

ADDITIONAL PRAISE FOR THIS WORK

*“Richard Snoddy, author of a distinguished, recently published monograph *The Soteriology of James Ussher: The Act and Object of Saving Faith* (Oxford, 2014), has produced a splendid new edition of original texts, sermons and tractates on church government by this great 17th-century Irish scholar and bishop. Ussher is especially notable for his key role in drafting the Reformed Articles of Religion of the Church of Ireland (1615), a confessional formulary which constitutes a doctrinal bridge of sorts from the Thirty-Nine Articles (1571) to the Westminster Confession (1647). In Ussher’s concerted endeavour to reconcile adherents of Reformed divinity to the institution of episcopal government, these writings perform a function for ecclesiology analogous to the Irish Articles in matters of doctrine. This scholarly edition should be of considerable interest and edification to all who are students of the Reformed Episcopal tradition.”*

—**W.J. Torrance Kirby, Professor of Ecclesiastical History,
McGill University**

“Richard Snoddy has done the church a great service by bringing back into accessible print these sermons and treatises of the great Archbishop James Ussher. They will both edify and provoke readers to rethink and reapply Reformed Anglican ecclesiology for our own days.”

—**Rev. Dr. Lee Gatiss, Director, Church Society**

“The publication of this volume represents the first fruits of a noble and ambitious project - the Library of Early English Protestantism. This selection of Archbishop James Ussher’s key writings on the Church and ministry will help to make this brilliant seventeenth-century divine - an irenic and constructive thinker - better known to all who have an interest in the legacy of early Anglican theology and a concern for the well-being and flourishing of Anglicanism today. We still have much to learn from Ussher.”

—**Professor Paul Avis, Universities of Durham and Exeter, UK;
Editor-in-Chief of Ecclesiology**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	ii
Abbreviations	iii
Conventions	v
General Introduction	vi
1 A Sermon at Temple Church (1620)	1
2 A Sermon at St. Margaret's Church (1621)	22
3 A Brief Declaration of the Universality of the Church (1624)	62
4 A Sermon Before King Charles at Greenwich (1626)	97
5 The Original of Bishops and Metropolitans (1644)	118
6 The Reduction of Episcopacy (1657)	148
Bibliography	155

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

RECENT YEARS have seen an increasing interest in James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh. On the one hand historians have recognized his importance in the ecclesiological and theological debates of the seventeenth century and his stature as one of the great scholarly intellects of early modern Europe. On the other, at a popular level, the insertion of dates from his biblical chronology into many editions of the King James Version of the Bible since 1701 has guaranteed his place as the poster-boy of young earth creationism. This volume seeks to introduce four of Ussher's sermons and two treatises on church government to a new readership in the confessionally Reformed churches and the wider evangelical community.¹ These pieces all in some way deal with the theme of the Church—its nature, its unity, its purity, its government, and how it must deal with difference—and they should stimulate theological reflection, especially for those within the Anglican tradition. A brief introduction to Ussher's life and career precedes an introduction to each work in turn.

James Ussher

James Ussher was born to Arland and Margaret Ussher in Dublin on 4 January 1581, the fifth of their ten children. This prominent Anglo-Irish family embodied in miniature the religious divisions of late sixteenth-

¹ For other publications directed to these constituencies, see *The Puritan Pulpit: James Ussher, 1581–1656* (Orlando: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 2006), which reproduces the sermons found in *WJU*, 13:1–191, 209–334; *A Body of Divinity* (Birmingham, AL: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2007), a major handbook of Christian doctrine attributed to Ussher which is not included in *WJU*; Crawford Gribben, *The Irish Puritans: James Ussher and the Reformation of the Church* (Darlington: Evangelical Press, 2003); The editor is also preparing a volume of Ussher's previously unpublished sermons from the 1620s. On the contested authorship of *A Body of Divinity*, see Harrison Perkins, "Manuscript and Material Evidence for James Ussher's Authorship of 'A Body of Divinitie' (1645)," *Evangelical Quarterly* 89 (2018): 133–61.

