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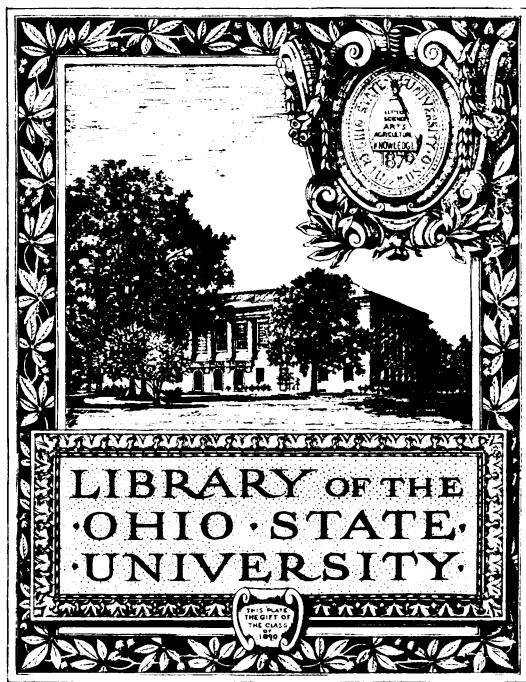
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VINDICATION
OF THE
MINISTERS
OF THE GOSPEL



BURGES



A
VINDICATION

OF THE
Ministers of the Gospel

in, and about *London*, from the unjust
Aspersions cast upon their former Actings

for the Parliament, as if they had pro-
moted the bringing of the

K I N G

to Capitall punishment.

WITH

A short Exhortation to their People to keep close
to their Covenant-Engagement.

Isaiah 62.1. *For Zions sake I will not hold my peace, and for Ierusaems sake I will not rest, untill the righteous keepe thereof as brightnesse, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.*

Prov. 24.21, 22. *My son, fear thou the Lord and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change.*

For their calamity shall rise suddenly, and who knoweth the ruine of them both?

L O N D O N,

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Woodstreet. 1648.

A
VINDICATION
OF THE
MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL
in, and about *London*, from the unjust Aspersions
cast upon their former Actions for the Parliament,
as if they had promoted the bringing of the
KING to Capitall punishment.

IT cannot be unknown how much we, and other Ministers of this City and Kingdom that faithfully adhered to the Parliament, have injuriously smarted under the scourge of evil tongues and pens, ever since the first eruption of the unhappy differences and unnaturall warre between the King and Parliament, for our obedience to the Commands and Orders of the Honourable Houses, in their contests with his Majesty, and conflicts with his Armies.

We are not ignorant of the over-busie entermedlings of Prelates and their party heretofore, in over-ruling civil affairs to the great endangering of Kingdoms, and of this in particular, when private interests, ambitious designs, revenge, or other sinister ends, engaged them beyond their sphere. Howbeit, it cannot reasonably (as we conceive) be denied, that Ministers, as *subjects*, being bound to obey the Laws and to preserve the Liberties of

the Kingdom, and having an interest in them and the happiness of them, as well as others, may and ought, (without incurring the just censure due to busybodies and incendiaries) to appear, for preserving the Laws and Liberties of that Common-wealth whereof they are members, especially in our case, when it was declared by the Parliament, that all was at stake, and in danger to be lost. No, nor as *Ministers* ought they to hold their peace, in a time wherein the sins of Rulers and Magistrates as well as others, have so far provoked God as to kindle the fire of his wrath against his people. And yet, for this alone, the faithfull servants of God, have in all ages, through the malice of Satan and his instruments been traduced as Arch-incendiaries, when only their accusers are indeed guilty of both laying the tram, and of putting fire to it, to blow up a Kingdom.

An *Ahab* and his sycophants think none so fit to bear the odium of being the grand *Troubler of Israel*, as *Elijah*. Thus, the popish device was, to charge the *Gun-powder Treason* (had it taken effect) upon the *Puritans*: And, if you beleeve *Tertullus*, even a *Paul* is a *pestilent fellow*, a *mover of sedition throughout the world*, a *ringleader of a sect*, and what not, but what he is? Yea, *Christ* himself (though a friend to *Monarchy*, even of heathenish *Rome*) is proclaimed an *enemy to Caesar*, to open a way to his destruction, by their malice, who never cared for the interest of *Caesar*.

Wherefore, although *with us*, who have had experience of like usage, it be a small thing to be thus judged of men, when we regard only our own particular persons: For, if they call the master of the house *Beel-zebub*, how much more those of his household? yet when we consider how

how much it concerns the honour of our Master, and the good of all, to preserve our ministeriall function immaculate (our good names, being in that relation, as needfull to others, as a good conscience to our selves) we dare not but stand by and assert the integrity of our hearts, and the innocency of all our actions (in reference to the King and Kingdome) for which we are so much calumniated and traduced.

This we are compelled to at this time, because there are many who very confidently (yet most unjustly) charge us to have been formerly instrumentall, toward the taking away the life of the King. And because also there are others who in their scurrilous Pasquils and Libels (as well as with their virulent tongues) present us to the world as a *bloody seditious sect, and traitterous obstructors, of what all the godly people of the Kingdome doe earnestly desire for establishing of Religion and Peace*, in that we stick at the *Execution* of the King, while yet we are (as they falsly affirm) content to have him *convicted and condemned*: all which we must, and do from our hearts disclaim, before the whole world.

For when we did first engage with the Parliament, (which we did not till called thereunto) we did it with loyall hearts and affection towards the King, and his posterity. Not intending the least hurt to his Person, but to stop his party from doing further hurt to the Kingdome; not to bring his Majesty to justice (as some now speak) but to put him into a better capacity to doe justice: *To remove the wicked from before him, that his throne might be established in righteousness*; not to dethrone, and destroy him, which (we much fear) is the ready way to the destruction of all his Kingdomes.

That

That which put on any of us at first to appear for the Parliament was, *The Propositions and Orders of the Lords and Commons in Parliament* (Jun. 10. 1642.) for bringing in of money and plate, &c. wherein they assured us that whatsoever should be brought in thereupon, should not be at all employed upon any other occasion, then to maintain *The Protestant Religion, The Kings Authority, his Person in his royall dignity, the free course of justice, the Laws of the Land, the Peace of the Kingdome, and the Priviledges of Parliament, against any force which shall oppose them.*

And in this we were daily confirmed and encouraged more and more, by their many subsequnt declarations and protestations, which we held our selves bound to beleeve, knowing many of them to be godly and conscientious men, of Publike spirits, zealously promoting the common good, and labouring to free this Kingdome from tyranny and slavery, which some evill instruments about the King, endeavoured to bring upon the Nation.

As for the present actings at *Westminster*, since the time that so many of the Members were by force secludded, divers imprisoned, and others thereupon withdrew from the house of Commons (and, there not being that conjunction of the two Houses, as heretofore) we are wholly unsatisfied therein, because we conceive them to be so farre from being warranted by sufficient Authority, as that in our apprehensions they tend to an actual alteration (if not subversion) of that which the honourable *House of Commons*, in their Declaration of April 17. 1646. have taught us to call *the Fundamentalsl constitution and government of this Kingdome*; which they therein assure us (if we understand them) they would never alter.

Yea,

Yea, we hold our selves bound in duty to God, Religion, the King, Parliament and Kingdome, to professe before God, Angels and men, That we verily beleieve that which is so much feared to be now in agitation, *the taking away the life of the King*, in the present way of Trial, is, not only not agreeable to any Word of God, the principles of the Protestant Religion (never yet stained with the least drop of bloud of a King) or the fundamentall constitution and government of this Kingdom; but, contrary to them, as also to the *Oath of Allegiance*, the *Protestation of May 5. 1641.* and the *solemn League and Covenant*: from all, or any of which Engagements, we know not any power on earth, able to absolve us or others.

In which last, we have sworn (with hands lifted up to the most high God) *That we shall with sincerity, reality, and constancy, in our severall vocations, endeavour, with our estates and lives, mutually to preserve and defend the Rights and Priviledges of the Parliaments, and the liberties of the Kingdomes, and to preserve and defend the Kings Majesties Person, and Authority, in the defence of the true Religion, and Liberties of the Kingdomes: That the world may bear witnesse with our consciences of our Loyalty, and that we have no thoughts or intentions to diminish his Majesties just power and greatnesse.*

And we are yet further tied by another Article of the same Covenant; *Not to suffer our selves, directly or indirectly, by whatsoever combination, perswasion or terrour, to be divided or withdrawn from this blessed union and conjunction, whether to make defection to the contrary party, or to give our selves to a detestable indifferency, or neutrality in this Cause which so much concerns the glory of God, the good of the*

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King-

Kingdome, and honour of the King : but shall all the daies of our lives, Zealously and constantly continue therein against all opposition, and promote the same according to our power against all lets and impediments whatsoever. And this we have not only taken our selves, but most of us have by command of the Parliament administred it to others, whom we have thereby drawn in to be as deep as our selves in this publike engagement.

Therefore, According to that our Covenant, we doe in the Name of the great God (to whom all must give a strict account) warn and exhort all who either more immediately belong to our respective charges, or any way depend on our Ministry, or to whom we have administred the said Covenant (that we may not by our silence suffer them to run upon that highly provoking sin of Perjury)

* Declared by both Houses (for the substance of it) to be *Destru- tive to the being of Parliaments, and to the fundamentall Government of the Kingdom*, in Decemb. 1647. yea, condemn ed heretofore by the General, and his Council of Warre, and one of theouldiers shot to death for promoting it.

to keep close to the waies of God, and the rules of Religion, the Laws, and their Vows, in their constant maintaining the true Reformed Religion, the fundamentall Constitution, and Government of this Kingdome, (not suffering themselves to be seduced from it, by being drawn in to subscribe the late Models, or *Agreement of the people* *, which directly tends to the utter subversion of the whole frame of the fundamentall government of the Land, and makes way for an universall toleration of all heresies and blasphemies (directly contrary to our Covenant) if they can but get their Abettors to cover them under a false guise, of *the Christian Religion*) as also in preserving the Priviledges of both Houses of Parliament, and the Union between the two Nations of England and Scotland : to mourn bitterly for their own sins, the sins of the City, Army, Parliament and Kingdome, and the wofull miscarriages of the King himself,

self (which we cannot but acknowledge to be many and very great) in his Government, that have cost the three Kingdomes so dear, and cast him down from his Excellency into an horrid pit of misery, almost beyond example. And to pray that God would both give him effectually repentance, and sanctify that bitter cup of Divine Displeasure, that the Divine providence hath put into his hand; as also that God would restrain the violence of men, that they may not dare to draw upon themselves and the Kingdome the blood of their Sovereign.

And now, we have good reason to expect that they who brought us under such a bond, and thereby led us into the necessity of this present Vindication and manifestation of our judgements and discharge of our consciences, should defend us in it. However, we resolve rather to be of their number that tremble at his *Terrors* who is a *consuming fire*, and will not fail to *avenge the quarrell of his Covenant*, upon all that contemn it, then to be found among those who *despise the Oath by breaking his Covenant (after lifting up the hand)* although it had been made but in Civil things only, and that with the worst of men.

Lev. 26.

Ezek. 17.

2 Sam. 21.

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Edm. Stanton D.D. Pastor of Kingston.

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William Spurstow Minist. of *Hackney.*

La. Seaman Pastor of *Alb. Breadstreet.*

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Thomas Gouge Pastor of *Sepulchers*.
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Ra. Robinson Pastor of *Mary Woolnorth*.
John Glascock Min. at *Undetshaft*.
Thomas Whately Minister at *Mary Wool-*
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Jonathan LLOYDE Pastor of *Iames Garlick*
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Benjamin Needler Pastor of *Margaret Moses*.
Nath. Staniforth Minister of *Mary Botham*.
Steven Watkins Minister of *Mary Overies*.
Jacob Tice Pastor of *Buttolph Billingsgate*.
John Stileman Minister at *Rotterhithe*.
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Jonathan Deverux late Minister at *Andrews*
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Paul

Paul Russell Preacher at *Hackney*.
Iosuah Kirby Minister of the Word.
Arthur Barham Pastor at *Hellens*.

F I N I S.

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