xxi. 11, 12; Isa. xliii. 27, 28; Jer. xiv. 15,16; Mic. iii. 11, 12.

Whence both ministers and people have been involved in the sins of Prelacy, Indulgence, Toleration, Erastianism, subjecting the government of the church to the secular and civil authority; while they thought these only to be the sins of Prelates, or of wicked and usurping rulers; they in the meantime yielding all the conformity with, submission unto, and approbation of them, that was by wicked laws required. On the other hand, many of us have rested too much in a non-compliance with these, and “having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.”

In the third Article, whereas we are bound, “in our several vocations, mutually to preserve the rights and privileges of Parliaments, and liberties of the kingdoms;” meaning the true, real and righteous privileges and liberties—consonant to the Word of God.

Deut. i. 13; Deut. xvi. 18; Isa. i. 26.

Likeas, all lieges are bound by the laws of the land inserted in the National Covenant, to “maintain the authority of Parliaments, without which neither any laws nor lawful judicatories can be established.” Yet as our fathers had reason to complain “that neither had the privileges of the Parliament nor liberties of the subject been duly tendered; but some amongst them had laboured to put into the hands of the king an arbitrary and unlimited power destructive to both; and many of them had been accessory to those means and ways whereby the freedom and privileges of Parliaments had been encroached upon, and the subjects oppressed in their consciences, persons and estates;” so afterwards, all amongst the tract of tyranny and persecution, they had rather the name and show than the real power and privileges of lawfully constituted Parliaments; having advanced the royal prerogative to such a boundless pitch of arbitrariness, and being so corrupted, that faithful men and honest and honourable patriots were excluded, and those admitted who by the law of God and man should have been debarred; and so prelimited that the members behaved to take such oaths (for instance, the declaration and test, abjuring and condemning the Covenants) as engaged them to be perjured and conjured enemies both to our religion and liberty, which both the electors of Members of Parliament and the elected did sinfully comply with; neither did the body of the land make conscience of recovering these rights and privileges thus perverted and polluted; but in stupid subjection did own those for representatives who betrayed their liberties, and made laws to enslave the nation and entail slavery upon, posterity. On the other hand, they that disowned them did not make conscience of preserving those rights and privileges of supreme judicatories, when inadvertently and unadvisedly they put in such expressions and styles in some of their declarations as do not belong to private persons, but only to such judicatories. And not only then, but since the Revolution, have there been many ways taken for corrupting and depriving the Members of Parliament; as that all members and electors of members

have been obliged to take the oath of allegiance, with the assurance to such as did, and do, in their dominions, support Prelacy and exercise an Erastian supremacy over the church of Christ.



## Page 69

And now, last of all, by the means of this fatal Union with England, in terms and upon conditions inconsistent with our covenanted Union, engaged to in the League and Covenant; the nation's sovereignty and independency are given up, the rights of Parliament entirely lost, or vanished into a shadow, little preferable to no Parliament; so few being to represent this nation in the Parliament of Great Britain, as can never be able to prevent, by their number of voices, any act which it shall please the English to make, how destructive soever the same be to our sacred or civil concerns. Which treaty of Union was concluded in a Parliament as manifestly prelimited, as any which ever was seen in Scotland; the members were corrupted with bribes and preferment, and so engaged to act contrary to the will and mind of those whome they did represent, and to comply with that stratagem hatched by the English, for enslaving this poor nation, and denuded it of its privileges, as well sacred as civil. And alas! how insignificant were the endeavours then used to prevent that course, and preserve the privileges of the Parliament and liberties of this kingdom? only some faint addresses, all other attempts being laid aside at their Queen's command, by her proclamation, as *treasonable convocation of the lieges*.

Again, the subject's liberties, both as men and as Christian, which the scriptures allow, we should preserve,

I Sam. xiv. 25; Acts xxii. 25,28; xxv. 11,16,27; Gal. v. 1.

Have been miserably encroached upon by arbitrary government, whereby the subjects have been oppressed in their consciences, persons and estates, by all the oaths and bonds pressing conformity with the corruptions, novations, and usurpations the government of church and state, and persecutions for recusancy, and by impositions of the freedom of secret thoughts, which no law of men can reach, which yet in the time of the late persecution were extorted, by threatening of death and manifold tortures; the church's liberties have also been invaded by the ecclesiastical supremacy, declared by a blasphemous law inherent to the crown, which law, though it be not now in force, is yet still kept up in practice by the indiction, prorogation, and dissolution of Assemblies, and prescribing diets and causes of fasting and thanksgiving in the magistrate's name and authority, to which ecclesiastical supremacy, usurped by the magistrate, this backslidden church hath always subjected, and now to discover to the world that they are not ashamed of this surrendering of our Lord's prerogative to his enemies they have, in their Assembly, holden at Edinburgh, Anno 1710, most explicitly and fully subscribed to this ecclesiastical supremacy, in their Act for observation of fasts, wherein they affirm, "that it is much for the honor of God that fasts whether appointed' by the church, or the civil magistrate, be duly observed."



## Page 70

In that same third Article, we are likewise bound to defend “The supreme magistrate’s person and authority, in the preservation and defence of the true religion and liberties of the kingdom:” as in the National Covenant is expressed: likewise, “to defend his person and authority, in the defence of Christ his evangel, liberties of our country, ministration of justice, and punishment of iniquity; and to stand to his defence, in the defence of the true religion, liberties and laws of the kingdom;” as the duty is qualified in scripture.

II Sam. v. 3.; II Kings xi. 17; II Chron. xxvi. 16, 17, 18, 21; Rom. xiii. 3, 4, 6; I Pet. ii. 13, 14.

As our fathers in their acknowledgments had reason to say, “Neither hath it been our care to avoid these things which might harden the king in his evil way; but, upon the contrary he hath not only been permitted, but many of us have been instrumental to make him exercise his power in many things tending to the prejudice of religion, and of the Covenant, and of the peace and safety of these kingdoms; which is so far from the right way of preserving his Majesty’s person and authority that it cannot but provoke the Lord against him unto the hazard of both. Nay, under a pretence of relieving and doing for the king, whilst he refuses to do what was necessary for the house of God, some have ranversed and violated most of all the Articles of the Covenant.”

So, during the unhappy days of the late tyranny, it was the land’s sin and shame, and ought to be our sorrow, that men were mounted upon a throne of iniquity whose main design and practice was to subvert religion and persecute it, to introduce Popery itself and slavery, to destroy the nation’s liberties, suppress the evangel, and oppress its professors; who enacted and executed manifest injustice, stopped the ministration of justice against idolaters, adulterers, murderers, and other malefactors, and punished equity and duty, instead of iniquity; arrogated and obtained a monstrous prerogative above all rights and privileges of Parliaments, all laws, all liberties; a power to tyrannize as they pleased without control. But, as it was their sin who inaugurated Charles II. after such discoveries of his hypocritical enmity to religion and liberty, upon his subscription to the Covenants, so when he burned and buried that Covenant, and degenerated into manifest tyranny, and had razed the very foundation upon which both his right to govern, and the people’s allegiance were founded, and remitted the subjects’ allegiance by annulling the bond of it: it was the land’s sin that they continued still to own his authority when opposite to, and destructive of religion and liberty; and of those who appeared in arms at Pentland and Bothwell Bridge, that they put in his interest (with application of the words of the Covenant to him, though stated in opposition to it) into *the state of the quarrel*, in their *declaration of war*, for which (so far as the



## Page 71

godly could discern) the Lord put them to shame, and went not forth with their armies. It was likewise the sin of the land, and a great breach of Covenant, when the Duke of York was admitted to the exercise of the royal office against the laws of God and man; being incapable of the Covenant qualifications of a magistrate, and being a Papist, and so incapable of taking the "oath of coronation to maintain the true Protestant religion, and gainstand and abolish Popery;" which, for the preservation of the true religion, laws, and liberties of this kingdom, is stated by the 8th Act of Parliament, I King James VI, "That all kings, at the reception of their princely authority, shall take and swear;" yet this authority, though inconsistent with, and declaredly opposite to religion and liberty, was owned and upheld, by paying cess and supplies, expressly exacted for upholding tyranny in the destruction of religion and liberty; and though the Lord did, for a long time, by the tyranny of Charles II. and James VII., chastise these covenanted lands, yet there has not been a turning to him that smiteth: but these lands have again transgressed the Lord's commandments, and broken this part of the Covenant of the Lord, by receiving, admitting, supporting and subjecting to such, for Kings and Queens over these realms as want the qualifications required in God's word, and enacted by the righteous and laudable laws of the land to be in magistrates, superior and inferior: which were not brought under Covenant ties and obligations, to be for God and religion in their own persons and families, and to advance and preserve the same allenaryly in their dominions; but in place thereof have come under oath and obligation to countenance, protect end advance the Romish superstitions and innovations in the worship of God and government of the Church, which the Covenant binds these kingdoms to suppress and extirpate, and in consequence of, and in conformity to, these obligations, do maintain and defend, or tolerate and allow Prelacy and Sectarian errors in their dominions, contrary to the true religion and sound doctrine, contrary to justice and equity; yea, contrary to that trust especially committed to the hands of Christian Magistrates, who for that end have the sword given them, *that they may be a terror to evil doers*, preserve and defend the true religion and professors thereof, and punish and extirpate false religion and heresies, and bring the wheel over the broachers, maintainers and abettors thereof; which did, and do exercise an Erastian supremacy over the church, in proroguing, and dissolving General Assemblies, appointing diets and causes of fasts and thanksgivings; and by their civil authority causing them to be kept and observed; which do not impartially execute justice upon all offenders, witness the frequent indemnities and remissions granted to murderers; as particularly, the passing without punishment the persons which perpetrated the inhuman, barbarous and lawless



## Page 72

action of the massacre of Glencoe. Which waste and destroy the kingdom, by levying men and raising money for maintaining a long and expensive war, undertaken neither for the advancement of the true religion, nor for the advantage and safety of the nation; but in favour of the house of Austria, which hath been, and yet continues to be, one of the strong pillars of Antichrist's kingdom, and inplacable enemies to the true reformed religion, as appears by the persecution of the Protestants in Silesia, Hungary, &c. And yet notwithstanding of all this, many in the land of all ranks have sworn to bear true and faithful allegiance to them, without any conditional restriction or limitation; so that it is not possible for them, in a consistency with their oath, to disown their authority, and deny them subjection, or refuse to defend their persons and government, albeit they should proceed to the greatest pitch of arbitrariness; which is very far from the defence promised to Magistrates in the Covenant: the whole land (almost) hath complied with them in all the forementioned particulars so diametrically opposite to the Covenants, and supported, strengthened and encouraged them in these evil courses, by paying them cess and other subsidies; and ministers have minded so much to be loyal to their government, that they have forgotten to be faithful to their souls, in that they have not discovered to them the sin and danger of patronising Prelacy, and exercising Erastianism over the church; but in order to obtain their favor, have clapped their hands in these sins, which certainly is most opposite to that loyalty which we ought to maintain towards Princes, and tends rather to diminish their just power and greatness, than to increase and preserve it; and, instead of being a proper way of defending their persons and authority, is rather a mean to bring the wrath of a just and jealous God upon them, and those who defend or connive at them in these unlawful courses.