century Ireland. His uncle, Henry Ussher, was the Protestant Archbishop of Armagh from 1595 until his death in 1613. On the maternal side, his uncle Richard Stanihurst was an advocate on the continent for the Irish Catholic cause, and his cousin Henry Fitzsimon was a Jesuit controversialist active in the Irish mission. According to his first biographer, Nicholas Bernard, Ussher's mother was "seduced by some of the Popish Priests to the Roman Religion" whilst Ussher was in England, and she never returned to the Protestant faith, a cause of much anguish for her son.²

As a young man Ussher was a promising scholar. He entered Trinity College, Dublin in 1593, one year after it opened. He obtained his B.A. by 1599, his M.A. by 1601, and was awarded the degrees B.D. in 1607 and D.D. in 1613. He was a fellow of the college from 1600, and was appointed Professor of Theological Controversies in 1607, and Vice-Chancellor in 1615. Ussher was ordained in 1602, and after three years' preaching and catechising from various pulpits in the city, he became Chancellor of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin. This office carried with it the prebend of Finglas, where Ussher preached in the church every Lord's day. Despite rumors about his puritan inclinations, Ussher impressed King James VI and I, who elevated him to the see of Meath in 1621. He was nominated Archbishop of Armagh in the last days of James's reign in 1625, an office which he held until his death in 1656.

² Nicholas Bernard, *The Life & Death of the Most Reverend and Learned Father of Our Church Dr. James Usher, Late Arch-Bishop of Armagh, and Primate of All Ireland* (London: E. Tyler, 1656), 19–20; Other biographical accounts can be found in Richard Parr, *The Life of the Most Reverend Father in God, James Usher, Late Lord Arch-Bishop of Armagh, Primate and Metropolitan of all Ireland* (London: Nathanael Ranew, 1686); Charles R. Elrington, "The Life of James Ussher, D.D., Archbishop of Armagh," in *WJU*, 1:1–324; R. Buick Knox, *James Ussher: Archbishop of Armagh* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1967); Hugh Trevor-Roper, "James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh," in *Catholics, Anglicans and Puritans: Seventeenth Century Essays* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1987), 120–65; Alan Ford, *James Ussher: Theology, History, and Politics in Early-Modern Ireland and England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). The correspondence in *WJU*, vols 15–16 has now been superseded by *The Correspondence of James Ussher, 1600–1656*, ed. Elizabethanne Boran, 3 vols (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2015). For Ussher's irenic, moderate Reformed theology, see Richard Snoddy, *The Soteriology of James Ussher: The Act and Object of Saving Faith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

The Reformation in Ireland was incomplete and precarious.³ The English authorities had control of only a small portion of the island and even here it was difficult to enforce religious change. An illegal Catholic episcopate operated in the shadows of the established church and this was reinforced by waves of priests educated in the seminaries of continental Europe. Early seventeenth-century Irish Protestants were thus an embattled minority. These pressures helped to forge a distinct Irish Protestant identity, marked by fierce anti-Catholicism and an awareness of being locked in a deadly struggle. This is reflected in Ussher's professorial title; not "Professor of Divinity" as it would have been at other universities in the British Isles, but "Professor of Theological Controversies." His successor in that role, Joshua Hoyle, put it succinctly: the Protestant theologian's duty is to "love God, and hate the Pope."⁴

Ussher would certainly have played a leading role in drafting the Irish Articles of 1615, a confessional document which expresses this Irish Protestant perspective. Article 80 brands the Bishop of Rome as "that man of sin" (2 Thess. 2:3), raising belief in the identity of the pope as Antichrist to the level of an article of faith.⁵ The Articles are strongly predestinarian and Sabbatarian, and whilst incorporating much of the substance of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England they are conspicuously silent on the subject of episcopacy—the only bishop mentioned is that of Rome. This is a strongly Reformed confessional document that would appeal to those with puritan inclinations and which would keep them within the fold, maintaining unity against the papist enemy. This concern for Protestant unity was also manifested at the practical level. The need for a capable preaching ministry was such that considerable latitude was given to Scottish Presbyterian ministers in the diocese of Down and Connor in the early years of Ussher's primacy.⁶

³ On the Reformation in Ireland, see Henry A. Jefferies, *The Irish Church and the Tudor Reformations* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010); Alan Ford, *The Protestant Reformation in Ireland, 1590–1641*, 2nd impression (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1987); Karl S. