

# ORDINANCE OF COVENANTING.

(The National Covenant, Pt. 2.)

“That public, social covenanting, is an ordinance of God, obligatory on churches and nations under the New Testament; that the National Covenant and the Solemn League are an exemplification of this divine institution; and that these Deeds are of continued obligation upon the moral person.”—Fourth Term of Communion.

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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<sup>1</sup> penalties whatsoever, made in prejudice of the true religion, and professors thereof; or of the true kirk, discipline, jurisdiction, and freedom thereof; or in favours of idolatry and superstition, or of the Papistical kirk: As Act 3, Act 31 [13], Parl. 1;<sup>2</sup> Act 23, Parl. 11;<sup>3</sup> Act 114 [116], Parl. 12<sup>4</sup> of King James VI.,<sup>5</sup> That Papistry and superstition may be utterly suppressed, according to the intention of the Acts of Parliament, repeated in the fifth Act, Parl. 20,<sup>6</sup> King James VI.

Question 1.—*Is it the duty of the magistrate to see that the true religion is established by law?*

*Answer.*—Yes. Isa. 60:5, 10. This is cleared by the following: 1.) Because it is foretold by the prophet Isaiah, that in the days of the Gospel, kings shall be nursing fathers and queens nursing mothers to the church of God, Isa. 49:23. 2.) Because Artaxerxes, who was but a heathen king, was very careful to make a decree, that whatsoever was commanded by the God of heaven, should be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven, Ezra 7:23. And whosoever would not obey the law of God and the king was

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<sup>1</sup> This is a term used in Scots' law used to refer to customary practice and law.

<sup>2</sup> Act 3, Parl. 1 (1567), *Concerning the annulling of the acts of parliament made against God, his word and maintenance of idolatry in any times past*

the three estates of parliament have annulled and declared all such acts made in times past not agreeing with God's word, and now contrary to the Confession of Faith [*i.e.*, 1560 Scots Confession]

Act 31 [13], Parl. 1 (1567), *Concerning the jurisdiction of the kirk*

this present parliament, has declared and granted jurisdiction to the said kirk, which consists and stands in preaching of the true word of Jesus Christ, correction of manners and administration of holy sacraments, and declares that there is no other face of kirk nor other face of religion than is presently, by the favour of God, established within this realm; and that there be no other jurisdiction ecclesiastical acknowledged within this realm other than that which is, and shall be, within the same kirk, or that which flows therefrom concerning the premises.

<sup>3</sup> Act 23, Parl. 11 (1587), *Ratification of the liberty of the kirk of God*

concerning the liberty of the kirk of God and religion now presently professed and by the laws established within this realm; and that the said ratification be as effectual as if all the said acts were herein expressed, named and numerated; and quashes, annuls and abrogates all laws, acts and statutes, canon, civil, municipal and other ordinances whatsoever made in any times of before contrary or in prejudice of the said true religion and professors thereof.

<sup>4</sup> Act 114 [116], Parl. 12 (1592), *Act for abolishing of the acts contrary to the true religion*

and also ratify and approve the synodal and provincial assemblies to be held by the said kirk and ministry twice each year as they have been and are presently in use to do within every province of this realm; and ratify and approve the presbyteries and particular sessions appointed by the said kirk, with the whole jurisdiction and discipline of the same kirk agreed upon by his majesty in conference had by his highness with certain of the ministry convened to that effect, of the which articles the tenor follows:

*Matters to be entreated in provincial assemblies*

These assemblies are constituted for weighty matters necessary to be entreated by mutual content and assistance of brethren within the province as need requires. This assembly has power to handle, order and redress all things omitted or done amiss in the particular assemblies. It has power to depose the office bearers of that province for good and just cause deserving deprivation. And generally these assemblies have the whole power of the particular elderships whereof they are collected.

*Matters to be entreated in the presbyteries*

The power of the presbyteries is to give diligent labours in the bounds committed to their charge, that the kirks be kept in good order, to enquire diligently of naughty and ungodly persons, and to work to bring them in the way again by admonition or threatening of God's judgments or by correction.

<sup>5</sup> Parliaments from this period are accounted much after the fashion of regal years. Thus, Parliament 1, of James VI., would be accounted that of 1567, the first parliament of his reign, though still in his minority.

<sup>6</sup> Act 5, Parl. 20 (1609), *Act against Jesuits, seminary priests and reseters* [*i.e.*, those giving aid and comfort to] *of them*

And for the better execution of the said acts, our said sovereign lord and estates foresaid command and ordain all archbishops, bishops and presbyters to call before them the said papists, Jesuits, seminary priests and their reseters, every one within their own bounds, and to take trial and cognition if they have contravened the said acts or any part thereof, and according as they find after due trial and probation, that they report the same to his highness's advocate and secret council, to the effect they may be called and convened before them and punished according to the said acts in all points.

punished speedily, Ezra 7:25, 26. For which singular mercy Ezra blessed the God of his fathers, who had put such a thing in the king's heart, Ezra 7:27, 28. So, too, did Nebuchadnezzar make such a decree, Dan. 3:29. The like we read of Darius, Dan. 6:26; Ezra 6:10-12. 3.) Because the supreme magistrate is to be a keeper of both tables of the law of God, 2 Kings 11:12. As well the first, which relates to religion, and of our duty to God; as of the second, which relates to righteousness, and our duty to our neighbour, Deut. 17:18, 19. 4.) Scripture exhorts magistrates to the service of the Son of God, Ps. 2:10-12. This is an exhortation and command to the rulers, to lay aside that enmity and opposition which they had managed against Christ and His kingdom, and to do homage and service to Him, Isa. 60:3, 10, 11. If the question be asked, in what *character* are they to serve Christ? Isa. 62:2. It may be answered by proposing another, in what character did they *oppose* Him? Isa. 52:15. Was it not in their *public* character, as rulers? Ps. 72:10, 11. 5.) Sometime after the apostasy, it is prophesied that the kingdoms of this world will turn to Christ in their national capacities, Rev. 11:15. 6.) Apart from this how can these prophecies of old ever have accomplishment? Isa. 45:4; Jer. 4:2.

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,<sup>7</sup> King James VI.; as common enemies to all Christian government, Act 18, Parl. 16,<sup>8</sup> King James VI.; as rebellers and gainstanders of our Sovereign Lord's authority, Act 47, Parl. 3,<sup>9</sup> King James VI.; and as idolaters, Act 104, Parl. 7,<sup>10</sup> King James VI.

**Question 2.—Should the magistrate punish those who maintain and spread doctrines and practices contrary to the true Reformed religion?**

**Answer.—Yes.** Ezra 7:25, 26. This we derive: 1.) From the example of Hezekiah, who removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent, to which the Israelites did burn incense, 2 Kings 18:4. 2.) From the example of Josiah, who made a thorough reformation; and made all Israel serve the Lord their God, 2 Chron. 34:33. The word in the Hebrew imports (לְעִבּוֹד), that he in a manner forced and compelled them to the pure worship of God, as a servant is forced and compelled to his work, *cf.* Ex. 1:14. He, by his royal power and authority, kept them in order, forbidding idolatry, and commanding them to serve God no otherwise, than according to his word, 2 Chron. 15:12, 13. They entered into a covenant to seek the Lord

<sup>7</sup> Act 24, Parl. 11 (1587), *Concerning the trial and punishment of the offences of the adversaries of the true religion presently professed within this realm*

and that they, as also all sayers and hearers of mass or profaners of the sacraments, or other persons suspected to have declined from the true and Christian religion, or refusing to resort to the preaching of God's word, or whatsoever person that shall, by reasoning or dispersing of books or letters, presume to persuade any of his majesty's subjects to decline from the profession of the said true religion, being called to compare and answer thereupon before his highness and his privy council, in case the persons so accused and dilated, or any of them, shall be found culpable by his highness's privy council

<sup>8</sup> Act 18, Parl. 16 (1600), *Ratification of the act regarding Jesuits, priests excommunicate and trafficking papists*

Forasmuch as by diverse acts and proclamations made and published heretofore all Jesuits, seminary priests, excommunicate and tried trafficking papists, common enemies to all Christian government, are specially commanded to depart and pass out of this realm under certain pains mentioned in the same acts, the non-execution whereof has produced such a contempt and disregard of the said acts that the resort and trafficking of the said Jesuits and seminary priests is very frequent in sundry parts of this realm, through which great numbers of ignorant and simple people are seduced by them to decline from the true and Christian religion to the offence and displeasure of God

<sup>9</sup> Act 47, Parl. 3 (1572 [1573 N.S.]), *Concerning the disobedient who shall be received to our sovereign lord's mercy and pardon*

that none shall be reputed as loyal and faithful subjects to our said sovereign lord or his authority, but be punishable as rebels and gainsayers of the same who shall not give their confession and make their profession of the said true religion; and that all such as make profession thereof and yet has made defection from their due obedience owed to our sovereign lord, shall be admonished by the pastors and ministers of the kirk to acknowledge their offence and return to their indebted obedience

<sup>10</sup> Act 104, Parl. 7 (1581), *Against passing in pilgrimage to chapels, wells and crosses, and the superstitious observing of diverse other popish rights*

Forasmuch as part for want of doctrine and rarity of ministers, and partly through the perverse inclination of man's engine to superstition, the dregs of idolatry yet remain in diverse parts of the realm by using of pilgrimage to some chapels, wells, crosses and such other monuments of idolatry, as also by observing of the festival days of the saints, sometimes named their patrons, in setting of bonfires, singing of carols within and about kirks at certain seasons of the year, and observing of such other superstitious and popish rights to the dishonour of God, contempt of the true religion and fostering of great error amongst the people

God of their fathers, and whosoever should not was to be put to death, *cf.* Deut. 17:2-5. 3.) Because whosoever blasphemed the name of the Lord, was surely put to death, Lev. 24:16. This blaspheming was a piercing through or stabbing the name of the Lord, as is indicated in the Hebrew (וַיִּקְבֹּץ), *cf.* 2 Kings 12:9, 10; which may also be done by maintaining blasphemous errors and heresies, Tit. 3:10, 11. 4.) Such is prophesied to be carried out by those nations which repent, after the period of the apostasy, Rev. 17:16.

But also in particular, (by and attour [*i.e.*, in addition to] the Confession of Faith), do abolish and condemn the Pope's authority and jurisdiction out of this land, and ordains the maintainers thereof to be punished, Act 2, Parl.1;<sup>11</sup> Act 51, Parl. 3;<sup>12</sup> Act 106, Parl. 7;<sup>13</sup> Act 114, Parl. 12,<sup>14</sup> 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 and by law established in this realm; and ordains the spreaders and makers of books or libels, or letters or writs of that nature, to be punished, Act 46, Parl. 3;<sup>15</sup> Act 106, Parl. 7;<sup>16</sup> Act 24, Parl. 11,<sup>17</sup> King James VI.:

**Question 3.—Should the magistrate suppress all things designed to lead the people under his care out of the truth and study to promote the welfare of God's people?**

**Answer.**—Yes. 2 Sam. 23:3. The fear of God disposed Nehemiah, the governor, to “seek the welfare of the children of Israel,” not only by generously sacrificing the emoluments of his office, but by exerting his authority for preventing the profanation of the Sabbath, and issuing his commands and threatenings to those who persisted in its violation, Neh. 13:17, 18. In the same religious manner did he act in repairing the house of God, purging it from the defilement which the priest had suffered, and in providing for the regular performance of divine ordinances, Neh. 13:9-14.

do condemn all baptism conform[ed] to the Pope's kirk, and the idolatry of the mass; and ordains all sayers, willful hearers, and concealers of the mass, the maintainers and reseters [*i.e.*, those who afford shelter and aid to fugitive criminals] of the priests, Jesuits, trafficking Papists, to be punished without any exception or restriction, Act 5, Parl. 1,<sup>18</sup> Act 120 [122], Parl. 12;<sup>19</sup> Act 164, Parl. 13;<sup>20</sup> Act 193 [196], Parl. 14;<sup>21</sup> Act 1, Parl. 19;<sup>22</sup> Act 5, Parl. 20,<sup>23</sup> King

<sup>11</sup> Act 2, Parl. 1 (1567), *Concerning the abolishing of the pope and his usurped authority*

therefore have statute and ordained that the bishop of Rome, called the pope, have no jurisdiction nor authority within this realm in any time coming, and that none of our said sovereign's subjects in any times hereafter suit or desire title or right of the said bishop of Rome, or his seat, to anything within this realm under the pains of barratry, that is to say, proscription, banishment and never to enjoy honour, office nor dignity within this realm

<sup>12</sup> Act 51, Parl. 3 (1572 [1573 N.S.]), *Concerning purchasing of the pope's bulls or gifts of [Mary], the queen, our sovereign lord's mother*

Since which time, diverse subjects of this realm have wickedly and condemingly purchased the said pope's bulls, dispensations, letters and privileges at Rome, or have caused counterfeit the same in Flanders or others parts with antedates

<sup>13</sup> Act 106, Parl. 7 (1581), *Against fugitives and other papists practising against the true religion*

Forasmuch as certain fugitives and other persons, our sovereign lord's born subjects now remaining out of this realm, professing themselves the subjects and servants of other princes, upon disdain and malice borne by them against the true and Christian religion now publicly preached and by law established within this realm, cease not so far as in them lies to pervert the youth of this nation passing out of this realm to the schools and to visit other countries, and also make, set forth, send home and cause to be dispersed in this realm diverse famous books and libels in praise and defence of the Pope and his usurped authority, damned by God's word and our sovereign lord's laws

<sup>14</sup> Act 114 [116], Parl. 12 (1592), *Act for abolishing of the acts contrary to the true religion. (see above)*

<sup>15</sup> Act 46, Parl. 3 (1572 [1573 N.S.]), *That the adversaries of Christ's evangel shall not enjoy the patrimony of the kirk*

And if any person ecclesiastical or which shall have ecclesiastical living shall wilfully maintain any doctrine directly contrary or repugnant to any of the said articles, and, being convened and called as follows, shall persist therein and not revoke his error, or after his revocation shall of new affirm such untrue doctrine, such maintaining, affirming and persisting shall be just cause to deprive him of his ecclesiastical living, and it shall be lawful to them before whom he is called and convened to deprive him.

<sup>16</sup> Act 106, Parl. 7 (1581), *Against fugitives and other papists practising against the true religion. (see above)*

<sup>17</sup> Act 24, Parl. 11 (1587), *Concerning the trial and punishment of the offences of the adversaries of the true religion presently professed within this realm. (see above)*

<sup>18</sup> Act 5, Parl. 1 (1567), *Concerning the abolition of the mass and the punishment of all that hears or says the same*

yet nonetheless, there is some of the said pope's kirk that stubbornly persevere in their wicked idolatry, saying mass and baptising according to the pope's kirk, profaning through this the sacraments aforesaid in quiet and secret places, thereby neither regarding God nor his holy word; therefore it is statute and ordained in this present parliament that no manner of person or persons, in any time coming, administer any of the sacraments aforesaid, secretly or in any other manner of way, except those that are admitted and have power to that effect; and that no manner of person nor persons say mass, nor yet hear mass, nor be present thereat, under the pain of confiscation of all their goods, moveable and immovable, and punishing of their bodies at the discretion of the magistrate within whose jurisdiction such persons happen to be apprehended

<sup>19</sup> Act 120 [122], Parl. 12 (1592), *Against Jesuits, seminary priests and their reseters*

and decree and declare that in all time coming the saying of mass, resetting of Jesuits, seminary priests and trafficking papists against the king's majesty and the religion presently professed within this realm is and shall be a just cause to infer the pain and crime of treason both against the

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,<sup>24</sup> King James VI.: do condemn the monuments and dregs of bygone idolatry, as going to crosses, observing the festival days of saints, and such 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,<sup>25</sup> King James VI.

**Question 4.—Should the magistrate condemn the monuments of bygone idolatry and punish those who persist in their use?**

**Answer.—Yes.** 2 Kings 18:4. It was the practice of godly magistrates to remove the remaining monuments of bygone idolatry and make the people to follow after the Lord, 2 Chron. 34:33. This practice is grounded in the moral law of God which commands that all such remembrancers be destroyed and rooted out, Deut. 7:5. Thus, the prophet of God also prescribes this course to a people who are being reclaimed from their course of apostasy, Isa. 30:22.

Likeas many Acts of Parliament are conceived for maintenance of God's true and Christian religion, and the purity thereof, in doctrine and sacraments of the true church of God, the liberty and freedom thereof, in her national, synodal 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 99<sup>th</sup> Act, Parl.7;<sup>26</sup> Act 25, Parl. 11;<sup>27</sup> Act 114 [116], Parl. 12;<sup>28</sup> Act 160 [164], Parl. 13<sup>29</sup> of King James VI. ratified by the 4<sup>th</sup> Act of King Charles.<sup>30</sup> So that the 6<sup>th</sup> Act, Parl. 1,<sup>31</sup> and 68<sup>th</sup> Act, Parl. 6<sup>32</sup> of King

Jesuits, mass priests, trafficking papists and reseters of them, providing how soon the Jesuits and seminary priests satisfy the prince and the kirk, the foresaid penalty in no way to strike against the said reseters.

<sup>20</sup> Act 164, Parl. 13 (1593), *For punishment of the contemners of the decreets and judicatories of the kirk*

and it is of verity that a number of obstinate and stubborn people in diverse parishes of this land have contemned and daily contemns the sentences and decreets of the said assemblies and judicatories of the kirk, namely in landward parishes where there is little or no concurrence of magistrates to punish obstinate and disobedient persons; and the said kirk having no other punishment in their hands but spiritual, the which the said obstinate people (being altogether fleshly and beastly) feels not nor sets nothing by

<sup>21</sup> Act 193 [196], Parl. 14 (1594), *Against wilful hearers of mass*

Our sovereign lord, with advice of his estates of parliament, statutes and ordains that in all time coming all wilful hearers of mass and concealers of the same be executed to the death, and their goods and gear escheated [conveyed by forfeiture whether penal or for lack of heir] to his highness's use so soon as they shall be found guilty and convicted thereof or declared fugitive for the same before the justice general or his deputies or the lords of his majesty's privy council.

<sup>22</sup> Act 1, Parl. 19 (1607), *Act against the sayers and wilful hearers of mass*

against the sayers of mass, Jesuits, seminary priests, trafficking papists and receivers of any of them, and the other act made in his highness's 14<sup>th</sup> parliament, 193<sup>rd</sup> act, against wilful hearers of mass, in the whole heads, articles and clauses thereof; and decree and ordain the same two acts to have effect and to be put to execution against the contraveners thereof in all time coming with this addition

<sup>23</sup> Act 5, Parl. 20 (1609), *Act against Jesuits, seminary priests and reseters [i.e., those giving aid and comfort to] of them. (see above)*

<sup>24</sup> Act 25, Parl. 11 (1587), *Against sellers and dispersers of papistical and erroneous books*

to search and seek the said books, and being found, such books as are before declared to destroy them and to commit the importers to ward until they be punished in their persons and goods at our sovereign lord's will

<sup>25</sup> Act 104, Parl. 7 (1581), *Against passing in pilgrimage to chapels, wells and crosses, and the superstitious observing of diverse other popish rights. (see above)*

<sup>26</sup> Act 99, Parl. 7 (1581), *The ratification of the liberty of the true kirk of God and religion, with confirmation of the laws and acts made to that effect of before*

concerning the jurisdiction of the kirk, discharging of markets and labouring on Sundays and playing or drinking in time of sermon; concerning the youth and others beyond sea suspected to have declined from the true religion; that householders have bibles and psalm books; for punishment of strong and idle beggars and relief of the poor and impotent; and declares the said acts, and every one of them, and all other acts of parliament made in favour of the true religion since the said reformation, to have effect in all points after the form and tenor thereof.

<sup>27</sup> Act 25, Parl. 11 (1587), *Against sellers and dispersers of papistical and erroneous books. (see above)*

<sup>28</sup> Act 114 [116], Parl. 12 (1592), *Act for abolishing of the acts contrary to the true religion. (see above)*

<sup>29</sup> Act 160 [164], Parl. 13 (1593), *For punishment of the contemners of the decreets and judicatories of the kirk. (see above)*

<sup>30</sup> Act 4, Charles I. (1633), *Ratification of the acts touching religion*

Our sovereign lord, with advice and consent of the estates, ratifies and approves all and whatsoever acts and statutes made before regarding the liberty and freedom of the true kirk of God and religion presently professed within this realm, and ordains the same to stand in their full force and effect as if they were specially mentioned and set down herein.

<sup>31</sup> Act 6, Parl. 1 (1567), *Concerning the true and holy kirk and of them that are declared not to be of the same*

as the ministers of the blessed evangel of Jesus Christ, whom God of his mercy has now raised up amongst us, or hereafter shall raise, agreeing with them that now live in doctrine and administration of the sacraments, and the people of this realm that profess Christ as he now is offered in his evangel, and do communicate with the holy sacraments (as in the reformed kirks of this realm are publicly administered) according to the Confession of Faith

<sup>32</sup> Act 68, Parl. 6 (1579), *Concerning the true and holy kirk and of those declared not to be of the same*

James VI. in the year of God 1579, declare 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 presently adminstrate) according to the Confession of Faith, to be the true and holy kirk of Christ Jesus within this realm. And decerns [determines] 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 express; or that refuse the administration of the holy sacraments, as they were then ministrated; to be no members of the said kirk within this realm, and true religion presently professed, so long as they keep themselves so divided from the society of Christ's body. And the subsequent Act 69, Parl. 6<sup>33</sup> of King James VI. declares, that there is no 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 stiled 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 profess, 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;<sup>34</sup> Acts 45, 46, 47, Parl. 3;<sup>35</sup> Act 71, Parl. 6;<sup>36</sup> Act 106, Parl. 7;<sup>37</sup> Act 24, Parl. 11;<sup>38</sup> Act 123, Parl. 12;<sup>39</sup> Act 194 and 197, Parl. 14<sup>40</sup> 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;<sup>41</sup> Act 104, Parl. 7;<sup>42</sup> Act 25,

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Our sovereign lord, with advice of his three estates and whole body of this present parliament, has declared and declares the ministers of the blessed evangel of Jesus Christ, whom God of his mercy has now raised up amongst us, or hereafter shall raise, agreeing with them that now live in doctrine and administration of the sacraments, and the people of this realm that professes Jesus Christ as he is now offered in his evangel, and do communicate with the holy sacraments as in the reformed kirks of this realm are publicly administered, according to the Confession of the Faith, to be the only true and holy kirk of Jesus Christ within this realm

<sup>33</sup> Act 69, Parl. 6 (1579), *Concerning the jurisdiction of the kirk*

Our sovereign lord, with advice of the three estates of this present parliament, has declared and granted jurisdiction to the kirk, which consists and stands in the preaching of the true word of Jesus Christ, correction of manners and administration of the holy sacraments; and declares that there is no other face of a kirk nor other face of religion than is presently, by the favour of God, established within this realm, and that there be no other jurisdiction ecclesiastical acknowledged within this realm other than that which is, and shall be, within the same kirk, or that which flows therefrom concerning the premises.

<sup>34</sup> Act 4, Parl. 1 (1567), *The Confession of the Faith and doctrine believed and professed by the Protestants of the realm of Scotland, exhibited to the estates of the same in parliament, and by their public votes authorised as a doctrine grounded upon the infallible word of God.* Under this Act and heading appears the entire 26 chapters of the *Scots Confession* of 1560. This was a formal owning of that confession by the civil magistrate.

Act 9, Parl. 1 (1567), *Concerning those that shall bear public office hereafter*

none be permitted to procure nor be admitted notary, or created a member of court in any time coming, unless he likewise profess the evangel and religion aforesaid

<sup>35</sup> Act 45, Parl. 3 (1572 [1573 N.S.]), *Concerning the true and holy kirk*

note the names of the persons, as well men as women, suspected to be papists or that have not communicated with the sacraments as they are now truly administered in the reformed kirks of this realm and, with the like diligence, lawfully admonish them according to the order of the kirk; and in case they be out of the realm, upon 60 days' warning to recant their popish errors, give the confession of their faith according to the form approved in our sovereign lord's parliament, be participant with the sacraments and submit themselves to the discipline of the true kirk within certain reasonable space, under the pain of excommunication; and if they fail, to pronounce the sentence of excommunication against them.

