

## Queensferry Paper- 1680

We undersubscribers, for ourselves and all that shall adhere to us, or join with us, being put to it by God, our own consciences, and men, and following the examples of God's people, registrate in his word in such cases; we are resolved (having acknowledged and obtained mercy, we trust, for our former breaches of covenants with God) to bind ourselves with a solemn and sacred bond, lest upon the one hand, we should be carried away with the stream of the defection of this time, that neither mind bypast vows, nor intends performance, but are going a quite contrary way of seeking their own things: and on the other hand, lest we should wander, evanish into vanity, and come to nothing, not having any fixed limits and end proposed to ourselves; and as we resolve to covenant with and before God, so to declare before the world, what are the designs we propose to pursue, if God shall give us power and success, that men (knowing) if they will know, our inward thoughts and utmost end, and our way from the one to the other, may not be at a trouble or uncertainty to find us out, and may have no occasion to misjudge, nor misrepute us that are friends, and those that have the glory of God before their eyes (as we may have no cause to be jealous of our intentions) and that our enemies with their associate backsliders (sometime professed friends) may not have ground to load us with foul and odious aspersions, the kingdom of God with us, may do it without excuse, and those who join with us, may do it on solid grounds, and in hazarding their perishing lives, may know they do not die as fools: it is true the unmindfulness, failing, counteracting, and mocking that has been in our former vows and covenants with God, together with great spiritual judgments that have followed both upon professors and ministers, and the great temporal judgments that are like to follow, puts us to some stop; so that we cannot but with much trembling of heart renew our covenant, or engage anew, especially considering our own weakness and hazard; yet the clear conviction of duty, zeal to God's glory, and love to Christ's reigning, which is the highest and greatest duty that a man can perform to God, trusting in his mercy, who knows the integrity and rightness of our intentions, will both instruct, enable, accept, preserve, and prosper us: we go on declaring those, and nothing but those to be our present purposes.

First. We covenant and swear, that we acknowledge and avouch the only true and living God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to be our God and that we close with his way of redemption by his Son Jesus Christ, and rely upon his righteousness, as that righteousness only whereby a man can be justified before God; and that we acknowledge the scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be by divine revelation, and to contain the will of God to man, and anent men; and that we take those scriptures to be the only object matter of our faith, and rule of our conversation in all things, and that we do give up ourselves to God, to be renewed, instructed by his grace, and ruled in all things by his Spirit according to his word, and shall

earnestly endeavour to render him that love, worship, and obedience that his word requires, and his goodness obliges us to.

Secondly. That we shall, to the utmost of our power, advance the kingdom of God (if at any time God shall give us power) by establishing throughout the lands, righteousness, and the true reformed religion, in the truth of its doctrine, in the purity and power its worship and ordinances, its right government and discipline, and that we shall free the church of God from the tyranny and corruption of prelacy on the one hand, and the thralldom and encroachments of Erastianism upon the other hand; and that we shall, to the utmost of our power, relieve the church and our brethren, the subjects of this kingdom (God authorizing and calling us to this, by his raising up, and giving us power and success in removing those who by their transgression have forfeited their authority) of that oppression that hath been exercised upon their consciences, civil rights, and liberties, that men may serve God holily without fear, and possess their civil rights peaceably without disturbance.

Thirdly. That we confess with our mouths and believe with our hearts, the doctrine of the reformed churches, especially that of Scotland, contained in the Scriptures, summed up in our confessions of faith, and engaged to by us in our covenants, is the only true doctrine of God, and that we purpose to persevere in it to the end: and that the pure worship required and prescribed in the scriptures without the inventions, additions, adornings, or corruptions of men, is the only true worship of God, and the presbyterian government exercised by lawful ministers and elders in kirk-sessions, presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies, is the only right government of the church, and that this government is a distinct government from the civil, and ought distinctly to be exercised, not after a carnal manner by the plurality of votes, or authority of a single person, but according to the word of God; so that the word makes and carries the sentence, and not plurality of votes.

Fourthly. That we shall endeavour, to our utmost, the overthrow of the kingdom of darkness, and whatever is contrary to the kingdom of Christ, especially idolatry and popery in all articles of it, as we are bound in our national covenants, superstition, will-worship, and prelacy, with its hierarchy, as we are bound in our Solemn League and Covenant, and that we shall with the same sincerity endeavour the overthrow of that power (it being no more authority) that hath established, and upholds that kingdom of darkness, that prelacy, to wit, and Erastianism over the church, and hath exercised such a lustful and arbitrary tyranny over the subjects, taken all power in their hand, that they may at their pleasure introduce popery in the church, as they have done arbitrary government in the state. And in a word, that we shall endeavour the extirpation of all the works of darkness, and the relics of idolatry and superstition (which are much enlarged and revived in those times) and execute righteous judgment impartially (according to the

word of God, and degree of offences) upon committers of those things, especially, to wit, the blasphemy, idolatry, atheism, sorcery, perjury, uncleanness, profanation of the Lord's day, oppression, and malignancy, that thus being zealous of God's glory, he may delight to dwell in the midst of us.

Fifthly. Seriously considering, that the hand of our kings, and rulers with them, hath been of a long time against the throne of the Lord, and that the Lord, upon this account, has declared that he will have war with them for ever, and has commanded his people utterly to root them out; and considering that the line and succession of our king and rulers hath been against the power and purity of Religion, and godliness, and Christ's reigning over his church, and its freedom, and so against God, and hath degenerate from that virtue, moderation, sobriety, and good government, which was the tenor and right by which their ancestors kept their crowns (for when they left that, they themselves were laid aside, as our chronicles and registers do record) into an idle and sinful magnificence, where the all and only government is to keep up their own absoluteness and tyranny, and to keep on a yoke of thralldom upon the subjects, and to squeeze from them their substance to uphold their lustful and pompous superfluities: we having no better nor greater way at this time of manifesting our public siding with, and loving of God, nor seeing a more speedy way of relaxation from the wrath of God (that hath ever lain heavy on us, since we engaged with him) but of rejecting of them, who have so manifestly rejected God (especially of late) and his service and reformation, as a slavery, as they themselves call it in their public papers, especially in their late letters to the king and duke of Lauderdale, disclaiming the covenants with God, and blasphemously enacted it to be burned by the hand of the hangman, governed contrary to all right laws divine and human, exercised such tyranny and arbitrary government, so oppressed men in their consciences and civil rights, used free subjects, Christian and reasonable men, with less discretion than their beasts, and so not only frustrate the end of government, which is, that men may live peaceably and godly under them (this being the end of government, to maintain every one in their rights and liberties against wrongs and injuries) but have done directly opposite to it, by enacting and commanding impieties, injuries, and robberies, to the denying of God his due, and the subjects their godliness and peace; so that instead of government, godliness, and peace, there is nothing but rapine, tumult, and blood; so that now it cannot be called a government, but a lustful rage, exercised with as little right reason, and more cruelty than in beasts; and they themselves can no more be called governors, but public grassators, and public judgments, which all ought to set themselves against, as they would do against pestilence, sword, and famine raging among them; for they are like those, and bring those; and as they have exercised no good government, nor administered justice, so on the other

hand, they have stopped the course of law and justice against blasphemers, idolaters, atheists, sorcerers, murderers, incestuous and adulterous persons, and other malefactors; and instead of rewarding the good, have made butcheries and murders upon the Lord's people, sold them as slaves, imprisoned, forfeited, fined, banished, &c., and that upon no other account, but for maintaining Christ's right of ruling over their consciences against the usurpations of men, for fulfilling their vows, repelling unjust violence (which innocent nature allows every creature) of all which particulars we can give (we speak before God) innumerable and sure instances.

But that we may see if there be anything that stands in our way, there are but three things that seem to have weight that we know. First. Whether the deed and obligation of our ancestors can bind us. Secondly. Whether the covenant doth bind us either to this man or his posterity. And Thirdly. Whether there yet be any hope of them and their posterity.