“Our own consciences within, and God's judgment upon us without, do convince us of the manifold, wilful, renewed breaches of the fourth Article, which concerneth the discovery of malignants, consonant to the Scriptures.”

2 Sam. xxiii. 6; Esther vii. 5. 6; Psalm xxvi. 5; Psalm ci. 8; Prov. xxv. 5.

“For their crimes have not only been connived at, but dispensed with and pardoned, and themselves received into intimate fellowship, intrusted with counsels, admitted into parliaments, and put in places of power and authority for managing the public affairs of the kingdom; whereby, in God's justice, they got at last into their hands the whole power and strength of the kingdom, both in judicatories and armies, and did employ the same unto the enacting and prosecuting an unlawful engagement in war against the kingdom of England, notwithstanding the dissent of many considerable members of parliament, who had given constant proof of their integrity in the cause from the beginning;



## Page 73

of many faithful testimonies and free warnings of the servants of God; of the supplications of many synods, presbyteries, and shires; and the declaration of the General Assembly and their Commissioners to the contrary; which engagement, as it was the cause of much sin, so also of much misery and calamity unto this land, and held forth the grievousness of our sin, in complying with malignants in the greatness of our judgment, that we may be taught never to split again upon the same rock, upon which the Lord hath set so remarkable a beacon. And, after all that is come to pass unto us, because of this our trespass, and after that grace hath been showed unto *our fathers and us once and again* from the Lord our God, by breaking these men's yoke from off *their and our necks, and sometimes* delivering our fathers *so far from their insultings*, that he put them in a capacity to act for the good of religion, their own safety, and the peace and safety of the kingdoms, should they and we again break the commandment and covenant of the Lord, by joining once more with the people of these abominations, and taking unto our bosom these serpents which had formerly stung us almost unto death; this, as it would argue great madness and folly upon our part, so no doubt, if it be not avoided, will provoke the Lord against us, to consume us until there is no remnant nor escaping in the land? many times have we been warned of the sin of complying with malignants, both by faithful ministers, and fatherly corrections from the Lord;"—yet, after all these punishments, we have again joined with the people of these abominations; the Lord is righteous, for we remain yet escaped as it is this day; behold, we are before him in our trespass, we cannot stand before him because of this.

These incendiaries, malignants, and evil instruments, made many grievous encroachments, and prevailed much in the days of our fathers—yet not without dissent, testimonies, warnings, and declarations; but more especially in the dismal days of persecution and tyranny, they were suffered, yea, encouraged, without any significant joint testimony, not only to hinder the reformation of religion, but to overturn the whole work of reformation, to burn and bury the covenants for it, to re-establish abjured Prelacy, erect a monstrous Christ-exauctorating and church-enslaving supremacy, attempt the introduction of Popery and slavery at the gate of an anti-Christian toleration, and to persecute and destroy the godly, who durst not in conscience comply with them; and not only to divide the *King from his people, or one of the kingdoms from another*—but first, to divide the bulk and body of both kingdoms, and make them pursue divided interests from the interest and cause of Christ, and then to divide the remnant of such as adhered to it amongst themselves, by indulgences and other bonds of contention, in order to get them more easily destroyed; and at length to engage the King into such a division



## Page 74

from the people, as to make him, instead of their protector, their declared destroyer; and not only to *make parties among the people contrary to his league and covenant*, but to draw and divide the whole people into a party with perjuries. The generality, notwithstanding, did own allegiance to the head of these incendiaries and malignants, yea, a Popish incendiary, because he wore a crown on his head; and did pay the cess imposed for the maintenance and encouragement of malignants; many did associate with them in expeditions of war, drawing up with them in their musters and rendezvouses, thereby countenancing a malignant cause, and listing themselves under a malignant—yea, Popish banner; many subscribed and swore themselves contrary to the covenant by taking tests, oaths, and bonds, obliging them to surcease from covenanted duties, and to keep the peace and good behaviour with them, whom they were obliged by covenant to seek to bring to punishment; yea, some, and not a few, were inveigled in the snare of the oath of delation, to delate the persecuted people of God to their courts, and thereby made them (instead of discovering malignants according to the covenant,) to discover their brethren to malignants. And very many, almost the universality of the land, were involved in the snare of the oath of abjuration, renouncing the principle of declaring war against a malignant King, and of asserting the lawfulness of bringing his murdering accomplices and incendiaries to condign punishment; but, on the other hand, some of the suffering party did sometimes exceed the bounds of moderation in this matter, in usurping the sword without God's call, without respect to the rule, and against the scope of their own declarations, to take vengeance on them at their own hand; yea, even to that degree, of taking the lives of some of them in an extravagant manner;[27] for which, they were sadly rebuked of God, an occasion was given and taken to reproach and blaspheme the way of God upon that account. But to descend to our own time, we have it to bewail, that whatever alteration there is in the face of affairs since the yoke of tyranny was taken off our neck, yet there is no alteration in this matter to the better, but rather to the worse; malignants are so far from being brought to condign punishment, that they are the whole administrators of the affairs of the kingdom; whence it is come to pass, that the supreme judicatories which should take trial of such and bring them to punishment, and to whom they should be delated, are wholly, or mostly composed of such; yea, none may now be reputed malignant unless he be disaffected to the civil government; so that malignancy is not now disaffection to the cause and work of God, but disaffection to the present establishment, and so far are they that are truly disaffected to Christ and his interest this day advanced and strengthened in their designs, that they have (so far as in them lies) put a final stop to all further progress in



## Page 75

reformation in these covenanted kingdoms; so that instead of discovering and bringing to punishment them who make parties and factions against the League and Covenant, and reformation therein concerted, the most part of Britain and Ireland are nought else but a party and faction against it, who have cast it out of doors, and, for what is apparent, are never minded to receive it again; and, upon the contrary, such as are labouring to adhere most closely (though in weakness) to these engagements, and prosecute the ends of these covenants, are unjustly looked upon as a party and faction, and prosecuted as offenders by such as, according to the genuine sense of this Article, ought to be brought to condign punishment. It is likewise promised in this Article, that *such shall be brought to trial as shall divide the King from his people, or one of the kingdoms from another*, which clause hath been broken, by using endeavours to have King and people and the kingdoms all conjoined in a *union* and conjunction contrary to, and eversive of this Solemn League and Covenant; and these that go under the character of ministers, from whom it might in all reason be expected that they should interpose for having malignants duly punished, are so far from doing so, that they make it their endeavour to please them; and upon the contrary, they spare no pains to incense the persons in the government against those whose design it is, in the Lord's strength, to adhere to their covenant engagements, and keep themselves unspotted from the abominations of the times. We acknowledge also ourselves guilty of the breach of this Article, in so far as we have not more frequently and fervently, from a real respect and zeal to the glory of God, after we saw no means of getting such evil instruments and opposers of reformation punished and suppressed by human judicatories, applied by prayer and supplication to God, that he would either of his infinite mercy convince them of, and reclaim them from, or in justice reprove and punish them for their opposition to his cause and interest. As also, that we have not duly searched into our own sins, and especially the malignancy of our own hearts: by means whereof, the Lord is highly provoked to permit such evil instruments not only to afflict and oppress us, but also to retard the success of his own work; and that we have not impartially or sincerely mourned over these sins in our own hearts and lives, which hinder our own personal, and so have influence to impede national reformation, and have not forsaken and abandoned them.

In the fifth Article, we are bound, "according to our place and station, to endeavor, that the kingdoms may remain conjoined in a most firm peace and union to all posterity; and that justice may be done upon the wilful opposers thereof;" according to Isa. ii. 2, 3, xiv. 23, 24; Jer. 1, 4, 5; Ezek. xxxvii. 16, 17; Zech. ii. 11. viii. 21, 22; Gal. v. 12.



## Page 76

“But through the peace and union of the kingdoms (while duly subordinate to the interest of religion) was a great blessing of God unto both, and a bond which we are bound to preserve inviolated, and to endeavor that justice may be done upon the wilful opposers thereof; yet some in this land, who have come under the bond of the Covenant, have made it their great study how to dissolve this union, and few or no endeavors have been used by any of us for punishing of such;” yea, very little, or none at all, have the most of us been concerned about this Article; whether there be peace with, or holiness and truth in, the other kingdoms; or what sort of peace, or on what foundation it be settled: both kingdoms are mutually guilty of dissolving this Covenant Union, in invading each other, at several times, contrary to the Covenant, the English nation in subjecting us to their conquest, and forcing us to a submission to their Sectarian usurpations on church and state; and this nation, in giving such provocations to them, by the unlawful engagement in the year 1648, by treating with, setting up and entertaining, the head of the malignant party, their enemy and ours both, as our King in the year 1650, and invading them upon his quarrel, at the Worcester expedition, Anno 1651; since which time, after that kingdom and this both united in that unhappy course of restoring the King, without respect to the Covenant, and re-establishing the Prelacy, which broke our Covenanted Union and Conjunction, that nation hath sometimes sent aid to our persecutors, for suppressing our attempts to recover our religion and liberties; and this nation hath sent forces to help their destroyers, and to suppress their endeavors for the recovery of their privileges. And in the mean time, we have been very little solicitous for correspondence to settle union with such of them as owned the Covenant, or for giving to, or receiving from them, mutual informations of our respective cases and conditions, under all our calamities and calumnies cast upon us: nor have we studied to keep sympathy or communion of saints, or mutual bearing of one another’s burdens, as became covenanted brethren.

On the other hand instead of union in truth and duty according to the bond of the Covenant, a confederacy hath been studied in defection from the Covenant, and an union and peace which wanted the foundation laid down in the foregoing Articles of the Covenant, viz., “uniformity in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, against Popery, Prelacy, Schism, Sectarianism, for our religion, laws and liberties, and discovering, suppressing and punishing the enemies of these interests.” Such an Union has not been studied nor sought, but on the contrary an Union against the Reformation and Uniformity, for Prelacy and Sectarianism multiformity, by maintaining tyranny and strengthening malignancy. Yea, by the means of this incorporating Union now of late established, Prelacy is not only strengthened and confirmed, but

## Page 77

so settled as to continue to all succeeding generations, and this nation's slavery as well as their sin perpetuated. And persons of all ranks have had a deep hand in this trespass: the nobility and gentry who represented the nation, in surrendering their own and the nation's rights and privileges; ministers in not warning them faithfully to beware of that covenant-breaking course, which could not but provoke God to anger against this poor island, but showing more concern in that juncture for settling their own, then for securing and advancing Christ's interest; and the body of the land, in that they did not bestir themselves, for the defence of their own liberties in a lawful way.

In the sixth Article we are bound, "according to our places and callings, in this common cause of religion, liberty and peace, to assist and defend all those that enter into this League and Covenant, in the maintaining thereof. And in the National Covenant, in like manner, we are bound to stand to the mutual defence and assistance, every one of us of another, in the same cause, with our best counsel, our bodies, means, and whole power, against all sorts of persons whatsoever; so that whatsoever shall be done to the least of us for that cause, should be taken as done to all of us in general, and to every one of us in particular." A duty very clear in the scriptures; Judges v. 23; 1 Chron. xii. 1, 18; Neh. iv. 14; Prov. xxiv. 11, 12.