Act 46, Parl. 3 (1572 [1573 N.S.]), *That the adversaries of Christ's evangel shall not enjoy the patrimony of the kirk.* (see above)

Act 47, Parl. 3 (1572 [1573 N.S.]), *Concerning the disobedient who shall be received to our sovereign lord's mercy and pardon.* (see above)

<sup>36</sup> Act 71, Parl. 6 (1579), *Concerning the youth and others beyond sea suspected to have declined from the true religion*

because sundry of the youth of this realm passing to the parts beyond sea become corrupt in religion, whereof great inconvenience may follow, therefore it is statute and ordained that all persons, the sons of noblemen, gentlemen or others pretending the cause of their departure to be for attaining to further knowledge in letters, shall, before their said departure, suit and obtain the king's majesty's licence to that effect, containing a provision that they shall remain constant in the profession of the true religion publicly preached and by law established within this realm

<sup>37</sup> Act 106, Parl. 7 (1581), *Against fugitives and other papists practising against the true religion.* (see above)

<sup>38</sup> Act 24, Parl. 11 (1587), *Concerning the trial and punishment of the offences of the adversaries of the true religion presently professed within this realm.* (see above)

<sup>39</sup> Act 123 [125], Parl. 12 (1592), *Who has not given confession of their faith shall not enjoy the benefit of pacification*

the foresaid acts of pacification and abolition, which whole acts and constitutions were only made and granted in favour of such persons who profess the true religion as the same is presently professed within this realm and that have acknowledged our said sovereign lord and highness's authority; and to the effect that the benefit and commodity of the said acts be not extended in favour of any person or persons who profess not the true religion as the same is presently professed within this realm, and has not acknowledged our said sovereign lord and his highness's authority

<sup>40</sup> Act 194 [197], Parl. 14 (1594), *Regarding satisfaction to the kirk by papists*

Our sovereign lord, with advice of his estates in this present parliament, ordains all presbyteries within this realm to cause lawfully summon and charge all persons papists or suspect of papistry within the bounds of their presbyteries, personally or at their dwelling places, to compare before the said presbyteries and satisfy the kirk and presbytery where they remain and make residence

Act 197 [200], Parl. 14 (1594), *Regarding escheats and liferents of excommunicated persons*

notwithstanding whatsoever decreets or declarators given and passed in favour of the said rebels, their bairns or conjunct persons; and the right of the said escheat goods, gear and liferents to have pertained and to pertain to our said sovereign lord and to be at his gift and disposition as freely as if the said pretended gifts and dispositions thereof had never been granted nor conveyed to their said bairns and conjunct persons, and as if declarator had not passed thereupon.

<sup>41</sup> Act 5, Parl. 1 (1567), *Concerning the abolition of the mass and the punishment of all that hears or says the same.* (see above)

Parl. 11,<sup>43</sup> King James VI.; and that notwithstanding of the King's Majesty's licences on the contrary, which are discharged, and declared to be of no force, in so far as they tend in any wise to the prejudice and hinder of the execution of the Acts of Parliament against Papists and adversaries of true religion, Act 106, Parl. 7,<sup>44</sup> King James VI. On the other part, in the 47<sup>th</sup> Act, Parl. 3,<sup>45</sup> King James VI. it is declared and ordained, Seeing the cause of God's true religion and his Highness's authority are so joined, as the hurt of the one is common to both; 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 religion, against whatsoever enemies and gainstanders of the same; and namely, against all such, of whatsoever nation, estate, or degree they be of, that have joined or bound themselves, or have assisted, or assist, to set forward and execute the cruel decrees of the council of Trent, contrary to the true preachers and professors of the word of God; which is repeated, word by word, in the articles of pacification at Perth, the 23<sup>d</sup> of February 1572,<sup>46</sup> approved by Parliament the last of April 1573 [January 1573 N.S.],<sup>47</sup> ratified in Parliament 1587, and related Act 123 [125], Parl. 12<sup>48</sup> of King James VI.; with this addition, "That they are bound to resist all treasonable uproars and hostilities raised against the true religion, the King's Majesty, and the true professors."

**Question 5.—Is the true security of a nation bound up with its profession of the true religion and defense thereof?**

**Answer.**—Yes. Ezra 7:23. Scripture assures us that all nations shall serve Christ, Ps. 72:10, 11. Conversely, it issues stern warnings to those kingdoms which refuse to serve Christ by securing the prosperity of His church, Isa. 60:12. Furthermore, God threatens to bring judgments upon those nations that fail to worship Him as He has commanded, Zech. 14:17-19.

