

A
NARRATIVE
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
General Assembly

Of divers Pastors, Messengers and Ministering Brethren of the *Baptized Churches*, met together in *London*, from *Septemb.* 3. to 12. 1689, from divers parts of *England* and *Wales*: Owning the Doctrine of Personal Election, and final Perseverance.

Sent from, and concerned for, more than one hundred Congregations of the same Faith with themselves.

Acts 15. 6. And the Apostles and Elders came together for to consider of this matter.
2 Cor 8. 23. — Or our Brethren be enquired of, they are the Messengers of the Churches, and the Glory of Christ.

London, Printed in the Year, 1689.

*A General Epistles to the Churches.*¹

The Elders, Messengers, and Ministring Brethren of the Churches met together in their General Assembly in the City of *London*, *Septemb.* from the *3d* to the *11th*, 1689.

Unto the Church of God meeting in
send Greeting.

Beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ,

IT doth not a little affect our Souls to see how ready you were to comply with that Christian and Pious Invitation you had, to send one or two worthy Brethren, as your Messengers, to meet with the rest of us in this great Assembly; for which we return you our hearty Thanks: hoping, that not only we, and the Churches of the Saints to whom we are related, at this present time will have cause to bless, praise and magnify the Father of Mercies, and God of all Comfort and Consolation upon this account; but that the Ages to come will have some Grounds to rejoice and praise his holy Name, hoping through the riches of his Grace, and divine Blessing upon our holy Endeavours, such great and gracious Effects will attend the result of our Consultations in this Assembly; which were chiefly to consider of the present state and condition of all the Congregations respectively under our Care and Charge; and what might be the causes of that Spiritual Decay, and loss of Strength, Beauty and Glory in our Churches; and to see (if we might be helped by the Lord herein) what might be done to attain to a better and more prosperous State and Condition.

And now, Brethren, in the first place, with no little Joy we declare unto you how good and gracious the Lord hath been to us, in uniting our Hearts together in the Spirit of Love, and sweet Concord, in our Debates, Consultations, and Resolves, which are sent unto you, there being scarcely one Brother who dissented from the Assembly in the Sentiments of his Mind, in anyone thing we have proposed to your serious Considerations, either in respect of the cause of our Witherings, nor what we have fixt on as a means of Recovery to a better state, if the Lord will.

And therefore, in the second place, be it known unto you that we all see great cause to rejoice and bless God, that after so dismal an Hour of Sorrow and Persecution, in which the Enemy doubtless designed to break our Churches to pieces, not only us, but to make the whole *Sion* of God desolate, even so as she might become as a plowed Field, the Lord was pleased to give such Strength and Power in the time of need to bear up your Souls in your Testimony for Jesus Christ, that your Spirits did not faint under your Burdens in the time of your Adversity; so that we hope we may say in the Words of the Church of old, *Though all this is come upon us, yet we have not forgotten thee, neither h we dealt falsly in thy Covenant. Our Heart is not turned back, neither have our Steps declined from thy way. Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of Dragons, and covered us with the shadow of Death*, Psal. 44. 17, 18, 19. Yet nevertheless we fear Christ may say, *I have somewhat against you, because you have left your first Love*, as he once charged the Church of *Ephesus*, and may possibly most Churches in *England*; it is therefore good to *consider from whence we are fallen, and repent, and do our first works*, Rev. 2. 5.

¹ This heading is not in the text, but is found in the header of this section. The full title spans two pages, *A General Epistle* on one page, and *to the Churches* on the opposite.

We are persuaded one chief cause of our decay is for want of holy Zeal for God, and the House of our God; few amongst us living up (we fear) to what they profess of God, nor answering the terms of that sacred Covenant they have made with him; the Power of Godliness being greatly decayed, and but little more than the Form thereof remaining amongst us. The Thoughts of which are enough to melt our Spirits, and break our Hearts to pieces, considering those most amazing Providences of the ever blessed God under which we have been, and more especially now are exercised, and the many signal and most endearing Obligations he is pleased to lay us under. The Spirit of this World we clearly discern is got too too much into the Hearts of most Christians and Members of our Churches, all seeking their own, and none, or very few, the things of Jesus Christ; if therefore in this there be no Reformation, the whole interest of the blessed Lord Jesus will still sink in our Hands, and our Churches left to languish, whilst the Hands of poor Ministers become as weak as Water, and Sorrow and Grief seize upon their Spirits.

Thirdly, We cannot but bewail that great Evil, and neglect of Duty in many Churches concerning the Ministry.

1. In that some though they have Brethren competently qualified for the Office of Pastors and Deacons, yet omit that sacred Ordinance of Ordination, whereby they are rendered incapable of preaching and administering the Ordinances of the Gospel, so regularly, and with that Authority which otherwise they might do. Those who have failed herein, we desire would in the fear of God lay it to Heart, and reform.

2. In neglecting to make that Gospel-Provision for their Maintenance, according to their Abilities, by which means many of them are so incumbered with Worldly Affairs, that they are not able to perform the Duties of their holy Calling, in preaching the Gospel, and watching over their respective Flocks.

Fourthly, We find cause to mourn that the Lord's Day is no more religiously and carefully observed, both in a constant attendance on the Word of God in that Church to whom Members do belong, and when the publick Worship is over, by a waiting on the Lord in Family-Duties, and private Devotion.

But because we have sent unto you the whole Result of this great Assembly particularly, we shall forbear to enlarge further upon these Causes of our Withering and Decays.

One Thing you will find we have had before us, and come to a Resolve about, which we are persuaded will prove an exceeding great Blessing and Advantage to the Interest of Jesus Christ in our Hands; and if the Lord enlarge all our Hearts, give a revival to the sinking Spirits of the Mourners in *Sion*, and to languishing Churches too, which is, that of a general or Publick Stock, or Fund of Mony to be raised forthwith. First, By a Free-will Offering to the Lord: And, secondly, by a Subscription, every one declaring what he is willing to give, Weekly, Monthly, or Quarterly, to it.

And now, Brethren, we must say, the Lord is about to try you in another way than ever you have been tried to this Day, because, till now, no such Thing was settled amongst us, and so not propounded to you. It will be known now, whether you do love Jesus Christ, and his Blessed Interest, Gospel, and Church, or no; *i. e.* Whether you love him more than these, or more than Son or Daughter. O that you would at this time shew your Zeal for God, and let all Men see the World is not so in your Hearts, but that Jesus Christ hath much room there: 'Tis to be given towards God's Holy Temple, to build up his Spiritual House which hath a long time lain as waste. Remember how willingly the Lord's People offered upon this Account formerly; 'tis some great as well as good Thing the Lord, and we his poor and unworthy Servants and Ministers, do expect from you. God

has wrought a great Work for us, O let us make some suitable return of Duty to him, and act like a People called, loved, and saved by him. Shall so much be spent needlessly on your own ceiled Houses, on costly Attire and Dresses, and delicious Diet, when God's House lies almost waste! We are therefore become humble Supplicants for our dear Master, and could entreat you on our bended Knees, with Tears in our Eyes, to pity *Sion*, if it might but move your Hearts to Christian Bounty and Zeal for Her and the Lord of Hosts. We fear God did let in the Enemy upon us to consume us and waste our Substance, because to this Day we have with-held it from him, when his Cause, Gospel, and Churches called for more than ever yet you parted with, and that a Blast has been upon our Trades and Estates for our remissness in this Matter. May we not say, *Ye looked for much, and lo it came to little; and when ye brought it home, the Lord did blow upon it?* Why, because, saith God, *mine House that is waste, and ye run every one to his own House*, Hag. 1. 9. But if now we reform our Doings, and shew our Zeal for Christ and his Gospel, and love to him, and act as becomes a willing People professing his Name, you will see you will be no losers by it: *For I will, saith the Lord, open the Windows of Heaven, and pour out a Blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it*, Mal. 3. 10. If the Worth of Souls, the Honour of God, the Good of the Church, the glorious Promulgation of the Gospel in the Nation, the Credit of your Profession, your own Peace, and that weight of Eternal Glory be upon your Spirits, we doubt not but you will give evidence of it at this Time; and so shall you *build the old waste Places, and raise up the Foundations of many Generations; and be the Repairers of the Breaches, and Restorers of Paths to dwell in*, Isa. 58. 1 2.

We to these great and good Ends, have thought upon and appointed a Solemn Day to Fast and Mourn before the Lord, and to humble our selves, and seek his Face, that a Blessing may attend all that we have done, and you with us may yet further do for his Holy Name sake.

A General Fast appointed in all the Congregations on the 10th of October next, 1689. with the Causes and Reasons thereof.

The main and principal Evils to be bewailed and mourn'd over before the Lord on that Day, are as followeth.

First; Those many grievous Backslidings, Sins, and Provocations, not only of the whole Nation, but also of the Lord's own People, as considered in our publick and private Stations; particularly that great decay of first Love, Faith, and Zeal for the Ways and Worship of God; which bath been apparent, not only in our Churches, but also in private Families.

Secondly; That this Declension and Backsliding hath been, we fear, for a long series of time, and many sore Judgments God has brought upon the Nation; and a strange Death of late come upon the Lord's faithful Witnesses, beside divers painful Labourers in Christ's Vineyard called Home, and but few raised up in their stead; little success in the Ministry; forms of Persecution having been raised upon us, a new War commenc'd by the Beast, (through' the Divine Permission of God, and Hand of his Justice) to a total overcoming to appearance the Witnesses of Christ in these Isles; besides his more immediate Strokes by Plague and Fire, &c. God blasting all Essays used for deliverance, so that we were almost without hope, therefore our Sins that provok'd the Righteous and Just God to bring all these Evils upon us, we ought to bewail and mourn for before him. But withal not to forget his Infinite Goodness, who when he saw that our Power was gone, and that there was none shut up or left, that he should thus appear for our Help and Deliverance, in a way unexpected and unthought of by us.

Thirdly; The Things we should therefore in the next place pray and cry to the Lord for, is, that he would give us true, broken, and penitent Hearts for all our Iniquities, and the Sins of his People, and wash and cleanse away those great Pollutions with which we have been defiled; and also pour forth more of his Spirit upon us, and open the Mysteries of his Word, that we may understand whereabouts we are, in respect of the latter Time, and what he is a doing, and know our Work, and that a Blessing may attend all the Churches of his Saints in these Nations, and that greater Light may break forth, and the Glory of the Lord rise upon us, and that the Word may not any more be as a miscarrying Womb and dry Breasts, but that in every place Multitudes may be turned to the Lord, and that Love and sweet Concord may be found among all the Lord's People in these Nations, that the great Work begun therein so unexpectedly, may go on and be perfected, to the praise of his own Glory.

Likewise to put up earnest Cries and Supplications to the Lord for the lineal Seed of *Abraham*, the poor Jews, that they may be called, and both Jews and Gentiles made one Sheepfold, under that one Shepherd Jesus Christ.

These are some of those Things we have thought good to lay before you, and which we hope we shall be helped with you to spread before the Lord on that Day, with whatsoever else you or we may be help'd to confider of: hoping you will not forget your Pastors and Ministers in your Prayers, and what we have been enabled to come to a Resolve about, so that all may be succeeded with a glorious Blessing from the Almighty, that the present Churches, and those Saints who shall come after us, may have cause to praise his Holy Name: Which is the unfeigned Prayer and Desire of us who subscribe our selves your Servants for Jesus sake.

Hanserd Knowllys,
William Kiffin,
Andrew Gifford,
Robert Steed,
Thomas Vauxe,
William Collins,
John Tomkins,
Toby Willes,
George Barrette,
Benjamin Keach,
Daniel Finch,
John Carter,

Samuel Buttall,
Isaac Lamb,
Christopher Price,
Robert Keate,
Richard Tidmarsh,
James Webb,
John Harris,
Thomas Winnell,
James Hitt,
Hercules Collins,
Richard Sutton,
Robert Knight,

Leonard Harrison,
Edward Price,
William Phips,
William Facey,
John Ball,
William Hankins,
Samuel Ewer,
Paul Fruin,

In the Name and behalf
of the whole Assembly,

[*Memorand.* 'Tis agreed to by us, that the next General Assembly be held at *London*, on that Day which is called *Whitson-Monday*, 1690.]

The NARRATIVE of the Proceedings of the Elders and Messengers of the Baptized Congregations, in their General Assembly, met in London on Septemb. 3, to 12, 1689.

WHEREAS we the Pastors and Elders of the several Churches, in and about *London*, did met together, and seriously take into our consideration the particular States of *the Baptized Churches* among our selves; and after a long Persecution, finding the Churches generally under great Decays in the Power of Godliness, and Defects of Gifts for the Ministry; Also, fearing that the same Decays and Defects might be among the Churches of the same Faith and Profession throughout *England* and *Wales*, many of their Ministers being deceased, many having ended their Days in Prison, many scattered by Persecution to other Parts, far distant from the Churches to which they did belong. From a due sense of these Things did by their Letter, dated *July 28. 1689*, write to all the aforesaid Churches throughout *England* and *Wales*, to send their Messengers to a General Meeting at *London*, the *3d* of the *7th* Month, 1689. And being met together, the first Day was spent in humbling our selves before the Lord, and to seek of him a right way to direct into the best Means and Method to repair our Breaches, and to recover our selves into our former Order, Beauty, and Glory. In prosecution thereof, upon the *4th* day of the same Month, We, the Elders, ministring Brethren and Messengers of the Churches in and about *London*, and Elders, Ministring-Brethren & Messengers of the several Churches from several parts of *England* and *Wales* hereafter mentioned, being again come together, after first solemn seeking the Lord by Prayer, did conclude upon these following Preliminaries, and lay them down as the Foundation of this our Assembly, and Rules for our Proceedings; Wherein all the Messengers of the Churches aforesaid, in City and Country (as well for the Satisfaction of every particular Church; as also to prevent all Mistakes, Misapprehensions and Inconveniencies that might arise in time to come concerning this General Assembly) do solemnly, unanimously, profess and declare;

1. That we disclaim all manner of *Superiority, Superintendency*, over the Churches; and that we have no *Authority* or *Power*, to prescribe or impose any thing upon the Faith or Practice of any of the Churches of Christ. Our whole Intendment, is to be helpers together of one another, by way of Counsel and Advice, in the right understanding of that perfect Rule which our Lord Jesus, the only Bishop of our Souls, hath already prescribed, and given to his Churches in his Word, and therefore do severally and jointly agree,
2. That in those things wherein one Church differs from another Church in their Principles or Practices, in point of Communion, that we cannot, shall not, impose upon any particular Church therein, but leave every Church to their own liberty, to walk together as they have received from the Lord.
3. That if any particular Offence doth arise betwixt one Church and another, or betwixt one particular Person and another, no Offence shall be admitted to be debated among us, till the Rule Christ hath given (in that Matter) be first Answered, and the Consent of both Parties had, or sufficiently endeavoured.
4. That whatever is determined by us in any Case, shall not be binding to any one Church, till the Consent of that Church be first had, and they conclude the fame among themselves.
5. That all things we offer by way of Counsel and Advice, be proved out of the Word of God, and the Scriptures annexed.
6. That the Breviats of this Meeting be transcribed, and sent to every particular Church with a Letter.

7. That the Messengers that come to this Meeting, be recommended by a Letter from the Church, and that none be admitted to speak in this Assembly, unless by general Consent.

The Letters from several Churches being read, the Meeting was dismissed till next day, and concluded in Prayer.

Septemb. 5. 1689.

After solemn seeking the Lord, all the Elders, Ministring-Brethren, and Messengers aforesaid, considered, debated and concluded, That a publick Fund, or Stock was necessary: And came to a Resolve in these three Questions; 1. How to Raise it. 2. To what Uses it should be disposed. 3. How to Secure It.

Quest. 1. *How or by what Means this Publick Fund, or Stock, should be raised?* Resolved,

1. That it should be raised by a *Free-Will Offering*. That every Person should communicate (for the Uses hereafter mentioned) according to his Ability, and as the Lord shall make him willing, and enlarge his Heart; and that the Churches severally among themselves do order the Collection of it with all convenient speed, that the Ends proposed may be put into present practice.

2. That for the constant carrying it on, there be an annual Collection made in the several Churches, of a Half-penny, Penny, *2d, 3d, 4d, 6d, per Week*, more or less, as every person shall be made willing, and that every Congregation do agree among themselves to collect it, either Weekly, Monthly, or Quarterly, according to their own convenience, and that Ministers be desired to shew a good Example herein. *Exod. 35. 4, 5. 1 Chron. 29. 14. Mal. 3. 10. Hag. 1. 9. 2 Cor. 8. 11, 12.*

3, That every particular Church do appoint their Deacons, or any other faithful Brothers to collect, and to acquaint the Church with the Sum collected, and remit it Quarterly into the Hands of such Persons as are hereafter nominated and appointed to receive it at *London*; the first quarterly Paiment to be made the *5th of December* next.

4. That the Persons appointed to receive all the aforesaid Collections, be our Honoured and well-beloved Brethren, whose Names we have sent you in a printed Paper by it self, all living in and about *London*; and when any of these aforessaid Brethren die, then the major part of the Survivors of them, shall nominate and appoint another Brother in his stead, to be confirmed, or refused, at the next General Meeting of this Assembly. And that the said nine Brethren shall disburse it, from time to time, for the uses hereafter mentioned, according to the satisfaction they, or the major part of them, shall have from the Information and Testimony of any two Churches in this Assembly, or from the Testimony of any particular Association of Churches in the Country, or from the Satisfaction they shall have by any other means whatsoever.

Quest. 2. *To what Uses this Fund, or Publick Stock, shall be disposed?* Resolved,

1. To communicate thereof to those Churches that are not able to maintain their own Ministry; and that their Ministers may be encouraged wholly to devote themselves to the great Work of Preaching the Gospel.

2. To send Ministers that are ordained (or at least solemnly called) to preach, both in City and Country, where the Gospel hath, or hath not yet been preached, and to visit the Churches; and these

to be chosen out of the Churches in *London*, or in the Country; which Ministers are to be approved of, and sent forth by two Churches at the least, but more if it may be.

3. To assist those Members that shall be found in any of the aforesaid Churches, that are disposed for Study, have an inviting Gift, and are sound in Fundamentals, in attaining to the knowledg and understanding of the Languages, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. These Members to be represented to the Nine Brethren in *London*, by any two of the Churches that belong to this Assembly.

Resolved, The Mony collected, be returned, as is expressed in a printed Paper before mentioned, to one of the Nine Brethren mentioned in the said Paper.

Resolved and concluded, That every quarter of a Year, an Account shall be taken by those Nine Brethren in *London*, nominated in the printed Paper aforesaid, of all the Receipts and Disbursments belonging to this aforesaid Fund, or Stock: With an Account signed by them, or the major part of them, shall be sent and transmitted to one Church in every County, and from that Church to be communicated to all the rest of the Churches aforesaid within the same County, with all convenient speed. The first Account to be made and sent the 5th of *January* next.

Resolved, That what Charges soever the said Nine Brethren are at in the Service of this Assembly, shall be discharged out of the aforesaid stock.

The Questions Proposed from the several Churches, Debated, and Resolved.

Quest. *Whether it be not expedient for Churches that live near together, and consist of small numbers, and are not able to maintain their own Ministry, to join together for the better and more comfortable support of their Ministry, and better Edification one of another?*

Ans. Concluded in the Affirmative.

Q. *Whether it is not the Duty of every Church of Christ to maintain such Ministers as are set apart by them, by allowing them a comfortable Maintenance according to their Ability?*

A. Concluded in the Affirmative, 1 Cor. 9. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. Gal. 6. 6.

Q. *Whether every Church ought not to endeavour not only to provide themselves of an able Ministry for the preaching of the Word, but also to set apart to Office, and in a solemn manner ordain such as are duly qualified for the same?*

A. Concluded in the Affirmative. Act. 14. 23. Tit. 1.5.

Q. *Whether it is not the liberty of Baptized Believers to hear any sober and pious Men of the Independent and Presbyterian Persuasion, when they have no opportunity to attend upon the preaching of the Word in their own Assembly, or have no other to preach unto them?*

A. Concluded in the Affirmative, Act. 18. 24, 25, 26.

Q. *Whether the continuing of Gifted-Brethren many Years upon trial for Eldership, or any Person for the Office of a Deacon, without ordaining them, altho qualified for the same, be not omission of an Ordinance of God?*

A. Concluded in the Affirmative.

Q. *What is the Duty of Church-Members when they are disposed to marry, with respect to their Choice?*

A. To observe the Apostle's Rule, to marry only in the Lord, 1 Cor. 7. 39.

Q. *Whether, when the Church have agreed upon the keeping of one day weekly, or monthly, (besides the first day of the Week) to worship God and perform the necessary Services of the Church, they may not charge such Persons with evil that neglect such Meetings, and lay them under Reproof, unless such Members can shew good cause for such their Absence?*

A. Concluded in the Affirmative, Heb. 10. 25.

Q. *What is to be done with those Persons that will not communicate to the necessary Expences of the Church whereof they are Members, according to their Ability?*

A. Resolved, That upon clear Proof, the Persons so offending, as aforesaid, be duly admonished; and if no Reformation, the Church to withdraw from them, Eph. 5. 3. Mat. 25. 42. 1 Joh. 3. 17.

Q. *What is to be done with those Persons that withdraw themselves from the Fellowship of that particular Church whereof they are Members, and join themselves to the Communion of the National Church?*

A. To use all due means to reclaim them by Instruction and Admonition; and if not thereby reclaimed, to reject them. Mat. 18. 17. Luk. 9. 63. Heb. 10. 38. Jude 19.

Resolved, That the like method be taken with those that wholly forsake the Fellowship of that Congregation to which they have solemnly given up themselves.

Q. *Whether Believers were not actually reconciled to God, actually justified and adopted when Christ died?*

A. That the Reconciliation, Justification, and Adoption of Believers are infallibly secured by the gracious purpose of God, and merit of Jesus Christ. Yet none can be said to be actually reconciled, justified, or adopted, until they are really implanted into Jesus Christ by Faith; and so by virtue of this their Union with him, have these Fundamental Benefits actually conveyed unto them. And this we conceive is fully evidenced, because the Scripture attributes all these Benefits to Faith, as the instrumental cause of them. *Rom. 3. 25. Chap. 5. 11. Chap. 5. 1. Gal. 3. 26.* And gives such Representation of the state of the Elect before Faith as is altogether inconsistent with an actual Right in them, *Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3, ---12.*

Q. *Whether it be not necessary for the Elders, Ministering-Brethren, and Messengers of the Churches, to take into their serious consideration those Excesses that are found among their Members, Men and Women, with respect to their Apparel?*