But alas! how little conscience hath been made of this duty? "We have suffered many of our brethren in many parts of the land to be oppressed of the common enemy, without compassion or relief. There hath been great murmuring and repining because of expenses of means and pains in doing of our duty;" and not only so, but many did swear and subscribe oaths and bonds expressly against such assistances, and to condemn all such endeavors, to assist, defend and rescue them, as rebellion and sedition, and obliging them to assist their murdering malignant enemies, by such occurrences as they required. Yea, many instead of coming out to *help the Lord against the mighty*, and defending their brethren, did come out to the help of the mighty against the Lord, his cause, Covenant, and oppressed people; concurring in arms against them at all the appearances that were made and essayed for the cause of Christ; compearing at courts, held for informing against and condemning their brethren, that were present at, or concerned in such appearances for the Covenanted cause, and coming in as witnesses against them; sitting in assizes for condemning them, and guarding them to their executions, when martyred for their duty, and the interest of truth. Many likewise denied to reset, harbor or entertain their brethren, persecuted for maintaining the Covenanted Reformation; some raised the hue and cry after them, thereby occasioning, and assisting in, the murder of several faithful brethren; the most part owned the great murderer who authorized all the



## Page 78

rest, and enacted all these murders, and assisted him and his accomplices, and executioners of his murdering mandates, with their persons and estates, in paying the supplies professedly demanded, and declaredly imposed, for enabling them to accomplish these mischiefs. Yea, many were so far from assisting, that they added afflictions to their afflicted brethren, their reproaches, and persecuting by the tongue those whom the Lord had smitten, and talking to the grief of those he had wounded. And all sorts of us have been wanting in our sympathy with, and endeavoring succor to, our suffering brethren, let be to deliver them from their enemies' hands according to our capacity. So also, it is for matter of lamentation, that many ministers all alongst discovered great unconcernedness with, and contempt of, poor despised and reproached sufferers, condemned the heads of their suffering, forgot or refused to pray for them publicly. And as this Article was all alongst through the persecuting times, most grossly violated, so to this day it continues to be. Any that would appear in the least active in this cause, are so far from being assisted that they are borne down, derided, sentenced, and sometimes imprisoned; whatever motions are made in private discourses, or public sermons, which may import a respect to, or liking of, this noble cause of religion, or a dislike of, and displacency with the courses opposite unto it, are so far from being countenanced, that the movers are hated, vilipended, contemned or censured, as raisers of dust, formenters of division, pragmatic, turbulent and fractious spirits, and loaded with many other defamatory epithets and calumnies. Many instances of which may be given since the Revolution. For example, when in the year 1690, there was a paper of grievances presented to the Assembly by some of those who had been keeping up a witness against the iniquitous courses of the times, and were now expecting that as the fruit of a merciful delivery from tyrannical usurpations, and antichristian persecutions, Reformation should be revived, grievances redressed, judicatories rightly constituted, and duly purged, it was far from receiving a kind and friendly reception and they who presented it left without assistance and help, contrary to the tenor of the Covenant, so that that paper could not be allowed a hearing, let be a redress, and the persons who offered it to their consideration were, to their great sorrow and grief of heart, dismissed without a satisfying answer. As also when Messrs. Linning, Shields and Boyd, who had been carrying on a Testimony against the time's defection, and were now minded to join with the Assembly, after the exhibition of their Testimony, whatever acceptance it might meet with at their hands, had in prosecution of this their design, exhibited their proposals to the Committee of Overtures, these proposals, though both worthy of consideration and necessary to be redressed, were not allowed a hearing in open Assembly, but rejected

## Page 79

as being “made up of mistakes, reflections, unseasonable and impracticable overtures,” and the said persons, so far from being assisted, in order to a removal of the evils therein complained of, as destructive to the cause of God, that upon the contrary the four named persons stand in the fifth Act of that pretended Assembly characterized with the name and epithet of persons who had followed courses contrary to the order of the church, and in their Moderator’s exhortation, *to walk orderly in time coming, in opposition to all schism and division*, their former practice of testifying against the corruptions of the times was implicitly condemned as disorderly, schismatic and divisive. Another instance of this appeared not long after; when in the year 1692, some of the godly of the land published their declaration disowning William and Mary’s government, because not qualified as God’s word, and our Covenants do require, as it is specified at large in the narrative of that declaration; some of them were apprehended and imprisoned, for that piece of adherence to the Covenanted Reformation, and opposing or at least witnessing against the courses which they found to be contrary to it. Yet who at that juncture appeared to assist them in their laudable undertakings? And all alongst since, whosoever has offered grievances, or any way witnessed against the bypast and present defections, have been and are prosecuted with church censure, or persecuted with bitter and malicious invectives and reproaches, falling from the tongues and pens of those that are obliged by Covenant to have assisted, defended and encouraged them. And especially ministers, who by virtue of their office, as well as Covenant engagements, are obliged to excite persons to, and assist them in their duty, have been active to do the quite contrary; for instance, when some persons offered to give public satisfaction for their compliance with Christ’s enemies, they refused to admit them. But to what purpose do we repeat these instances? It is too certain and evident, that there is more assistance and encouragement afforded to the enemies of this cause and Covenant, by persons of all ranks than to the friends and well wishers of it. Love to, and zeal for this cause are greatly decayed, and therefore mutual sympathy and affection amongst the people of God in the prosecution and maintenance of it are much a wanting.

In the same Article we are bound, “not to suffer ourselves directly or indirectly, by whatsoever combination or terror, to be divided or withdrawn from this blessed union and conjunction, whether to make defection to the contrary part, or to give ourselves to a detestable indifferency or neutrality in this cause; and in the National Covenant, that we shall neither directly nor indirectly suffer ourselves to be divided, or withdrawn, by whatsoever suggestion, allurements or terror, from this blessed and loyal conjunction. According to scripture warrants.”



## Page 80

Gen. xiii. 8; Psal. cxxxiii. throughout; Zech. viii. 19; I Cor. i. 10; Eph. iv. 3; Phil. i. 27, ii. 2; Heb. xxi. 14; Jer. ix. 3; Ezek. xxii. 25; Hag. i. 2; Phil. ii. 21; II Tim. iv. 10; Rev. iii. 15.

But, alas! it is long since our fathers had reason to complain and confess, “That many in their day through persuasion or terror, suffered themselves to be divided and withdrawn to make defection to the contrary part. Many had turned off to a detestable indifferency and neutrality in this cause, which so much concerneth the glory of God, and the good of these kingdoms. Nay, many had made it their study to walk so, as they might comply with all times, and all the revolutions thereof. That it was not their care to countenance, encourage, entrust, and employ, such only as from their hearts did affect and mind God’s work; but the hearts of such, many times had been discouraged, and their hands weakened, their sufferings neglected, and themselves slighted, and many who had been once open enemies, and always secret underminers, countenanced and employed. Nay, even those who had been looked upon as incendiaries, and upon whom the Lord had set marks of desperate malignancy, falsehood and deceit, were brought in as fit to manage public affairs.”

All which sins and breaches of covenant have now increased to a great height of heinousness; for, in our day, these incendiaries, desperate and engrained malignants have only been employed in, and admitted to the management of the affairs of the kingdom, and none but they accounted habile by law; and such divisions from the Covenanted-conjunction, and defections to the contrary part have been, and are enacted and established by law; yea, all the unhappy divisions that have been from the *public resolutions*, and downward, have been the woful consequents and effects of defections to the contrary part. At the first erection of Prelacy, many, both ministers and professors, partly by terror, partly by persuasions, did withdraw from this covenanted conjunction, and make defection unto Prelacy, with which they combined, conforming with, and submitting to the ministry of the conforming curates; and afterward, by the terror of the fear of men, and the persuasions of their counsel and example, many of the land were seduced into a combination with malignants, in taking oaths and bonds contrary to the covenant, thereby dividing themselves from the recusants, and making defection to the party imposing them, and opposing the covenants. By combination of those that preferred peace to truth, and ease to duty—by the terror of threatened continuance of persecution, and the persuasion of a promised relaxation and immunity from troubles; many ministers have been divided from the testimony of the Church of Scotland, against the encroaching supremacy and absolute power, and one from another, and have made defection to that part and party that were advancing these encroachments and usurpations on the prerogatives



## Page 81

of Christ and privileges of his church; by receiving indulgences and tolerations from them, in their own nature destructive unto, and given and received on terms inconsistent with the duties of the covenants, which were contrived and conferred on purpose to divide them from this cause, and from their brethren that more tenaciously adhered to it; and did effectuate that design in a great measure—and others gave themselves to a detestable indifferency in complying with, conniving at, and not witnessing against these defections, but passing them over in a secure submissive silence. And as, in the times of persecuting violence, these breaches of this Article were made by reason of the snares of that sinful time; so much more has there been a manifest violation of it since, when at this day there is such a universal combination of interests in opposition to the covenanted reformation. Are not the most of the three kingdoms in one great combination against it, by this cope-stone of defection, this incorporating union? How have we made conscience of performing that part of the covenant anent *resisting the persuasion of men to make defection to the contrary part*, when the whole land is so deeply involved into it? There has been, alas! too much way given to carnal arguments and persuasives—such as worldly gain, ease, profit, and preferment, and too much slavish fear and terror of men, whose breath is in their nostrils, has been entertained, without a due reliance and dependance upon Omnipotency; which has greatly carried men off their feet, and wheeled them into a compliance with, and defection to the contrary part, or into a neutrality and indifferency in this cause; so that few are found valiant for the truth upon the earth. What strange laxness and Laodicean indifferency has there appeared in this cause, through the whole conduct of affairs in church and state, since the revolution; whereby many discover to every observant eye that they are satisfied if they obtain a peaceful enjoyment of their own things, and liberty to dwell in their ceiled houses—albeit the Lord's house (in a great measure) lies waste? Where are there any acts of Assemblies, or proceedings of the church, which discover any due concern or zeal for the covenanted interests? Nay, the contrary has too frequently appeared; as for instance, when by the 5th act of the 2d session of William and Mary's 1st Parl., the establishment of the church was calculated for the meridian of state-policy, according to act 114, Parl. 12, King James VI. Anno 1592. On purpose to pass over in shameful oblivion the church's choicest attainments in reformation betwixt 1638 and 1649; and particularly, to make void the League and Covenant, with the Assembly's explanatory declaration affixed to the National, the malignants' grand eye-sore, there was no faithful protestation and testimony exhibited against this by the Assembly, then indicted, and convened the 16th of October following; which, if duly pondered in all its circumstances, without



## Page 82

the mask and pretexts industriously drawn over it, will appear to be, perhaps one of the greatest sins of this nation, and to be little inferior in nature and aggravations to the burning of the covenants, which is granted by all Presbyterians to be a most atrocious act of contempt done to the eternal God, and to his Son Jesus Christ, and cannot be called to mind by any of the godly without great abhorrence and detestation of it; in so far as the passing over and not ratifying these acts of Parliament and Assembly by the respective judicatories, which were made during that time of reformation, was a practical and interpretative condemning of them as unprofitable, and did greatly corroborate the acts whereby Charles II. had declared them null and not obligatory; and did likewise import a vilifying and despising of what God had wrought for his people in these lands, during that time; and, lastly, was a manifest indication of disregard to the oath of God, which these lands had come under. Neither did that, nor any succeeding Assembly, impartially and explicitly enumerate the land's sins in their national fasts; namely, the indulgence and toleration, with the addresses and thanksgiving for it, and the burning of the covenant, &c.; neither have they, in any of their addresses to their King or Queen, by letters, or other means, declared unto them the indispensable duty of renewing the covenants, nor applied to the Parliament for that effect; neither have they, by their Assembly-acts, asserted the intrinsic power of the church; neither did they in any of their acts, or public papers, make honourable mention of those who had laid down their lives for their adherence to Christ's truths during the times of persecution, nor testified their approbation of what was done that way; and yet many of us have been wanting in testifying our dislike of these backsliding courses, by discountenancing, withdrawing from, and keeping ourselves free of all participation with them; but have received the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the privilege of marriage at their hands, and paid tithes and stipends. By all which, it is apparent now much indifferency there has been in this cause of covenanted interest, which so much concerneth the glory of God, the good of the kingdoms, and the honour of the civil Magistrate.