1. As to the first. Our ancestors their transactions and obligations neither did, nor could bind us, they did not buy their liberty and conquest with our thralldom and slavery; nor could they, liberty and freedom being a benefit next to life, if not in some regard above it, that they could not give it away more than our lives, neither is it in the power of parents to bind their posterity to anything that is so much to their prejudice, and against their natural liberty. It is otherwise indeed in things moral. Neither did they bind us to anything but to a government, which they then esteemed the best for the commonwealth and subjects; and when this ceaseth, we are free to choose another, if we see it more conducible for that end, and more free of these inconveniences. 2dly. The covenant doth not, for it only binds us to maintain our king in the maintenance of the true established and covenanted religion; and this we have not: neither can they require homage upon the account of the covenant, having renounced and disclaimed that covenant: and we being no otherwise bound, the covenant being the coronation compact without the swearing and sealing of which our fathers, or rather we ourselves refused to receive him for king, and them for rulers; and if they were free to refuse him for king upon the account of not subscribing of that covenant, we are much more free to reject him upon his renouncing of it, this being the only way of receiving the crown of Scotland; and reigning also, not being an inheritance that passes from father to son without the consent of tenants, but an (and the more men plead for this, the more we are concerned to look to it) office, which, all say, is given *ad culpam, non ad vitam*. And for the 3d, Neither is there any hope of their return from these courses, having so often showed their natures and enmities against God and all righteousness, and having so oft declared and renewed their purposes and promises of persevering in those courses: and suppose they should dissemble a repentance of those things, and profess to return to better courses, being put to straits, and for their own ends (for

upon no other account can we reasonably expect it:) supposing also, that there might be pardon for that which is done, which we cannot see can be without the violation of God's law, and the laying on of a great guiltiness upon the land, for the omitting of the execution of so deserved and so necessarily requisite a justice, from which guiltiness the land cannot be cleansed or made free, but by executing of God's righteous judgment upon them: but supposing that it might, they cannot now be believed, after they have violated all ties that human wisdom can devise to bind men. And besides, who sees not somewhat of folly to be in this, to think to bind a king that pretends to absoluteness? the way being thus cleared, and we being sure of God's approbation and men's whose hearts are not utterly biassed, and conscience altogether corrupted; and knowing assuredly, the upholding of such, is to uphold men to bear down Christ's kingdom and to uphold Satan's, and to deprive men of right government and good governors, to the ruining of religion, and undoing of human society. And seeing also the innumerable sins and snares that are in giving obedience to their acts upon the one hand; and upon the other hand, seeing the endless miseries that will follow if we shall acknowledge their authority, and refuse obedience to their sinful commands: we then upon those, and the following grounds, do reject that king, and those associate with him in the government (stated and declared enemies to Jesus Christ) from being our king and rulers, because standing in the way of our right, free, and peaceable serving of God, propagating his kingdom and reformation, and overthrowing Satan's kingdom according to our covenants, declare them to be henceforth no lawful rulers, as they have declared us to be no lawful subjects, upon a ground far less warrantable, as men unbiassed will see: and that after this, we neither own, nor shall yield any willing obedience to them, but shall rather suffer the utmost of their cruelties and injuries (until God shall plead our cause) being no more bound to them, they having altered and destroyed the Lord's established religion, overturned the fundamental and established laws of the kingdom, taken away altogether Christ's church-government, and changed the civil government of this land, which was by a king and free parliament, into tyranny, where none are associate to be partakers of the government but only those who will be found by justice to be guilty of criminals, and where all others are excluded, even those who by the laws of the land, and by birth, have a right to, and a share in that government, and that only because they are not of the same guiltiness and mischievous purposes with themselves, and where also all free elections of commissioners for parliaments, and officers for government, are made void, they making those the qualifications for admission to those places, which by the word of God, and the laws of the land, was the cause of their exclusion before. So that none can say that we are now bound in allegiance unto them, unless they will say, we are bound in allegiance to devils whose vicegerents they are, having neither authority

from God (because it is by their sinfulness forfeited) nor yet judging nor ruling for God.

We then being made free by God and their own doings, (he giving the law, and they giving the transgression of that law, which is the cause) and being now loosed from all obligations both divine and civil to them, knowing also, that no society of men, having corruption in them (which is always ready to beget disorder and to do injuries, unless restrained and punished by laws and government) can be without laws and government, and withal desiring to be governed in the best way that is least liable to inconveniences, and least apt to degenerate into tyranny: We do declare, that we shall set up over ourselves, and over what God shall give us power of, government and governors according to the word of God, and especially that word, Exodus 18.21. "Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people, able men such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness, and place such over them; to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens." That we shall no more commit the government of ourselves, and the making of laws for us, to any one single person, or lineal successor, we not being by God, as the Jews were, bound to one single family; and this kind of government by a single person being most liable to inconveniences, and aptest to degenerate into tyranny, as sad and long experience hath taught us.

Moreover we declare, that those men whom we shall set over us, shall be engaged to govern us principally by that civil and judicial law (we think none will be so ignorant as to think, by the judicial law we mean that which is ceremonial or typical) given by God to his people of Israel, no man, we think, doubting, but it must be the best so far as it goes, being given by God; and we having no body of law of our own, but some few imperfect acts of parliament, and sometimes following the canon, and sometimes the feudal, and sometimes the civil, which occasions great contentions among the people, especially those who are naturally litigious, to the exhausting and enhancing of the substance of the kingdom to some few men, and squeezing of its inhabitants, but especially that we shall be governed by that law in matters of life and death, and all other things also, so far as they reach, and are consistent with our Christian liberty established in all Christendom (only violated by our tyrants, and some others of late) excepting only that of divorce and polygamy, the one being not a law, but a permission granted upon the account of the hardness of their hearts, the other being a sinful custom, contrary to the first institution of marriage, crept into the church. We know that men of malignant and perverse spirits, who have not a higher God than a wicked king, which suits only with their lustful licentiousness, and it may be others with them, that seemed to be of better principles, will raise an ignorant clamour upon this, that it is a fifth monarchy, and we fifth-monarchy-men, and will labour to amuse the people with strange terms, and put odious names on good things to make them

hateful as their way is; but if this be their fifth monarchy, we both are, and ought to be such, and that according to God's word.

Sixthly. It being the work of the ministers of the gospel to preach, propagate, and defend the kingdom of God, and to preserve the doctrine, worship, discipline, government, liberties and privileges of the same from all corruptions and encroachments of rulers and all others; and seeing that the ministers of the church of Scotland, at least the greater part of them by far, not only were defective in preaching and testifying against the acts of rulers, for overthrowing religion and reformation, abjuring our covenant with God, establishing a government in the church, which their king calls his own government (and so is not God's) contrary to our covenant, against enacting of that blasphemous (so Calvin calls that supremacy of Henry VIII. upon which this prerogative is formed, and from which it is derived, and is no less, if not more injurious to Christ, and enslaving to his church) and sacrilegious prerogative, given to a king over the church of God, and against their other acts and encroachments upon his church, and hindered others also who were willing, and would have testified against them, and censured some that did it (for which, together with other faults in their trust and administration, we may say God hath left them to do worse things) but also have voted in that meeting (which they are pleased to call 'an assembly of ministers,' but how unjustly let men judge) an acceptance of that liberty founded upon, and given by virtue of that blasphemous, arrogated and usurped power, and has appeared before their courts to accept of that liberty, and to be enacted and authorized their ministers, and so have willingly (for this is an elicite act of the will, and not an act of force and constraint) translated the power of sending out, ordering and censuring (for as they accepted the liberty from them, so they are answerable and submit to their censures and restraints, at least all of them who were yet tried with it, and others of them appeared, and acknowledged before their courts, that they would not have done these things that they were charged with, if they had thought it would have offended them) ministers from the court of Christ, and subjection to the ministry to the courts of men, and subjection unto the magistrate (which had been impious and injurious to Christ, though they had been righteous and lawful rulers), and by their changing of courts (according to common law) have changed their masters, and of the ministers of Christ are become the ministers of men, and bound to answer to them, as they will; and as by the acceptance of this liberty in such a manner, they have translated the power, so they had given up and quit utterly the government, and a succession of a presbyterian ministry, for as those were not granted them of their masters, so they received their ministry without them, and by this (as the ecclesiastic government is swallowed up in the civil) if the rest had followed them, the ministry should have been extinct with themselves, and the whole work of reformation had been buried in oblivion, and not so much as the remembrance thereof kept

up. Those, together with the other of their commissions, in preaching the lawfulness of paying that tribute, declared to be imposed for the bearing down of the true worship of God (which they falsely termed seditious conventicles, rendezvouses of rebellion) and their advising those poor prisoners to subscribe that bond, and consequently could not but so advise others, if put to it (for the hazard men were in will not make a real change of the morality of the action) and besides, the rest may be put to it on the same hazard; and if the one should advise (which consequently they must do) and the other should subscribe, this would altogether close that door, which the Lord hath made use of in all the churches of Europe, for casting off the yoke of the whore, and restoring the truth and purity of religion and reformation, and freedom of the churches, and should also have stopped all regress of men, when once brought under tyranny, to recover their liberty again. Those ministers then not being followers of Christ, who, before Pontius Pilate, gave a good confession, which was that he was a king (and no king, if he have no power to order his house and subjects) and they not following him nor his ministers, they not asserting and maintaining this his kingly power, against all encroachments and usurpers of it; and besides, we being commanded, if any brother walk disorderly, from such to withdraw. And although, in the capacity that we are now in, we neither have, nor assume to ourselves authority to give our definitive and authoritative sentence of deposition against those ministers, yet we declare (which is proper for us to do) that we neither can nor will hear preaching, nor receive sacraments from any of those ministers that have accepted, and voted for that liberty, nor from any who have encouraged and strengthened their hands by hearing and pleading for them, all those who have trafficked for an union with them, without their renouncing and repenting of those things, all that do not faithfully testify against them, and after do not deport themselves suitably to their testimonies, all who join not in public with their brethren, who are testifying against them. We declare, that we shall not own, &c., at least till they stand in judgment before those ministers, and be judged by them who have followed the Lord, kept themselves free of those defections, or at least have repented; and as our hearts have cleaved to those ministers, while they were on the Lord's side, and subjected to them, so we shall still cleave to those that abide following him, and shall be subject to them in the Lord.

Seventhly. Then, we do declare and acknowledge, that a gospel ministry is a standing ordinance of God, appointed by Christ to continue in the church until the end of the world; and that none of us shall take upon him the preaching of the word, or administering of the sacraments, unless called and ordained thereto by the ministers of the gospel. And, as we declare, that we are for a standing gospel ministry, rightly chosen and rightly ordained, so we declare that we shall go about this work in time to come with more fasting and prayer, and more careful inspection into the



conversation and holiness of those men that shall be chosen and ordained, the want of which formerly has been a great sin, both in ministers and people, which hath not been the least cause of this defection. This will meet with the same measure as the former. The former was a fifth monarchy, so this will be a separation. There is both malice and ignorance in this calumny. Malice in striving to make us odious; for there is nothing that will make us more odious to the world, than to tell them we think ourselves more holy than all, and will have no communion with others. But we abhor such thoughts, and whatever we know of our sincerity, yet we know nothing of our perfection, and so see nothing whereupon we may compare, much less exceed others, but the contrary; and if any were to be shut out upon that account, we judge ourselves would be the first. There is ignorance in it, if not a deep deceit; for separation, as the scriptures and divines take it in an evil sense, cannot be attributed to us; for if there be a separation, it must be where the change is, and that is not in us; we are not separating from the communion of the church, and setting up new ordinances, and a new ministry, but cleaving to the same ministers, and following the same ordinances, when others have slidden back to new ways, and have a new authority superadded, which is like the new piece in the old garment.

Eighthly. We bind and oblige ourselves to defend ourselves and one another in our worshipping of God, and in our natural, civil, and divine rights and liberties, till we shall overcome, or send them down under debate to the posterity, that they may begin where we end; and if we shall be pursued or troubled any farther in our worshipping rights and liberties, that we shall look on it as a declaring war, and take all the advantages that one enemy doth of another, and seek to cause to perish, all that shall, in an hostile manner, assault us, and to maintain, relieve, and right ourselves of those that have wronged us, but not to trouble or injure any, but those that have injured us, those being most lawful for us, being many that are wronged upon such an account, and by such persons who have nothing now over us, but power and usurped authority, which we shall neither answer nor acknowledge, if we can do otherwise, hoping that God shall break off that part of the yoke, and free us of that power and tyranny, that we have cast off upon his account, and will give us judges as we had at the beginning, and counsellors as we had at the first.