A. In the Affirmative. That it is a shame for men to wear long Hair, or long Perewigs, and especially Ministers, *1 Cor. 11. 14.* or strange Apparel, *Zeph. 1. 8.* That the Lord reproves the Daughters of *Sion*, for the Bravery, Haughtiness, and Pride of their Attire, walking with stretched-out Necks, wanton Eyes, mincing as they go, *Isa. 3. 16.* As if they affected Tallness, as one observes upon their stretched-out Necks, tho some in these Times seem, by their high Dresses, to out do them in that respect. The Apostle *Paul* exhorts, in *1 Tim. 2. 9, 10. Women adorn themselves in modest Apparel, with Shamefastness and Sobriety: not with Broidered Hair or Gold, or Pearls, or costly Array; but with good Works as becomes Women professing Godliness. And 1 Pet. 3. 3, 4, 5. Whose adorning, let it not be the outward adorning, of plaiting the Hair, of wearing of Gold, or of putting on of Apparel: but the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this (fashion) manner, the holy Women who trusted in God adorned themselves.* And therefore we cannot but bewail it with much Sorrow and Grief of Spirit, That those Brethren and Sisters who have solemnly professed to deny themselves, *Mat. 16. 24.* And who are by Profession obliged in Duty not to conform to this World, *Rom. 12. 2.* should so much conform to the Fashions of this World, and not reform themselves in those Inclinations that their Natures addicted them to in days of Ignorance, *1 Pet. 1. 14.* From these Considerations we earnestly desire, That Men and Women, whose Souls are committed to our Charge, may be watched over in this matter, and that care be taken, and all just and due means used for a Reformation herein; and that such who are guilty of this crying Sin of Pride, that abounds in the Churches as well as in the Nation, may be reprov'd; especially considering what Time and Treasure is foolishly wasted in adorning the Body, which would be better spent in a careful endeavour to adorn the Soul; and the charge laid out upon those Superfluities, to relieve the necessities of the poor Saints, and to promote the Interest of Jesus Christ. And though we deny not but in some cases Ornaments may be allowed, yet whatever Ornaments in Men or Women which are inconsistent with Modesty, Gravity, Sobriety, and a Scandal to Religion, opening the Mouths of the Ungodly, ought to be cast off, being truly no Ornaments to Believers, but rather a Defilement; and that those Ministers and Churches who do not endeavour after a Reformation herein, are justly to be blamed,

Q. *Whether it be not the Duty of all Christians, and Churches of Christ, religiously to observe the Lord's Day, or first Day of the Week, in the Worship and Service of God both in publick and private?*

A. It is concluded in the Affirmative. Because we find that Day was set apart for the solemn Worship of God by our Lord Jesus, and his Holy Apostles, through the infallible Inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

1st. Because it appears that the Son of God, who was manifested in the Flesh, had Authority to make a change of the Solemn Day of Worship, being Lord of the Sabbath. *Mat.* 12. 8. *Mark* 2. 28. *Luke* 6. 5.

2dly. It is manifest that our Blessed Lord and Saviour arose on that Day, as having compleated and confirmed the work of our Redemption. *Mat.* 28. 1. *Mark* 16. 2. *Luke* 24. 1. *Joh.* 20. 1. whereby he laid the Foundation of the Observation of that Day.

3dly. Our Lord Jesus did then on that Day most plainly and solemnly appear to his Disciples, teaching and instructing them, blessing them, and giving them their Commission, breathing on them the Holy Ghost. *Luke* 24. 13, 31, 36. *Joh.* 20. 19, 20, 21, 22.

Moreover, on the next first day of the Week, he appeared to them again, giving them a further infallible proof of his glorious Resurrection. And then convinced the Apostle *Thomas*, who being absent the first Day before, was now with them, *Joh.* 20. 26. Whereby it appears he sanctified and confirmed the religious Observation of that Day by his own Example.

4thly. Our Lord and Saviour remained with his Disciples forty Days after his Resurrection, and spoke to them of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God, *Act.* 1. 3. And we question not but he then gave command about the Observation of this Day.

5thly. Which appears, in that for a further confirmation thereof, after his Ascension, when his Disciples or Apostles were assembled together, solemnly with one accord, on the Day of *Pentecost*, which (by all computation) was the first Day of the Week; recorded, *Act.* 2. 1, 2. He then poured out his Holy Spirit in a marvellous and an abundant Measure upon them.

6thly. Accordingly, afterwards, we find this Day was solemnly observed by the Churches, as appears, *Acts* 20. 7. where we have the Churches assembling on that day plainly asserted, with the solemn Duties then performed, which were Preaching, and breaking of Bread; and all this recorded as their usual Custom, which could be from no other cause but Divine and Apostolical Institution. And it is most remarkable and worthy the serious Observation of all the Lord's People, that although the Holy Apostles, and others that were Preachers of the Gospel, took their opportunities to preach the Word on the Jewish Sabbath-day, and on other days of the Week as they had convenient Seasons afforded; yet we have no Example of the Churches then assembling together to celebrate all the Ordinances of our Lord Jesus peculiar to them, but on the first Day of the Week. Which manifest practice of theirs is evidently as plain a Demonstration of its being a Day set apart for religious Worship, by the Will and Command of our Lord Jesus, as if it had been exprest in the plainest Words. Forasmuch as they did nothing in those purest Primitive Times in the sacred Worship of God, either as to time or form, but by a Divine Warrant from the Holy Apostles, who were instruted by our Lord Jesus, and were guided in all those Affairs by his faithful and infallible Holy Spirit.

7thly. In like manner the Solemn Ordinance of Collection for the necessities of the poor Saints, was commanded by the Lord to be performed on that Day, *1 Cor.* 16. 1, 2. by an Apostolical Ordination; which without question, by reason of their observing that Day for their holy assembling and worship, was then required.

8thly, and *lastly,* It is asserted by all the considerate and able Expositors of the Holy Scriptures, that the denomination or Title of the Lord's Day, mentioned *Rev.* 1. 10. was attributed to the First Day of the Week, as the usual distinguishing Name given to that solemn Day by the Christians, or Churches, in the Primitive Times; as being a Day to be spent wholly in the Service and Worship of

the Lord, and not in our own worldly and secular Affairs, which are lawful to be attended unto on other Days of the Week.

From all which, laid together and considered, we are convinced, that it is our Duty religiously to observe that Holy Day in the Celebration of the Worship of God.

Q. *Whether the Graces and Gifts of the Holy Spirit be not sufficient to the making and continuing of an Honourable Ministry in the Churches?*

A. Resolved in the Affirmative, *Eph. 4. 8, 9. 1 Cor. 12. 7.*

Q. *Whether it be not advantagious for our Brethren now in the Ministry, or that may be in the Ministry, to attain to a competent knowledg of the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin Tongues, that they may be the better capable to defend the Truth against Opposers?*

A. Resolved in the Affirmative.

Q. *Whether an Elder of one Church may administer the Ordinance in other Churches of the same Faith?*

A. That an Elder of one Church, may administer the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper to another of the same Faith, being called so to do by the said Church; tho not as Pastor, but as a Minister, necessity being only considered in this Case.