Moreover in the same Article we are sworn, "All the days of our lives, zealously and constantly to continue in this cause, against all lets and impediments whatsoever, and what we are not able ourselves to suppress and overcome, to reveal and make known the same that it may be timeously prevented. And in the National Covenant, never to cast in any let, that may stop or hinder any such resolution, as by common consent shall be found to conduce for so good ends; but on the contrary, by all lawful means, to labor to further and promote the same; and if any such dangerous or divisive motion be made to us by word or writ, that we and every one of us shall either suppress it, or if need be, incontinent make the same known, that it may be timeously obviated. Agreeing very well with the scriptures." Numb. xiv. 9, 10; Neh. vi. 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11; Isa. viii. 12, 13, 14; Acts iv. 19, 20, 24, xxi. 13; Gal. ii. 5; Phil. i. 28.



## Page 83

Nevertheless, *many have been the lets and impediments, that have been cast in the way, to retard and obstruct the Lord's work*, by Prelacy, supremacy, indulgences, toleration, and absolute tyranny and compliance therewith, enacted by law, and all the mischiefs established by a throne of iniquity since the unhappy restoration of Charles II. to this day. Yet few have ever zealously contended and fewer have constantly continued in contending, against these obstructions, so obstructive to the cause, many have kept secret the first motions and appearances of these things, while they might have been suppressed and overcome, and the generality have passed them over in silence, and not made known, nor advertised unto evil of these things when declared, by witnessing against these things, when, they could not be otherwise removed or overcome. Yea, many of us have ourselves cast in lets and impediments, obstructive to the cause, by our defections divisions and disorders against common consent, and precipitances, without common consent even of our brethren adhering to the testimony. Many a divisive motion hath not been counted dangerous, of those which tended to divide us from the Covenanted cause. And many a good and necessary motion hath been accounted divisive, namely, such as proposed the necessity of confessing and forsaking sin.

“Besides these and many other breaches of the Articles of the Covenant, in the matter thereof, which concerneth every one of us, to search out and acknowledge before the Lord, as we could wish his wrath to be turned away from us, so have many of us failed exceedingly in the manner of following and pursuing the duties contained therein, not only seeking great things for ourselves, and mixing private interests, and ends concerning ourselves, and friends, and followers, with those things which concern the public good; but many times preferring such to the honour of God and good of his cause; and retarding God's work until we might carry alongst with us our own interests and designs: it hath been our way to trust in the means, and to rely upon the arm of flesh for success, albeit the Lord hath many times made us meet with disappointments, and stained the pride of all our glory, by blasting every carnal confidence unto us. We have followed for the most part the counsels of flesh and blood, and walked more by the rules of policy than piety, and have hearkened more unto men than unto God.”

In the conclusion of the Solemn League and Covenant there is a profession and declaration “before God and the world of our unfeigned desires to be humbled[28] for our own sins and for the sins of these kingdoms[29]; especially that we have not valued, as we ought, the inestimable benefit of the gospel[30], that we have not laboured for the purity[31] and power thereof[32], and that we have not endeavoured to receive Christ into our hearts[33], nor to walk worthy of him in our lives[34], which are the causes of other sins and transgressions



## Page 84

so much abounding amongst us[35]: all which we are under many obligations to confess and mourn over from the word; and, of our true and unfeigned purpose and desire, to endeavour for ourselves and all others under our power and charge[36] both in public and in private, in all dutie[37] we owe to God and man, to amend our lives[38] and each one to go before another[39] in the example of a real reformation, that the Lord might turn away his wrath and heavy indignation,[40] and establish these kingdoms in truth and peace.[41] Yet we have refused to be reformed and have walked proudly and obstinately before the Lord, not valuing his gospel, nor submitting ourselves unto the obedience thereof; not seeking after Christ, nor studying to honour him in the excellency of his person, nor to employ him in the virtue of his offices; not making conscience of the public ordinances, nor studying to edify one another in love. The ignorance of God and his Son Jesus Christ prevails exceedingly in the land.” Even our fathers in their purest times confessed, in their acknowledgement of sins, “That the greatest part of masters of families among noblemen, barons, gentlemen, burgesses, and commons, neglected to seek God in their families, and to endeavour the reformation thereof. And albeit it had been much pressed, yet few of the nobles and great ones could be persuaded to perform family duties themselves in their own persons, which made so necessary a duty to be disregarded by persons of inferior rank.”

We may add, in our degenerate times, not only the great ones generally profess the neglect and contempt of so necessary a duty, both in their own persons and in the use of chaplains; but the great part of the commons are altogether strangers to it; many performing no part of the family worship at all, others only singing a psalm and reading a chapter without praying, and others making a fashion of all, but very perfunctoriously, formally, and indifferently, and scarcely once in a day. And ministers also making little conscience of visiting families to see how this duty is performed, not pressing it upon the negligent, nor stirring up the formal to a more spiritual way of performing it, nay, some giving bad examples to their flocks, by neglecting it themselves in their own families. *The nobility, gentry, and barons, who should be examples of sober walking unto others, are very generally ringleaders of excess and rioting.* We have been far from amending our lives and promoting a personal reformation, and going before one another in the example of a real reformation, when we have been examples of deformation in our personal practices and public transactions, and being too-familiar and too far united with the patrons and patterns of the land's deformations. “Our fathers also acknowledged, albeit they were the Lord's people engaged unto him in a solemn way; yet they had not made it their study that judicatories and armies should consist of, and places of power



## Page 85

and trust be filled with men of blameless and Christian conversation, and of known integrity and approved fidelity, affection, and zeal unto the cause of God. And not only those who were neutral and indifferent, but disaffected and malignant, and others who were profane and scandalous were intrusted. By which it came to pass that judicatories, EVEN THEN, were the seats of injustice and iniquity. And many in their armies, by miscarriages, became their plague unto the great prejudice of the cause of God, the great scandal of the gospel, and the great increase of looseness and profanity throughout all the land." But, since the time of that acknowledgment there has still been more and more degeneracy, so that judicatories have consisted of, and been filled with perjured traitors to God and their country. And armies made up of these plagues marshalled under a displayed banner against Christ and his interest, not only to the scandal, but for the suppression of the gospel, and forcing people to profanity throughout the land; and now are, to the disgrace of the Protestant religion, made up of the refuse of the lands, and employed in the support of an Antichristian interest abroad. Yet have we not sighed and cried for these abominations, nor have we been concerned, as we ought, with the abounding of them through the land. As also, with blushing, we must confess our pride and presumptuous boasting of external privileges of the gospel and outward reformation, and of a testimony which we bragged of, as if that had made us better than others, while we made no conscience of personal reformation, which, no doubt, amongst other sinful miscarriages, was a main cause of the Lord's depriving us so long a time of the comfortable and soul-enriching mercy of a faithfully dispensed gospel.

And, in like manner, the conceitedness of some in suffering and contending for truth, rather for keeping up the contention abetting a party, and many times under too lofty names of the suffering party, and remnant, and the like, than to keep and hold fast the word of the Lord's patience to his glory as our crown; and many other evidences of pride hateful to God, such as boasting in the strength of armies in the suffering times in an ostentatious way, vaunting of, and being too much taken up with them, though then necessary for the defence of our lives; rejoicing in our numerousness or worldly abilities, or in the number of them that frequent the public ordinances in the fields; or that they, who are owners of the testimony, are for the most, part kept free from the gross out-breakings into which others are left to fall; which things, though very good and desirable in themselves, may yet be, and have been, occasions of sin when boasted in, more than humbly and thankfully acknowledged to be from the hand of God. As also, revengeful resenting of affronts, passionate and disdainful refusing to take reproof for faults, or for the excess in any duty, as to the manner of it, when we thought the matter was right.



## Page 86

And, it is likewise matter of regret, that both in the time of greatest suffering and afterwards, idleness of both kinds did too much prevail amongst us; both that when we were in a manner driven from the world, and shut up from all employment but the exercise of godliness, many did not improve that opportunity of the cross to promote acquaintance and communion with God, being slothful in prayer, reading and other duties; and some again, even when they might have had access to lawful employments, continued idle and out of work, to the opening of the mouths of many against the cause; albeit they were not called to, or employed in any public business for the same.

And besides all these things, there may be many other transgressions whereof the lands wherein we live are guilty, and these attended with many heinous aggravating circumstances beyond what they were in our fathers, which we have not been humbled for to this day; but, instead of mourning for them, confessing and forsaking them, we have been rather defending or daubing, covering or coloring, excusing or extenuating them. All which we now desire to acknowledge and be humbled for, that the world may bear witness with us, that righteousness belongeth unto God, and shame and confusion of face to us, as appears this day.

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### *A SOLEMN ENGAGEMENT TO THE DUTIES CONTAINED IN OUR NATIONAL AND SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT.*

*Particularly adjusted to the Circumstances of these Times, Anno 1712*

Because it is requisite, in order to obtain mercy, not only to confess, but also to forsake our sins, and to do the contrary duties; therefore, that the sincerity and reality of our repentance may appear, we resolve, and solemnly engage before God, in the strength and through the assistance of Christ, that we shall carefully endeavour, in all time coming, to avoid all these offences, whereof we have now made solemn public acknowledgment, and all the snares and temptations tending thereunto; and to testify this sincerity of our resolution, and that we may be better enabled in the power of the Lord's might, to perform the same, we do again renew our Covenants, both National and Solemn League, promising to make conscience of a more exact performance of all the duties therein contained, so far as we, in our stations, and present deplorable circumstances, are capable; particularly such as follow.

Because religion is of all things the most excellent and precious in its own nature, and therefore most to be desired by the children of men, and the knowledge of the great truths of the gospel, so generally decreased in this land, is so absolutely necessary to salvation; therefore in order to attain it, we shall labor to be better acquainted with the *written word of God*, the only infallible rule of faith and manners; and shall (according to our capacity) study more than formerly the doctrine of the reformed church of Scotland, summed



## Page 87

up in our[42] Confession of Faith, Catechisms Larger and Shorter, Sum of Christian Doctrine and practical Use of Saving Knowledge, Directory for Worship (as the same was received and observed by this church in her purest times, viz. in the year 1649,) Propositions concerning Church Government, and Ordination of Ministers, annexed to the Confession of Faith, and other writings clearing and confirming these truths, approved by this church, and agreeable to the word of God.

We shall likewise endeavor the advancing and promoting the power of this true Reformed Religion, against all ungodliness and profanity, the securing and preserving the purity thereof, against all kinds of errors, heresy and schism, as namely, Independency, Brownism, Anabaptism, Antinomianism, Arminianism, Socinianism, Libertinism, Familism. Scepticism, Quakerism, Deism, Burignonism and Erastianism; and as we declare, that we willingly agree in our consciences unto the doctrine of the church of Scotland in all points, as unto God's undoubted truth and verity, grounded only upon his written word, so we resolve constantly to adhere unto, maintain and defend, profess and confess, and (when called of God) to yield ourselves sufferers for the said doctrine, as we shall desire to be approved and confessed by Jesus Christ, before God and his holy angels. *2dly*, We shall also study more sincerity, uprightness and heart-integrity in the worship of God, and shall not satisfy ourselves with the form of it, without the power and spirituality, which God the only object of religious worship, doth require: and shall endeavor the due performance of all the duties of religious worship, which God hath in his most holy word required. And shall (if Providence offer occasion) endeavor to recover, and labor to preserve the purity thereof from all corruptions, mixtures, innovations and inventions of men, Popish, Prelatical, or any other; and while we are not able, by reason of the prevailing power of the abettors and maintainers of them, to get them removed, we shall labor (through grace) to keep ourselves free from all sinful communion and participation with them, and shall, in our stations, testify against these corruptions and perversions of God's worship, by all competent means. *3dly*, We shall likewise by all lawful means endeavor, that Presbyterian church government in kirk-sessions, presbyteries, synods and general assemblies, may be recovered in its former purity, established upon its proper basis and foundation, the word of God; and that it may be freed from all encroachments and invasions made thereupon by the powers of the earth; and that the discipline of the church may be impartially exercised against all scandalous offenders, great or small; and when the ministers of this church, or any of them, shall sincerely and conscientiously endeavor the restoration of the government in all its privileges, and freedom from all Erastian encroachments, and to have the discipline duly and impartially exercised, then we promise to be obedient, and be subject thereunto, as becomes the flock of Christ; but shall always testify our dislike of all encroachments made and yielded to, prejudicial to the privileges which Christ hath bestowed upon his church.



## Page 88

*4thly*, We shall always desire and pray for the reviving of the work of uniformity in the three kingdoms, and (if the Lord in his providence shall offer opportunity) shall seek and endeavour it by other means possible, lawful, expedient, and competent to us in our capacities; and shall never cordially consent unto, nor cease to testify against, whatsoever doth obstruct and hinder that work of uniformity, and shall detest and abhor all multiformity, introduced by Erastianism, Prelacy, and Sectarianism, now so prevalent, and confirmed by this late union with England.

According to the second Article, we shall do our utmost endeavour to have the land purged of Popish idolatry, and the monuments thereof destroyed, particularly the abomination of the mass; and, so far as lies in our power, shall never suffer the same to be re-introduced or erected again, nor favour any attempts tending thereunto. We shall never make any conjunction with these abominable Popish idolaters, at home or abroad, in armies or otherwise; and shall, according to our National Covenant, detest and abhor all their wicked superstitious rites and ceremonies. We shall never consent, for any reason whatsoever, that the Penal Statutes made against Papists should be annulled; but shall, when opportunity offers, be ready to concur in putting them to a due and vigorous execution. *2dly*, We shall, by all approven means, in our stations and vocations, endeavour the extirpation of Prelacy; and shall never submit to that wicked hierarchy of Bishops, Archbishops, &c., having superiority of order and jurisdiction above preaching Presbyters, whether Erastian or only Diocesan, in any form or degree, howsoever reformed, accommodated, limited, or restricted by cautions and provisions of men; seeing that all such superiority is flatly condemned in the Word of God, and hath proven many times fatal to the church of Christ. We shall detest and abhor, and in our stations witness against whatsoever courses, tending to the establishment of that abominable hierarchy; and particularly, the oaths of allegiance, with the assurance, and oath of abjuration, lately imposed on the persons of public trust in these realms, in regard they may justly be interpreted to strengthen that hierarchy, by upholding the persons that maintain the same. We shall not submit to any orders issued forth by Bishops, nor own them as our lawgivers, nor acknowledge any title they have to be members of parliament or council. *3dly*, We shall in like manner detest, and abhor, and labour, to extirpate all kinds of superstition—all rites and ceremonies superadded by human invention to the worship of God, not enjoined and required in his Word; together with all heresy and false doctrine, and all profaneness and immortalities of every kind, and whatsoever is contrary to sound religion; and shall in the strength, and through the help of Christ, endeavour to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and from henceforth to live righteously towards our neighbour, soberly in ourselves, and to walk humbly with our God.



## Page 89

We shall upon the one hand, endeavour to keep ourselves, as far as we can, from all partakings in other men's sins, by consenting unto associations, incorporations, combinations, compliance with, or conniving at, their sins. And upon the other, to guard against all schism, and sinful separation, or unjust, rash, and disorderly withdrawing from societies, congregations or families, or any part of the communion of the true reformed church of Scotland, holding purely and entirely the doctrine, worship, discipline and government of the same, in principle and exercise, according to the rules of Christ, and standing acts and constitutions of this church, consonant thereunto, so far as the Lord gives light therein. And as we look not upon our practice in withdrawing from the backslidden ministers of the present Erastian church, for reasons valid and sufficient, to be a gathering and setting up formed separate churches under other ordinances and ministry, distinct from the Presbyterian church of Scotland, (although we be falsely aspersed as doing it) so we purpose and resolve always to adhere to that standard of doctrine, discipline, and government, and that purity and form of worship, which during our reforming times were established, and to embrace such ordinances, and such a ministry as are of divine appointment; and that we shall not presume to withdraw from minister or member of that body for any offence, in any case, where either the offence may be legally removed without withdrawing, or cannot be instructed to be condemned by the word of God, and constitution of this church, or is in itself an insufficient ground of withdrawing, or where it is not defended, or obstinately persisted in, or is a thing to be condescended upon, forborn, or forgiven; but shall study to maintain union and Christian communion, with all and every one, whether ministers or private Christians, who adhere unto the purity of the doctrine, worship, discipline and government of the church of Scotland, and to the whole word of Christ's patience, in the sufferings and contendings of his people, in opposition to his enemies' encroachments; and shall join, in the way of truth and duty, with all who do, and in so far as they do, adhere to the institutions of Christ. And because many have labored to supplant the liberties of the true kirk, and have in a great measure, of late by indulgences and toleration, and now by oaths of allegiance and abjuration, and encroaching on the freedom of Christ's courts, obtained their design: we shall therefore, to our power withstand and witness against all these encroachments made upon the liberties of Christ's church in our land, and when we can do no more, shall withdraw our countenance and concurrence from such as hold their freedom from, and are modified by such usurpation; and shall neither hear their sermons, nor pay them stipends, while they continue unfaithful; and shall, whenever God gives us opportunity, endeavor to recover, and when recovered, to maintain and defend the liberties and privileges of the church of Scotland, against all who shall oppose or undermine the same, or encroach thereupon, under any pretext whatsoever.



## Page 90

With reference to the third Article, wherein we are bound to defend the privileges of the Parliament, liberties of the kingdoms, and the King's Majesty's person and authority, in the defence of the true Reformed religion: albeit God, in his righteous judgment, hath left the nations so far to the counsels of their own hearts, as to suffer them to set up Magistrates, wanting the qualifications requisite, and to fill places of power and trust with insufficient and disaffected persons, who have no respect to the interest of religion, and this nation in particular to give up the rights and privileges of Parliament, and kingdom, to the will and lust of the English, and so to betray the interest both of religion and civil liberty for unworthy by-ends; yet we purpose and promise, that we shall always in our capacities bear witness against these courses, and shall not by any means corroborate them, or encourage and countenance the maintainers and abettors of them. And if ever the Lord in his mercy shall be pleased to open a door of relief, and break the cords of the ungodly, we shall not be wanting in all lawful and suitable endeavors to promote, to our power, the recovery of that liberty and freedom which we have lost, and to have those acts and oaths, which impede Reformation, rescinded: and that all the righteous laws, made in favor of the Covenanted Reformation, may be put in full force, and duly executed.

We shall earnestly pray to God that he would give us able men, men of truth, fearing God and hating covetousness, to bear charge over his people, and that all places of power and trust in church, state, or army, may consist of, and be filled with men of known good affection to the cause of God, and of a Christian and blameless conversation; and when it shall please the Lord to give us such magistrates and judges supreme and subordinate, then we will, in the terms of the covenant, yield allegiance to them, and loyally subject to their good government, not from any by-end or sinister principle, but out of sincere obedience to God's commandment; and shall willingly support and defend them, with our estates and lives, in their persevering and defending the true reformed Protestant religion, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, and suppressing all kinds of false religion in their dominions, and in the administration of justice and punishment of iniquity; but while the Lord, in his just displeasure for our sins, withholds such from us, we intend to wait till he turn away his anger, and not to stretch forth our hands to iniquity, in owning and countenancing such as are not duly qualified; as, particularly, those that are Popish or Prelatical in their professed principle and practice, and by oaths engage themselves to maintain, and accordingly to defend, the Prelatical form of church government, who oppose and encroach upon the true government of Christ's house by their supremacy, and tolerate Sectarian errors in their dominions, and that every one of them supreme and subordinate; and shall not corroborate their unjust authority, by paying them cess and supply, for upholding their corrupt courts and armies, employed in an unjust and antichristian quarrel; or, by compearing before their judicatories, either to defend or pursue lawsuits, or upon any other account.



## Page 91

Because we are not in a case to bring to due trial and punishment, condign, according to the merit of their offences, malignants and evil instruments, according to the fourth Article; therefore, we shall endeavour to keep ourselves, as far as possible, from any compliance with, or approbation of their cause and courses, opposite to the cause and work of God; and shall endeavour to keep at a distance from everything that may anyways import a unitive conjunction, association, or confederacy with them, or strengthening them in their opposition to the cause of God—the covenanted interest. We shall, through grace, endeavour to represent before the throne of justice their wicked courses; and pray that God would defeat their inventions, though we shall always, as becomes Christians, implore the throne of grace for mercy to their souls, so far as it may be consistent with God's eternal purpose of electing love. Moreover, we shall always endeavour to guard against all unwarrantable and irregular ways, not approven in God's Word, of punishing malignants and incendiaries, for their opposition to reformation.

Whereas, in the fifth Article, we are bound to endeavour, that the kingdoms may remain united in a most firm peace and union to all posterity; which union did consist in a uniformity in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, though, as was said, it is now laid aside, and a union entered into which establishes multiformity therein, and so is the opposite of this Covenanted Union. We shall, therefore, deny our consent unto, and approbation of this union, and shall, as we have in weakness been witnessing against it formerly, so continue to do for the future, and shall not corroborate or strengthen the same; but upon the contrary, if the Lord afford opportunity, shall do our utmost to have the *union of the kingdoms settled* upon the true covenanted basis; and shall lay out ourselves, as far as possible, to entertain correspondence and sympathy with every one in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, who do, or shall, to our knowledge, adhere to this League and Covenant.

According to the sixth Article, considering what danger we and all our brethren, under the bond and owning the obligation of these covenants, are in, and may be exposed unto, from the Popish and Prelatical malignant faction still prevailing, and from this backslidden church; and being sensible of the many defects which have been amongst us, in the duty of defending and assisting one another in maintaining the common cause of religion and liberty, we do here solemnly enter into a bond of association with all that do now renew these covenants, “with the Acknowledgement of the Public Sins and Breeches, and the Engagement of Duties thereof, and concert and assert the old covenanted cause and quarrel,” as our fathers stated and contended for it, from the year 1638 to the year 1650. Which cause of the covenanted reformation in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, and all interests,

## Page 92

or rights, religious or civil, contended for during the foresaid space of years, conducing to promote the same, we faithfully promise to prosecute, propagate, preserve and maintain, to the utmost of our power, with our lives and all that we have; and to adhere to all the faithful testimonies, protestations and declarations, in the defence of the foresaid covenanted reformation, agreeable to, and founded on God's Word, ever since the foresaid year 1650, not regarding the foul aspersions of rebellion, combination or schism, or what else our adversaries, from their craft and malice, would put upon us; seeing what we do is so well warranted, and ariseth from an unfeigned desire to maintain the true religion, to obtain the protection and preserve the honour of righteous government, and promote the peace and happiness of the kingdoms.

And for the better performance of what we here engage to, we shall sympathize, bear all burdens, embark our interest with, assist and defend all those, who enter into, or join this association and Covenant, and shall reckon whatsoever is done to the least of us, for this cause, as done to us all in general and to every one of us in particular: and shall account it a breach of Covenant, if seeing our brethren pursued for this very cause, and having sufficient means to comfort and assist them, any of us shall either make peace with the persecutors, bind up their hands by oaths and bonds from resisting them, refuse to hide, harbor, or supply their brethren, decline to venture, in lawful and necessary attempts for their relief, or withdraw from their dutiful support; and being thus united and associated in this cause, as we resolve and oblige ourselves to abide in this firm conjunction, and neither consent nor concede to any combination or counsel, suggestion, persuasion, allurement or terror, that may have any known tendency or influence, whether direct or indirect, to seduce us either to a division amongst ourselves, or defection to our adversaries, or a base indifferency and neutrality between the two; but shall, with all zeal, fidelity and constancy, communicate our best help, counsel and concurrence, for promoting all resolutions, which by common consent shall be found to conduce to the good of the cause, and shall endeavor to discover, oppose and suppress, all contrivances or counsels, that may cast in any let or impediment, that may be obstructive or prejudicial to the same. So we shall likewise desire, design and endeavor, (whenever the Lord in his providence shall offer opportunity) to get the defections, unworthy neutralities, and unhappy divisions, which have long and lamentably wounded, and wrecked this church, removed and remedied. And shall be willing, with all tender sympathy and compassion, to embrace and welcome with the utmost bowels of kindness and respect that we can, all who shall confess and forsake these defections, and according to their stations, as ministers or private Christians, shall, by all

## Page 93

proper means, labor to satisfy the conscience of the godly, that are through these defections and scandals justly offended, and that according to the rules of Christ, delivered in his word, and received in this church, in her Reforming times, and join cordially with us in the prosecution of this cause; and we shall be willing also, at their desire, to acknowledge and forsake, for peace and unity, whatever we can rationally be convinced to be bad in our conduct and management, as we must acknowledge, that in all things we fail, and come exceedingly short of that perfection, which we should and would be at.

And because there be many who heretofore have not made conscience of the oath of God—but some, through fear, others by persuasion, and upon base ends, and human interests, have entered thereinto, who have afterwards discovered themselves to have dealt deceitfully with the Lord, in swearing falsely by his name; therefore, we, who do now renew our covenants with reference to these duties, and all other duties contained therein, do, in the sight of him who is the searcher of hearts, solemnly profess, that it is not upon any politic advantage, or private interest, or by-end, or because of any terror or persuasion from men, or hypocritically or deceitfully, that we do again take upon us the oath of God; but honestly and sincerely, and from the sense of our duty. And that, therefore, denying ourselves and our own things, and, laying aside all-self interests and ends, we shall, above all things, seek the honour of God, the good of his cause, and the wealth of his people; and that, forsaking the counsels of flesh and blood, and not leaning upon carnal confidences, we shall depend upon the Lord, walk by the rule of his Word, and hearken to the voice of his servants. In all which, professing our own weakness, we do earnestly pray to God who is the Father of mercies, through his Son JESUS CHRIST, to be merciful unto us, and to enable us, by the power of his might, that we may do our duty, unto the praise of his grace in the churches. Amen.

### **FOOTNOTES:**

[Footnote 4: In the Preface to this edition, the reader may perceive the same spirit in 1880. | ED.]

[Footnote 5: The lawful supreme Magistrate.]

[Footnote 6: The persons and authority of such, when God of his mercy shall grant them to us.]

[Footnote 7: King Charles the First.]

[Footnote 8: Remonstrances, declarations and testimonies of old, and of late.]



[Footnote 9: Or any other corruptions thereof, Prelatic or Erastian, either tried or to be tried; such as indulgence, the toleration, the magistrates appointing fasts without advice and consent of the church, dissolving assemblies, &c.]

[Footnote 10: Remonstrances, declarations and testimonies.]

[Footnote 11: To righteous governors, (when obtained), and to our country.]

[Footnote 12: The lawful supreme Magistrate's.]



## Page 94

[Footnote 13: The person and authority of sovereigns having the qualifications which the Scriptures require.]

[Footnote 14: The lawful supreme Magistrate's.]

[Footnote 15: The lawful supreme Magistrate.]

[Footnote 16: Lawful supreme Magistrates.]

[Footnote 17: Anno 1638.]

[Footnote 18: Lawful supreme Magistrates.]

[Footnote 19: After all supplications, remonstrances protestations and sufferings of our fathers, and our own grievous sufferings and contendings both before and since the late Revolution.]

[Footnote 20: When restored, according to their ancient foundation.]

[Footnote 21: The lawful supreme Magistrate's.]

[Footnote 22: The lawful Magistrate's.]

[Footnote 23: The lawful Magistrate, when obtained.]

[Footnote 24: Our Reformers.]

[Footnote 25: As they were then.]

[Footnote 26: The lawful supreme Magistrate.]

[Footnote 27: Such as the Curate of Carsphairn, and some others. But it is to be noted, that this sentence is not meant of those who either designed or actually executed that act of extraordinary justice upon the Archbishop of St. Andrews, who being an arch-traitor, and public incendiary, and implacable enemy to the work of God, and all the godly in the kingdom, was therefore justly put to death; though (because of the defect of justice in those that had authority,) the act, in respect of the persons executing, was singular and extraordinary. See the same vindicated, *Hind Let Loose*, head vi., page 633, &c.]

[Footnote 28: Ezek. vii. 16. But they that escape of them shall escape, and shall be on the mountains like doves of the vallies, all of them mourning, every one for his iniquity.]

[Footnote 29: Ezek. ix. 4.—Set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.]



[Footnote 30: Matt. xxii. 5. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise.]

[Footnote 31: 1 Tim. vi. 14. That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.]

[Footnote 32: 2 Tim. iii. 5. Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.]

[Footnote 33: Eph. iii. 17. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.—Col. ii. 6. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.]

[Footnote 34: Col. i. 10. That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing.]

[Footnote 35: 2 Thes. ii. 10, 11, 12. Because they received not the love of the truth —For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie. That they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.]

[Footnote 36: Josh. xxiv. 15.—But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Gen. xviii. 19. For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment.]



## Page 95

[Footnote 37: 1 Tim. iii. 15—That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God.—]

[Footnote 38: Psal. ci 2. I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. Jer. vii. 3. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Isa. I. 16, 17; *Cease to do evil. Learn to do well.* —]

[Footnote 39: Jer. 1. 8. Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be ye as the he goats before the flocks.]

[Footnote 40: Zech. i 3. Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. Psal. lxxxv. 3. Thou hast taken away all thy wrath; thou hast turned thyself from the fierceness of thine anger. Verse 4th. Turn us, O God of our salvation and cause thine anger towards us to cease]

[Footnote 41: Psal. lxxxv. 9, 10. Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land. Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Isa. xxxii. 17. And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever.

Zech. viii. 19—Therefore love the truth and peace.]

[Footnote 42: Note. The Confession of Faith is here adhered to, as it was received and approved by the General Assembly of this church, by their Act of the 27th of Aug. 1647, Sess. 23, the 2d Article of the 31st Chap, being understood, as explained in that Act, and the 4th Sect, of the 23d Chap, being understood, as it is explained in our Informatory Vindication, page 196, 2d Edition.]

[Typographical errors excepted, and *Historical Introduction* substituted for *Preface*, this edition agrees with those of Paisley, 1820, and Belfast, 1835.—ED.]

## **ACT OF COVENANT RENOVATION,**

AGREED UPON AT PHILADELPHIA, OCTOBER 8, 1880,

## **BY THE**

REFORMED PRESBYTERY,



# **AFTER THE APPROVED EXAMPLE OF OUR FATHERS, AT**

**AUCHENSAUGH, 1712, AND ACCOMMODATED**

TO THE PRESENT TIME.

\* \* \* \* \*

“I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.”—*Psalms* cxix: 106.

“They (Egyptians) shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it.”—*Is.* xix: 21.

The Corinthians “first gave their own selves to the Lord.”—*2 Cor.* viii: 5.

## **COVENANT RENOVATION.**

Vow, and pay unto the Lord your God.—*Ps.* lxxvi: II.

## **PREFACE.**

Having in prospect a united, public and solemn approach to our covenant God, some important principles should be understood, that we may proceed with intelligence and have sure ground for our faith.



## Page 96

“God is love;” and reciprocal love constitutes “the bond of perfectness” between God and rational creatures. Communion with God is the supreme felicity and highest honor of which angels and men are capable. The first emanation of divine love revealed to us was displayed in the covenant of works; although not called a covenant, the narrative contains all the elements essential to a federal deed, comprising a summary of the whole moral law. Thus the sovereign love of God was manifested through the medium of law and covenant inseparably combined; and this is the Lord’s manner of dealing with mankind till the present time.

That covenant was made with us in Adam as our common father and public representative. By the breach of it we are born in Adam’s image and “children of wrath;” for the principle of representative identification pervades the moral universe. Our rational and social nature fits us both for personal and federal responsibility.

When we had “destroyed ourselves” by apostasy from God, then did God “show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.” The gift of his Son to be a covenant head to sinners is God’s highest, and most glorious demonstration of his ineffable love. The breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the love of Christ passeth knowledge; and the displays of this love through the covenant of grace will doubtless furnish matter of admiration to holy angels, and of adoring gratitude to redeemed sinners throughout eternity. Rev. i: 5, 6.

Ever since our fall in Adam God has dealt with our sinful race by covenant. This covenant was made with Christ as Mediator between God and man, and as the representative of all whom the Father gave him to be redeemed and brought to glory. John xvii: 2. Accordingly, the Lord Jesus, immediately on the fall of our first parents, entered upon his work of mediation. To them first he announced his commission, declaring his purpose to “bruise the serpent’s head—to destroy the works of the devil.” Gen. iii: 15; 1 John iii: 8. Christ is given “for a witness to the people; a leader and commander to the people; to have power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him.”

Throughout the whole of the mediatorial administration the law and the covenant are distinct, though inseparably connected: and although many covenants are mentioned in the Scriptures, and even distinguished as *old* and *new*. Jer. xxxi: 31; Heb. viii: 8; yet we must understand these as only different and successive modes of administering one and the same Covenant of Grace. This covenant was proclaimed before the deluge by prophets, as Enoch and Noah; after the flood by patriarchs; then by the ministry of Moses and other prophets, when John the Baptist and the Messiah in person proclaimed it; and from the day of Pentecost till the end of the world is the last dispensation—still, the covenant is immutably the same. The most solemn and memorable act of covenanting with God was at Horeb, otherwise called Sinai, when the Israelites were first and formally organized in ecclesiastical and civil relations. Then “Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion.” Ps. cxiv: 2.



## Page 97

Besides circumcision and the passover, both of which involved covenant obligation, God instituted the additional ordinance of public and social federal transaction, that the whole body might glorify him by a united act of solemn dedication as his special property separated visibly from the world. Is. lxiii: 19. And that this is a moral ordinance, and of perpetual obligation, is evident from the practice of God's people, both under the Old and New Testament, and the language of prophecy. Deut. xxix: 10-12; 2 Cor. viii: 5; Is. xlv: 5.

Again, when we renew our covenant, we do not mean that the obligation has ceased, or that we can increase its obligation, for this is infinite and permanent; we intend by our personal act to deepen and render more durable our sense of preexisting obligation. This is, indeed, the immediate object of all renovations, by Moses, Joshua, kings of Judah and Nehemiah. And as we have seen, this ordinance was observed by Christians in the time of the apostles, so their practice may be traced through history afterwards, however obscure, until the time of the Reformation from Popery; when in Europe, both continental and insular, this ordinance was revived and exemplified. Among all nations in Christendom Scotland stands preeminent since first emancipated from bondage in mystical Babylon, for the frequency and fidelity of her ecclesiastical and national vows to the Most High. After many struggles with Popery and Prelacy, during which Christ's witnesses in that land derived strength and courage from vows renewed to withstand these organized oppressors; at length by their example and influence the kingdoms of England and Ireland were brought into a confederation by that famous and grand document, the Solemn League and Covenant. Taken in connection with the National Covenant of Scotland, those three nations and the churches in them were voluntarily bound to God and to each other by all the solemnity of cords and bands made in heaven. Yet, through the corruption of human nature and the restless malice of the Dragon and his angels, these bands were treacherously broken and the cords cast away. Although those symbols of the public faith were Scriptural documents, yet the reformation as truly described by the late Mr. Robert Lusk, was to the majority "a reformation only on paper." Like Israel of old the hearts of most of the people were not right with God, neither were they steadfast in his covenant. Ps. lxxviii: 37. This was soon made manifest by the Public Resolutions, accepting Indulgences, and the subsequent twenty-eight years of persecution inflicted upon those who "stood to the covenant." Then followed, in 1689, what the apostates called, and their successors still fondly hail, as the "glorious Revolution settlement!"—a settlement which, by forms of law, consigned the nations' solemn vows to oblivion, with all possible expressions of detestation by the infamous "Act Rescissory." In the year 1707, the "Act of Incorporation" brought the church and kingdom of Scotland under degrading bondage to the anti-Christian, Prelatic and Erastian throne of Britain.



## Page 98

While these steps of apostasy were in progress, the Lord preserved a “wasted remnant” of witnesses, who “resisted unto blood striving against sin.” These valiant Christian patriots—“the Society People”—kept themselves and their garments clean, and kept also the word of Christ’s patience. They never were *dissenters*, nor properly called the “Old Dissenters.” During this hour of temptation they were destitute of the help and guidance of a public ministry. At length, in the year 1706, Mr. John M’Millan, wearing the honorable badges of suspension and deposition, imposed by his apostate brethren for advocating in their Assembly the continued obligation of the Covenants. National and Solemn League, (Is. lxvi: 5,) was joyfully received as their minister by the voice of the Society people. In the year 1712, at Auchensaugh, Mr. M’Millan, with the assistance of Mr. John M’Neil, licentiate, “resolved to set about this solemn and tremendous duty of renewing their national covenants with God.” Their mode of procedure was Scriptural, following the examples of Moses and others to Nehemiah—“the footsteps of the flock.” They framed three papers, History, Confession and Engagement. The text of the Covenants of our fathers was left entire, only some explanatory words and phrases being placed in the margin. These explanations were then necessary to clear that question of questions—“Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee?”—a question to be finally settled only at the sounding of the last Apocalyptic trumpet. Rev. xi: 15. That transaction was ever after incorporated with the Terms of Communion.

Some years after this transaction another renovation took place in Scotland, at a locality called Crawford-John; but no attainments were then made, nor has any authentic record of the proceedings been transmitted to posterity. Also the Seceders, soon after their erection as a distinct organization in Scotland, and repeatedly since in Britain and America, by public covenanting have contributed to the preservation of sound doctrine and Christian practice. We cannot, however, accord to them the honor of being the successors of the covenanted witnesses, which they unwarrantably claim, seeing that they disowned the “civil part” of the public Covenants, and thus unwittingly, we charitably believe, passed an implied censure on the One Lawgiver for having given us a second table in the moral law!

We merely refer to the Octoraro transaction, (1743,) conducted by that unstable minister, Mr. Craighead, as being unworthy of anything more than historical notice.

## Page 99

The two most noteworthy instances of avowed covenant-renovation within the present century are those at Dervock, Ireland, in 1853, and in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, in 1871; and we class them together, because however the respective documents differ in their provisions, and in our judgment some of these are irreconcilable, yet the parties have ever since agreed to coalesce. Reference is here made only to a sample of *essential* discrepancies. In the Dervock bond the British Covenants are expressly mentioned and owned; in the Pittsburg bond they are neither owned nor mentioned, although both were urged at the time, while they were openly vilified without rebuke. In the former Prelacy is abjured, in the latter it is not so much as named. The fourth article of the former is irreconcilable with the fourth article of the latter. The former is limited by *recognized truth*; the latter substitutes for truth *supposed piety*. But since these two parties, in the face of such antagonistic fundamental principles, do actually harmonize in practice, coming down to treat with opposing parties in the plain of Ono, their example of treachery in covenant can be regarded only as a beacon of warning.

Strictly speaking, no new obligation has been imposed or assumed since the law was given at Sinai. We are to “keep the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.” This is just what Christ still enjoins upon his disciples—“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” The footsteps of Christ’s flock differ nothing now from what they were in the days of Solomon. Some turn back into Egypt, while others turn aside with the “flocks of the companions to right-hand extremes or left-hand defections”; for the harlot’s “ways are moveable that thou canst not know them,” and we are warned—“Come not near the door of her house.”

The federal deeds which we propose to renew are, of course, those of our witnessing fathers, the National Covenant of Scotland and the Solemn League of Scotland, England and Ireland, adapting these public deeds to our time, and comprising all preceding and subsequent attainments, as was done by our predecessors at Auchensaugh. Our condition and surroundings are in many respects similar to theirs. “Their soul was exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that were at ease, and with the contempt of the proud”; but they were also exposed to many perils from the existing ecclesiastical and civil authorities which they publicly disowned.

All inspired records of public vows to God by his united people, from the time of Moses to Nehemiah, contained a synopsis of special providence towards themselves and others, of sins, mercies and judgments; and these were motives to this special duty, though not a rule—“And because of all this we make a sure covenant and write it.”



## Page 100

After these examples, which we judge “written for our learning,” we renew our own and our ancestors’ covenants, neither ecclesiastically nor nationally as representatives of either church or state, as they are now confederated against the Lord and his Anointed: but we appear publicly as a “despised remnant,” avowing allegiance to Zion’s only King and “Prince of the kings of the earth,” pledging adherence to those public deeds of our progenitors, in which the divine ordinances of Church and State are exhibited; and in which they are exemplified as co-ordinate, mutually independent, friendly, and helpful to the family and to each other. Thus acted the people of God under the covenant of grace in all ages; and so acted his servants at Auchensaugh, whose more immediate example we propose to follow.

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### CONFESSION OF PUBLIC SINS.

All authentic history confirms the declaration of the Sacred Scriptures, That by one man sin entered into the world, and that there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not. Yet there is mercy with God that he may be feared, and plenteous redemption to redeem Israel from all his trespasses. But we are assured that “he that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.”

Believing these teachings of God’s word, and in view of renewing solemn vows to him, we now give glory to the Lord God of Israel by making confession of our own and our fathers’ sins in violating our solemn covenants. We acknowledge the heinous sins of repeated violation of our covenanted unity—*First*, By joining in a military confederacy with the American Colonies in the revolutionary war of 1776. *Second*, Joining in a similar confederacy with Irish Papists and others to cast off the British government in 1798. *Third*, In a similar confederacy in the war between the United States and England in 1812. *Fourth*, By the like military association in the recent civil war: and these sins were aggravated by framing oaths of allegiance or fidelity in the years 1812 and 1863.

Some of those who had violated their covenants by military association with the United Irishmen fled for refuge to the United States; and without undergoing censure became active agents in constituting a presbytery without authority had from the parent body in Scotland, 1798; and proceeded in 1806 to frame and publish *Reformation Principles Exhibited*, a work which removed landmarks which the fathers had set; and which with an abstract of Terms of Communion unpresbyterially introduced, unsettled the foundations and issued in the lamentable disruption of 1833.



## Page 101

In Scotland the leaders of the people caused them to err by changing the Terms of Communion in the year 1822, and the Testimony in 1837. While these changes were made in the Covenanted Church's organic law some of the most popular and influential ministers—theological professors, were publicly transgressing our covenants by joining in affinity with divers confederacies for moral reform. Doctor Andrew Symington, the most influential minister in the Synod did actually and publicly co-operate with the Evangelical Alliance; and in 1841 the same professor was among the foremost in projecting a plan for a "concert of prayer," by diverse sorts of professors, those of the Established Church of Scotland being expressly mentioned. No wonder the hesitating *Covenanter* ventured at least to express preference for "more generally small meetings for prayer, to a large number of Christians of different names." This kind of amalgamation being contrary to Scripture was a breach also of the Solemn League, the sixth article of which was evidently designed by our fathers to prevent such social sins under the name of religion. The Theological Seminary in Scotland, as a corrupt fountain, polluted all the streams, the ministers taking the lead in the defection, as is now manifested to the world.

All along our history in Scotland, Ireland and America, the sin of the antediluvians and of Israel after the flesh has been imitated by us—joining with the known enemies of truth and righteousness, in the face of many fearful judgments for such breaches of solemn vows.

The ministers took the lead in joining and inducing others to join the Colonization Society, a scheme for the removal of colored freedmen from among the bondmen, that slavery might be more secure and more certainly perpetuated by removing the disturbing element; and all this under the guise of evangelizing Africa! The General Synod which had unanimously patronized that scheme in 1828, discovering the deception, did in 1836, by a majority transfer its patronage to the rival cause of Abolition, thus continuing and persevering in the same transgression, from which they are not reclaimed to this day.

About the same time when we were ensnared in these unscriptural confederacies, occasional hearing naturally became developed in a sabbath-school, which for a short time was conducted jointly by three denominations in Pittsburgh—Covenanters, Seceders and Associate Reformed, violating our covenanted unity and erecting an unauthorized agency for spiritual instruction. The General Synod did, in 1840, abolish its own deligation form and the Subordinate Synods in violation of conventional law and Presbyterian order, and still continues to adhere to this two-fold breach of the brotherly covenant. That body, carrying on defection, joined in military association as noticed above, during the late civil war between the Union and Confederate armies, framing an "oath of fidelity," and thus profaning a divine ordinance by pledging themselves to enforce an atheistical constitution and execute the laws: and some of them glory in their shame and boast of this flagrant and complicated breach of solemn vows to the contrary.



## Page 102

While recognizing many precious principles embodied in the Dervock bond, we cannot give it our approbation as an adequate renovation of our National Covenant and Solemn League, because it not only omits but obviously excludes the Form of Presbyterial Church Government and the Directory for Public Worship, and seems to substitute for these the Testimony which is incompatible with that of 1761; although the two documents above named were received by our General Assembly of Scotland as “part of the uniformity” to which we are bound in the Solemn League. And besides, all their symbols of faith mentioned in the Dervock transaction as subordinate, are owned only as “*Doctrinal Standards*,” thus leaving at loose ends individual and social Christian *practice*. This document is therefore a defective, evasive, and consequently inadequate renovation of our Covenants.

The sound principles comprised in the Pittsburgh bond are still more palpably rendered nugatory by contradictions, manifold evasions and ambiguous phrases; such as “accepted manuals, our fathers’ covenants,” *etc.*; while the solemn pledge to “maintain Christian friendship with pious men of every name, and to feel and act as one with all in every land who pursue this grand end”—an *undefined* end—would overthrow, if this were possible, the whole scriptural fabric of our Presbyterial Covenanted Reformation. Treachery and perfidy, not to say perjury, are bound up in the Pittsburgh bond, especially in pledging themselves to the performance of civil duties “not forbidden in the law of God.” Some of the native fruits of this transaction, tending still more to corrupt themselves and others are the continual practice of occasional hearing, exchange of pulpits and correspondence by delegation.

This body has placed itself under the authority of the Pennsylvania Legislature, having petitioned for and obtained an act of incorporation, and having voluntarily submitted to the Erastian civil jurisdiction of the state of Pennsylvania and of the United States. The civil Charter expressly institutes and appoints its trustees to be regulated and limited in the exercise of the functions of their respective offices by the constitutions of Pennsylvania and of the nation. Their bond prepared the way for this more gross and practical surrender of all that is distinctive in our covenanted position. And finally, so far as we know all parties in the three lands claiming to be Reformed Presbyterians, have for years renounced those provisions of our Directory which require the lines to be read in public praise to God, and the banns to be proclaimed before marriage.

The nations throughout Christendom, continue in league with Antichrist and give their strength to the beast. They still refuse to profess and defend the true religion in doctrine, worship, government and discipline, contrary to the example of the kingdoms of Scotland, England and Ireland in the seventeenth century. Some of them have waged wars of conquest, under pretence of opening a way for the spread of the gospel; and disregarding international law, have violated solemn treaties among themselves, and all of them practically disregard divine authority; habitually profaning the Christian Sabbath, by carrying the mail, by commercial traffic, and parties of pleasure on land and water.



## Page 103

Acknowledging the righteousness of divine judgment upon ourselves and others for manifold violations of God's law and breaches of our own and our fathers' solemn vows in our domestic, ecclesiastical and civil relations; we desire to humble ourselves before God for these sins, and for others not contained in this enumeration. Seeing that God hath punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hath left us a small remnant in his sovereign mercy, our prayer to him is that he may enable us by his grace to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, to the glory of his great and holy name, and the commendation of his pardoning mercy.

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ACT OF ADHERENCE TO OUR COVENANTS. NATIONAL AND SOLEMN LEAGUE;  
AS ADAPTED TO THE PRESENT TIME.

We, office-bearers and members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, convinced by the Word and Spirit of God of our guilt and depravity by our breach of covenant in Adam; of utter inability to save ourselves from the ruins of the falls or its just penal consequences; desiring moreover to bless, the Lord, that when we were yet without strength Christ died for the ungodly; that a door of faith has been opened to the Gentiles, and repentance unto life granted to such; taking our warrant and encouragement from God alone, with our hands lifted up toward him:—do swear by his great and fearful name as the Lord our God, that—

I. We accept God in Christ for ourselves and our children as offered to us in the gospel, to be our everlasting portion; and we joyfully surrender ourselves and our all to him as his rightful and exclusive property. We cordially approve the Covenant of Grace, and embrace it as all our salvation and all our desire. Dead to the law as a covenant of works, we cheerfully receive it from Christ's hand as our perfect rule of life, to direct our personal and social conduct. Aiming to glorify God as our chief end, and to do good unto all men as we have opportunity—especially to the household of faith—we promise in the strength of divine grace to search the Scriptures, conforming heart and life to this standard, in constant opposition to the course of this world, exemplifying godliness and honesty before men all our days.

II. Set for the defence of the gospel, and under manifold obligations to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, we acknowledge the Scriptures of the Old and new Testament to be the Word of God and the alone infallible rule of faith and manners, rejecting any and all additions or subtractions, false translations, perverting or wresting them to men's destruction.



## Page 104

We own also, as subordinate standards of faith and practice of doctrine and order, the National Covenant and Solemn League: as also the Westminster formularies, well known by their names—viz., the Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, Form of Church Government, and Directory of Public Worship; as these were received respectively by the Church of Scotland in the years 1645, '47, and '48, not merely as "*Doctrinal Standards*," but as symbols, all of them, of Christian practice also, and as a part of the uniformity sworn to in the Solemn League. We adhere to the Renovation of the National Covenants at Auchensauth, 1712, as comprising the same grand Scriptural principles with the original deeds, and preserving the identity of the moral person, which became more visible in 1761 by a Judicial Testimony, re-exhibited in 1858 and 1876.

We repudiate the Renovation at Dervock, 1853, as being inadequate, defective, and unfaithful—part of the document couched in abstract, evasive, and equivocal language. Also, we condemn and reject the Pittsburgh Bond, as ambiguous, self-contradictory and treacherous—"a snare on Mizpah." We abjure and testify against Popery, as delineated by our ancestors in the National Covenant, together with the fictitious dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and the blasphemous assumption by the Pope of Jehovah's incommunicable prerogative of Infallibility. In like manner we reject Prelacy, whether Erastian or Diocesan, as abjured in the National Covenant and more explicitly in the Solemn League; while in pity for the persons involved in these despotic systems, we will pray and labor for the extirpation of these poisonous plants, and the emancipation of their deluded admirers. We condemn and disown all existing systems which involve the infidel element called Voluntaryism, representing the divine ordinances of Church and State as mutually inimical or in any way antagonistic, thus impeaching the wisdom of the Almighty.

III. Believing that the Son of God has been, as Mediator appointed heir of all things, and invested with universal dominion; that he reigns and must reign till all his impenitent enemies be put under his feet: we pledge ourselves in reliance on divine grace to continue our advocacy of his claims upon the homage and willing obedience of individual and social man, in the family, the church and the civil commonwealth. We will maintain and urge his exclusive right to prescribe the faith and order of the church by his royal authority. We promise to inculcate and exemplify Presbyterian Church Government as alone of divine right and unalterable.



## Page 105

Believing, moreover, that civil government, originating in the will of God as Creator, has been placed by the Father under the authority of the Mediator, and that the principal objects to be promoted by this divine ordinance are the glory of its Author, the welfare of mankind, and the prosperity of the church; we engage to endeavor the reformation of the nations by testifying against all neglect or contempt of Messiah's claims, or impious invasion of his rights by either rulers or subjects. In joyful anticipation of the universal reign of righteousness and peace on the earth, we will labor and pray for a gospel ministry and a Scriptural magistracy; testifying against all corruptions of these or substitutes for them. Persuaded of the adaptation and sufficiency of divine ordinances to effect reformation, we will refuse to identify or incorporate with any substitutes for these, or to co-operate with voluntary associations for moral reform, whether secret and sworn, or open and pledged, as these imply want of faith in divine ordinances, and in the wisdom and beneficence of our covenant God.

IV. Believing that the Christian Church is one by her divine constitution, and lamenting existing divisions among the children of God; recognizing the obligation upon us to love the brotherhood, we will endeavor to cultivate charity in private intercourse towards all who reflect the divine image; and help to elevate them to the platform of the Covenanted Reformation as our only recognized bond of organic and ministerial church-fellowship. Nor will we, in reliance upon the promised and continued supplies of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, permit ourselves to be divided from this our covenanted unity and uniformity by the promises, threats, or solicitations of surrounding communities. Through divine grace we will endeavor, by practical manifestation of the truth, to commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God, as the most effectual means of healing Zion's breaches, that are great like the sea.

V. Having learned from God's Word that all who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, in their character, in their substance, or in their persons; and knowing from the recorded history of those who nobly stood to their covenant that they were subjected to all these kinds of suffering; and since our Sovereign Lord in his holy providence for the trial of the patience and faith of his saints permits Antichrist to practice and prosper, the kings of the earth still giving their strength unto the beast: we therefore, anticipating like treatment from an opposing world wherever we may sojourn, resolve in his strength to follow the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth, as our leader, endeavoring so to diffuse the sweet savor of his name, that in due time and in every land men shall be blessed in him, and all nations shall call him blessed.

## Page 106

VI. Finally, this solemn renewal of our federal obligations we confirm by oath in the presence of the omniscient God, who searcheth our hearts, uninfluenced by any selfish, worldly, politic, or carnal motives or ends; but singly with a view to the glory of God and the temporal and eternal welfare of our fellow-men; beseeching our Father in heaven for Christ's sake so to furnish us with the gifts and graces of his Holy Spirit, that we may prove faithful unto death, and joyfully welcome, the glorious appearing of our final and chosen Judge.

And in testimony of our desires, and assurance to be heard, we say—Amen.