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 and 131, Parl. 8,<sup>49</sup> King 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 allenarly [only, or exclusively], Act 48, Parl. 3, King James I.;<sup>50</sup> Act 79, Parl. 6, King James IV.;<sup>51</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Act 104, Parl. 7 (1581), *Against passing in pilgrimage to chapels, wells and crosses, and the superstitious observing of diverse other popish rights.* (see above)

<sup>43</sup> Act 25, Parl. 11 (1587), *Against sellers and dispersers of papistical and erroneous books.* (see above)

<sup>44</sup> Act 106, Parl. 7 (1581), *Against fugitives and other papists practising against the true religion.* (see above)

<sup>45</sup> Act 47, Parl. 3 (1572 [1573 N.S.]), *Concerning the disobedient who shall be received to our sovereign lord's mercy and pardon.* (see above)

<sup>46</sup> The first article of pacification reads, "That all persons who would enjoy and benefit from the pacification should affirm and profess the confession of the Christian faith and true religion of Jesus Christ publicly preached in the realm, and shall to the uttermost of their power maintain, fortify, and assist the true preachers and professors of the Word of God against whatsoever enemies or 'againststanders' of the same, of whatsoever nation or degree, that have joined or bound themselves or assisted to execute the cruel decrees of the Council of Trent, which is most injuriously called by the adversaries of God's truth the Holy League." *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Elizabeth, 1572-74. Preserved in the State Paper Department of Her Majesty's Public Record Office.* ed. Allan James Crosby (London: Longman & Co., 1876), 259-260.

<sup>47</sup> Act 47, Parl. 3 (1572 [1573 N.S.]), *Concerning the disobedient who shall be received to our sovereign lord's mercy and pardon.* (see above)

<sup>48</sup> Act 123 [125], Parl. 12 (1592), *Who has not given confession of their faith shall not enjoy the benefit of pacification.* (see above)

<sup>49</sup> Act 130, Parl. 8 (May, 1584), *Concerning the authority of the three estates of parliament*

that the honour, authority and dignity of the said three estates shall stand and continue in their own integrity, according to the ancient and lovable custom observed in time bygone

Act 131, Parl. 8 (May, 1584), *An act discharging all jurisdictions and judgements not approved by parliament, and all assemblies and conventions without our sovereign lord's special licence and commandment*

our sovereign lord and his three estates assembled in this present parliament discharge all judgements and jurisdictions, spiritual or temporal, accustomed to be used and executed upon any of his highness's subjects which are not approved by his highness and his said three estates convened in parliament

<sup>50</sup> Act 48, Parl. 3 (March 1425 [1426 N.S.]), *Of the laws, that none be but the king's laws*

Also it is statute by the king and ordained with the whole assent of his parliament and the three estates that all and sundry lieges of the king in the realm of Scotland live and be governed generally under the king's laws and statutes of the realm, and under no particular laws nor special privileges, nor by the laws of other countries or realms.

<sup>51</sup> Act 79, Parl. 6 (March 1503 [1504 N.S.]), *Concerning the law of the land*

Item, it is decreed and ordained that all our sovereign lord's lieges who are under his rule, and in particular the Isles, [are to] be governed by our sovereign lord's own laws and the common laws of the realm and by no other laws.

repeated in the Act 131, Parl. 8, King James VI.,<sup>52</sup> which if they be innovated and prejudged, “the commission anent the union of the two kingdoms of Scotland and England, which is the sole act of the 17<sup>th</sup> Parl. of King James VI.<sup>53</sup> 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<sup>th</sup> Act, Parl. 1,<sup>54</sup> repeated in the 99<sup>th</sup> Act, Parl. 7,<sup>55</sup> ratified in the 23<sup>d</sup> Act, Parl. 11,<sup>56</sup> and 114<sup>th</sup> Act, Parl. 12,<sup>57</sup> of King James VI., and 4<sup>th</sup> Act, Parl. 1,<sup>58</sup> of King 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 Testament; and according to the same word, shall maintain the true religion of Christ Jesus, the preaching of his holy word, the due and right ministration of the sacraments now received and preached within this realm, (according to the Confession of Faith immediately preceding,) 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, nowise 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 hereticks and enemies to the true worship of God, who shall be convicted by the true kirk of God of the foresaid crimes.” Which was also observed by his Majesty, at his coronation in Edinburgh 1633, as may be seen in the order of the coronation.<sup>59</sup>

**Question 6.—How are the true liberties of the church and kingdom secured by ecclesiastical establishments and right constitutions?**

**Answer.—**The Scriptures are clear that righteousness, not wickedness, is necessary to establishment, Prov. 12:3; indeed, that which is true, the truth, is that alone which abides the passage of time, Prov. 12:19. Thus, we are told that the very throne of the king is established by the righteousness of truth, Prov. 16:12. True liberty is the power to serve