We the Ministers and Messengers of, and concerned for, upwards of one hundred Baptized Congregations in *England and Wales* (denying Aminianism) being met together in London from the 3^d of the 7th Month to the 11th of the same, 1689. to consider of some things that might be for the glory of God, and the good of these Congregations; have thought meet (for the satisfaction of all other Christians that differ from us in the point of Baptism) to recommend to their perusal the Confession of our Faith, Printed for, and Sold by, Mr. *John Harris* at the *Harrow* in the *Poultrey*: Which Confession we own, as containing the Doctrine of our Faith and Practice; and do desire that the Members of our Churches respectively do furnish themselves therewith.

Moreover, this Assembly do declare their Approbation of a certain little Book, lately recommended by divers Elders dwelling in and about the City of *London*, Intituled, *The Ministers Maintenance Vindicated*. And it is their Request that the said Treatise be dispersed amongst all our respective Congregations; and it is desired that some Brethren of each Church take care to dispose of the same accordingly.

An Account of the several Baptized Churches in England and Wales (owning the Doctrine of Personal Election and Final Perseverance) that sent either their Ministers, or Messengers, or otherwise communicated their State in our General-Assembly at London, on the 3d, 4th, and so on to the 11th Day of the 7th Month, called September, 1689.

Barkshire

- 1 { Reading ----- { *William Facy, Pastor.*
Reyamire Griffin, Messenger.
- 2 { Farringdon ----- { *Richard Steed, Minister.*
William Mills, Minister.
- 3 { Abbingdon ----- { *Henry Forty, Pastor.*
John Tomkins.
Philip Hockton.
- 4 Newberry -----
- 5 Wantage ----- *Robert Keate, Minister.*
- 6 { Longworth ----- { *John Man, Preacher.*
Peter Stephens.

Bedfordshire

- 7 { Steventon ----- { *Stephen Howtherne, Pastor.*
John Carver.
- 8 Evershall ----- *Edward White, Pastor.*

Bristol

- 9 { Broad-Meade ----- { *Thomas Vaux, Pastor.*
Robert Bodinam.
- 10 Fryers ----- *Andrew Gifford, Pastor.*

Buckinghamshire

- 11 Haddington ----- *Peter Tyler.*
- 12 Stuckley ----- *Robert Knight, Pastor.*

Cambridg.

- 13 Cambridg ----- *Thomas Cowlinge.*
- 14 Wisbich ----- *William Ricks, Preacher.*

Cornwall

- 15 Looe ----- *Thomas Cowling, Minister.*

Devonshire

- 16 Boly-Tracy ----- *Clement Jackson, Minister.*
- 17 Dartmouth ----- *Philip Cary, Minister.*
- 18 Ladswell ----- *Samuel Hart, Minister.*
- 19 Luppit ----- *Thomas Halwell.*
- 20 { Plimouth ----- { *Holdenby, Pastor.*
Samuel Buttall, Minister.

- 21 South Molton ----- *Thomas Stoneman, Messenger*
- 22 { Tiverton ----- { *John Ball.*
Tristram Truvin, Minister

Dorsetshire.

- 23 Dorchester ----- *Thomas Cox, Minister.*
- 24 { Dalwood ----- { *James Hitt, Preacher.*
Thomas Payne, Preacher.
- 25 Lime ----- *Simon Orchard, Minister.*

Durham.

- 26 { Muggleswick ----- { *John Ward.*
Henry Blackhead.
- 27 { Newcastle on Tine ----- { *Richard Pitts, Pastor.*
John Turner.

Essex.

- 28 Hadfield-Braddock ----- *Willam Collins, Pastor.*
- 29 { Harlow ----- { *William Woodward, Pastor.*
James Newton.

Exon County.

- 30 { Exon ----- { *William Phipps, Pastor.*
Richard Adams.

Gloucestershire.

- 31 { *Burton on the Hill and*
Morton Hinmast ----- { *John Goring, Pastor.*
Anthony Freeman.
- 32 Cirincester ----- *Giles Watkins, Minister.*
- 33 Dimmock ----- *William Hankins, Pastor.*
- 34 Marring-Hampton -----
- 35 Nimpsfield ----- *Robert Williams.*
- 36 Sudbury -----
- 37 { Tewksbury ----- { *Eleazer Herringe, Pastor.*
Edward Canter.

Glamorganshire.

- 38 { Swanzey ----- { *Lewis Thomas, Pastor.*
Francis Giles.

Hartfordshire.

- 39 { Hempstead ----- { *Samuel Ewer, Pastor.*
William Aldwin.
- 40 { Kingsworth ----- { *James Hardinge, Minister.*
Daniel Finch, Minister
- 41 Perton -----
- 42 { Theobalds ----- { *Joseph Masters, Pastor.*
Joseph Seward.
- 43 { Tringe ----- { *Richard Sutton, Pastor.*
John Bishop.

Hampshire.

- 44 { Christ-Church ----- { *Joseph Brown.*
John Lillington.
- 45 Ringwood -----
- 46 { South-Hampton ----- { *Richard Ring, Pastor.*
John Greenwood.
- 47 { White-Church ----- { *Richard Kent, Messengers.*
Stephen Kent, Messengers.

Herefordshire.

- 48 Hereford City ----- *Edward Price, Pastor.*
- 49 Weston and Pinnard ----- *Richard Perkins, Preacher.*

Kent.

- 50 { Sandwich ----- { *Thomas Focknam, Pastor.*
Edward Taylor.

Lancashire.

- 51 Warrington ----- *Loe, Pastor*

Leicestershire.

- 52 { Kilbey ----- { *Henry Coleman, Pastor*
Benjamin Winkles.

London.

- 53 { Broken-Wharf ----- { *Hanserd Knollys, Pastors.*
Robert Steed, Pastors.
John Skinner.
Thomas Lampet.
- 54 Devonshire-Square ----- *William Kiffin, Pastor.*

	{		{	<i>Morris King.</i>
				<i>William Clark.</i>
55	{	Joyners-Hall -----	{	<i>John Harris, Pastor.</i>
				<i>Samuel Boneal.</i>
				<i>William Dicks.</i>
				<i>John Merriot.</i>
56	{	Houndsditch -----	{	<i>Edward Man, Pastor.</i>
				<i>John Burkes.</i>
				<i>Richard Howell.</i>
57	{	Petty-France -----	{	<i>William Collins, Pastor.</i>
				<i>John Collet.</i>
				<i>Thomas Harrison.</i>

Middlesex.

58	{	Lime-House -----	{	<i>Leonard Harrison, Pastor.</i>
				<i>Samuel Booth.</i>
				<i>John Hunt.</i>
59	{	Mile-end Green -----	{	<i>George Barret, Pastor.</i>
				<i>Isaac Marloe.</i>
				<i>John Putipher.</i>
				<i>Daniel Hawes.</i>
60		Culman Green -----		
61	{	Pennington-Street -----	{	<i>Isaac Lambe, Pastor.</i>
				<i>Humphrey Burroughs.</i>
				<i>John Gillies.</i>
62	{	Wapping -----	{	<i>Hercules Colins, Pastor.</i>
				<i>Humphrey Hutchings.</i>
				<i>John Overinge.</i>

Monmouthshire.

63	Abergaviny -----	<i>Christopher Price, Minister.</i>
64	Blainegumt -----	<i>William Prichard, Pastor.</i>
65	Galoen -----	
66	Lanwamouth -----	
67	Glanmenock -----	

Norfolk.

- 68 Pulham-Market ----- *Henry Bradshaw.*
- 69 { Norwich ----- { *Austin, Pastor.*
Thomas Flatman, Minister.

Oxfordshire.

- 70 { Finstock ----- { *John Carpenter, Minister.*
Joshua Brooks.
- 71 Hook-Norton ----- *Charles Archer, Pastor.*
- 72 Oxford City ----- *Richard Tidmarsh, Minister.*

Pembrookshire.

- 73 { Neare ----- { *Griffith Howel.*
William Jones, Pastor.

Somersetshire.

- 74 Bath-Haycomb ----- *Richard Gay, Minister.*
- 75 { Bridgwater ----- { *Tobias Wells, Pastor.*
William Coleman.
- 76 Chard ----- *William Wilkins, Minister.*
- 77 Charton ----- *William Woodman.*
- 78 { Dunster and Stockgomer ----- {
- 79 Froome ----- *William Randalfe.*
- 80 Hallitraw ----- *John Andrews.*
- 81 Hatch ----- *Jeremiah Day.*
- 82 Kilmington ----- *Robert Cox, Minister.*
- 83 Taunton ----- *Thomas Winnell, Pastor.*
- 84 Wedmore ----- *George Stant, Minister.*
- 85 Wells ----- *Timothy Brooke, Minister.*
- 86 Yeovel and Perriot ----- *Thomas Miller, Pastor.*

Suffolk.

- 87 Framingsham ----- *Thomas Mills, Minister.*

Surry.

- Southwark -----
- 88 Horse-lie-down ----- *Benjamin Keach, Pastor.*
John Leader.
Thomas Dawson.

{		{	<i>Edward Sanford.</i>
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89 Mayes-Pond -----

{	{	<i>Richard Adams, Minister.</i>
		<i>Nathaniel Crabb.</i>
		<i>John Bernard.</i>

91 Gilford ----- *John Ward.*

{	{	<i>Hezekiah Brent, Minister.</i>
		<i>John Scot, Minister.</i>

Warwickshire.

{	{	<i>John Wills.</i>
		<i>John Higgins.</i>

{	{	<i>Paul Fruine, Minister.</i>
		<i>Robert Paule.</i>

Wiltshire.

95 Bradford ----- *John Flouret.*

96 Calne -----

97 Cley-Chase -----

98 Devises ----- *James Webb.*

{	{	<i>William Aldridge.</i>
		<i>Edward Froud</i>

100 Knolles ----- *John Williams, Pastor.*

101 Malmsbury ----- *Arch, Pastor.*

102 Milsham -----

{	{	<i>Walter Pen.</i>
		<i>John Andrews.</i>

{	{	<i>Joseph Holton.</i>
		<i>John Layes.</i>

105 Warminster ----- *John Werell, Pastor.*

106 Westbury ----- *Roger Cator.*

Worcestershire.

107 Bromsgrove ----- *John Eccles, Pastor.*

[Hearty Thanks are returned to you for your great Love and Charity towards our poor Brother *Richard Dorwood*, upon the account of his Loss by Fire.]

The Assembly of the Elders, Messengers, and Ministering-Brethren, sent by, and concerned for, more than one hundred Baptized Congregations of the same Faith with themselves, from many parts of England and Wales (met together in London Sept. 3 to 12, 1689, to consider of several things relating to the well-being of the same Churches.) And having that opportunity, judged it their Duty to clear themselves from those Reproaches cast on them, occasioned by the weakness of some few of their Perswasion, who in the late King's Reign, were employed as Regulators for the Support of his Dispensing Power.

There having been many Reflections cast upon us, under the Name of *Anabaptists*, as such, as having in the late Times, for our Liberties-sake, complied with the Popish Party, to the hazard of the Protestant Religion, and the Civil Liberties of the Nation: We being met together, some from most parts of this Kingdom, judge it our Duty to clear our selves from the said Reflections cast upon us. And we do first declare, that to the utmost of our Knowledge, there was not one Congregation that had a hand, or gave consent to any thing of that Nature, nor did ever countenance any of their Members to own an Absolute Power in the late King, to dispense with the Penal Laws and Tests; being well satisfied, that the doing thereof by his sole Prerogative, would lay the Foundation of Destruction of the Protestant Religion, and Slavery to this Kingdom.

But yet we must confess, that some few Persons (from their own Sentiments) which were of our Societies, used their endeavours for the taking off the Penal Laws and Tests; and were employed by the late King *James* to go into divers Counties, and to several Corporations, to improve their Interest therein but met with little, or no Encouragement by any of our Members; though considering the Temptations some were under (their Lives being in their Enemies Hands) the great Sufferings, by Imprisonments, Excommunications, &c. that did attend from the Ecclesiastical Courts, as also by the frequent Molestations of Informers against our Meetings, by means whereof many Families were ruined in their Estates, as also deprived of all our Liberties, and denied the common Justice of the Nation, by the Oaths and Perjury of the vilest of Mankind, might be some abatement to the severe Censures that have attended us, tho if some amongst us, in the hopes of a Deliverance from the heavy Bondage they then lay under, might miscarry, by falling in with the late King's Design. It being also well known that some Congregations have not only reprov'd those among them that were so employed, but in a regular way have further proceeded against them. From whence it seems unreasonable, that for the miscarriage of a few Persons, the whole Party should be laid under Reproach and Infamy.

It being our professed Judgment, and we on all Occasions shall manifest the same, to venture our *All* for the Protestant Religion, and Liberties of our Native Country.

And we do with great Thankfulness to God acknowledg his special Goodness to these Nations, in raising up our present King *William*, to be a blessed Instrument, in his Hand, to deliver us from Popery and Arbitrary Power, and shall always (as in duty bound) pray that the Lord may continue Him and His Royal Consort long to be a Blessing to these Kingdoms, and shall always be ready to the utmost of our ability, in our Places, to join our Hearts and Hands with the rest of our Protestant Brethren, for the Preservation of the Protestant Religion and the Liberties of the Nation.

*William Kiffin,
Hanserd Knowllys,
Andrew Gifford,
Robert Steed,*

*Benjamin Keach,
Samuel Buttall,
Isaac Lamb,
Christopher Price,*

*Thomas Winnel,
James Hitt,
Edward Price,
William Phips,*

*Thomas Vauxe,
John Tomkins,
Toby Wells,
George Barret,*

*Robert Keate,
Richard Tidmarsh,
James Webb,
John Harris,*

*William Facey,
John Ball,
William Hankins,
Paul Fruin,*

FINIS.

Advertisement.

There is lately Published a Treatise, Intituled, *Gold Refined*, or Baptilinn ii ts Primitive Purity. Price 1 s.

Another, Intituled, *Antichrist Stormed*, and the time of the end, shewing the Judgment of most eminent Writers concerning the final downfal of *Mistery Babylon*; also the slaying the two Witnesses, and of the pouring out the seven Vials. Price 1 s. Both written by Benjamin Keach.

A *Solemn Call*, unto all that would be owned as Christ's Faithful Witnesses, speedily, and seriously, to attend unto the Primitive Purity of the Gospel Doctrine and Worship: Or, a Discourse concerning *Baptism*. Wherein that of Infants is Disproved, as having no Footing, nor Foundation at all in the Word of GOD. By way of Answer to the Arguments made use of by Mr. *William Allen*, Mr. *Sidenham*, Mr. *Baxter*, Dr. *Burthogge*, and others for the Support of that Practice. Wherein the Covenant made with *Israel* at Mount *Sinai*, *Exod.* 20. That in the Land of Moab, *Deut.* 29. As also the Covenant of *Circumcision* made with *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17. 7, 8, 9. whereon so much stress is laid for the Support of Infants-Baptism, are plainly proved to be no other than three several Editions of the Covenant of Works; And consequently, that no just Argument can thence be deduced for the Justification of that Practice. Together with a Description of that truly Evangelical Covenant, GOD was pleased to make with Believing *Abraham*; containing the Sum of the Everlasting Gospel then Preached unto him; since Proclaimed by the Apostles; and which now remains to be yet further Published unto every Nation, Kindred, Tongue, and People, for the Obedience of Faith. By *Philip Cary*, a Lover of Truth and Peace. Price Bound, 2 s.

There is also sometime since published an excellent Treatise, shewing, that no unbaptized Person ought to be admitted to the Lord's Table.

All Sold by *John Harris*, at the *Harrow* against the Church in the *Poultry*.

The Names of the Receivers of all Money to be raised for the General Fund, or Publick Stock.

The Persons appointed to receive all the Collections made in the respective Congregations, are our honoured and well beloved Brethren Mr. *William Kiffin*, Mr. *Robert Bristow*, Mr. *Morice King*, Mr. *John Leader* Sen. Mr. *Isaac Marlo*, Mr. *John Skinner*, Mr. *Richard Hallowell*, Mr. *John Collet*, and Mr. *Edward Harrison*.

Resolved, That the Money be remitted from the Countrey, to our beloved Brother Mr. *Edward Harrison*, (one of the nine Brethren before-mentioned) living at the Sign of the *Hen and Chickens* in *Cheapside, London*; with another Letter signifying the same, to our beloved Brother. Mr. *Morice King*, living at the Sign of the *Mermaid* in *Lawrence-lane*, Silk-man, another of the nine Brethren aforesaid.

We whose Names are subscribed,
testify, that the Persons aforesaid
were unanimously chosen
by the whole Assembly.
Septemb. 12. 1689.

Hanserd Knowllys,
Robert Steed,
William Collins,
Andrew Gifford,
Thomas Vauxe,
John Harris,
Benjamin Keach,
George Barrette,
Samuel Buttall,
Christopher Price,
William Pritchard,

William Hankins,
Edmond White,
Daniel Finch,
John Tomkins,
Edward Man,
James Webb,
Thomas Winnell,
Richard Adams,
William Phips,
John Ball,
Richard Ring,

Charles Archer,
James Hitt,
Hercules Collins,
Leonard Harrison,
Edward Price,
William Facey,
Paul Fruin,
Richard Sutton,
Robert Keate,
John Carter,
Robert Knight

N216. A narrative of the proceedings of the General Assembly. 1689. 4^o.*
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