<sup>52</sup> Act 131, Parl. 8 (May, 1584), *An act discharging all jurisdictions and judgements not approved by parliament, and all assemblies and conventions without our sovereign lord's special licence and commandment. (see above)*

<sup>53</sup> Act, Parl. 17 (1604), *Commission for the union*

Forasmuch as it has pleased his most excellent majesty, acknowledging the unspeakable favour with which the divine providence of the most high has blessed him, by the often wished but hardly expected conjunction of two so ancient and long discordant kingdoms, most earnestly to desire an established continuance of the same, that as by lawful succession they are one in the head, so in the body and every member thereof they may be so inseparably conjoined, as all later ages should find the sweetness of the good fortune, peace, wealth and felicity which by the perfect accomplishment thereof may continue to the world’s end; and his most excellent majesty, although absent in person from his most ancient and native kingdom, yet present by his princely power, fatherly care and prudent commandments daily directed to his most humble and obedient subjects of this kingdom, having laid before them the great blessing that a constant and friendly conjunction with their neighbour country of England, now united by allegiance and loyal subjection in his majesty’s most royal person, would bring to them and their posterity, and therewith, out of his most loving and accustomed princely regard to their inestimable joy and comfort, vouchsafing to assure them of his sincere disposition and clear meaning in no way by the foresaid union to prejudice or hurt the fundamental laws, ancient privileges, offices and liberties of this kingdom, whereby not only the princely authority of his most royal descent has been these many ages maintained, but also his people’s security of their lands and livings, rights, liberties, offices and dignities preserved, which if they should be innovated such confusion should ensue as it could no more be a free monarchy

<sup>54</sup> Act 8, Parl. 1 (1567), *Concerning the king's oath to be given at his coronation*

three estates of this present parliament that all kings and princes or magistrates whatsoever holding their place, which hereafter in any time shall happen to reign and bear rule over this realm, at the time of their coronation and receiving of their princely authority, make their faithful promise by oath in presence of the eternal God that, enduring the whole course of their life, they shall serve the same eternal God to the utmost of their power accordingly as he has required in his most holy word revealed and contained in the New and Old Testaments

<sup>55</sup> Act 99, Parl. 7 (1581), *The ratification of the liberty of the true kirk of God and religion, with confirmation of the laws and acts made to that effect of before. (see above)*

<sup>56</sup> Act 23, Parl. 11 (1587), *Ratification of the liberty of the kirk of God. (see above)*

<sup>57</sup> Act 114 [116], Parl. 12 (1592), *Act for abolishing of the acts contrary to the true religion. (see above)*

<sup>58</sup> Act 4, Charles I. (1633), *Ratification of the acts touching religion. (see above)*

<sup>59</sup> At his coronation, Charles was asked, “Sir, will you promise to serve Almighty God at the uttermost of your power, as he hath required in his holy word, and according to the same word maintain the true Religion of Christ now preached and professed within this realm, abolishing and gainstanding all false Religions contrary to the same: and will you employ yourself carefully to root out all heretics and enemies to the true worship of God, that shall be convicted by the true Church of God of the foresaid crimes.” The king answered, “I promised faithfully so to do.” Next, he was asked, “Sir, will you make promise to rule the people subject to you according to the Laws and Constitutions received within this Realm, causing justice and equity to be ministrate, in all your judgments without partiality, and to procure peace to the uttermost of your power to the Church of God: and amongst all Christian people.” Again, the king replied, “I grant and promise so to do.” *cf. The Manner of the Coronation of King Charles the First of England at Westminster, 2 Feb., 1626.* ed. Christopher Wordsworth (London: Harrison and Sons, 1892), 98-99.

God without fear of condemnation, being freed from the dominion of sin, 2 Pet. 2:19. So, we know that the power of true religion is necessary, not only to the preservation of the church, Heb. 13:9; but also to the upholding of the throne, Isa. 9:7.

Moreover, rejection of the truth opens the possibility of ever-increasing arbitrary exercises of government because once things are made relative, they are arbitrary, Jas. 1:8. So, the double minded seek to serve more than one master, Matt. 6:24; and, in so doing, fall into every kind of abomination before God, 2 Kings 17:33, 41. In contrast, the people of God are called upon to fix upon what is right and true, 1 Kings 18:21.

Therefore, when right constitutions are adopted, and arbitrary government is rejected, the true liberties are secured to the church, Acts 16:5; and the genuine liberty of the people prevails within the nation, Amos 5:15.

This is confirmed by Isaiah, speaking of the NT era, when it is said the Gentile nations shall become churches even as the Jews, Isa. 55:5. Under the NT, God calls to the nations and a nation's proper response is to establish the true church as its blessing, Mic. 4:2-4. For the transfer of the national church state of the Jews, together with the covenant relation, is promised to the Gentiles, Isa. 35:1, 2; Zech. 2:11. And the result is that the throne is brought into a connection with the church designed to secure its establishment while preserving genuine liberty, Prov. 25:5; John 8:32.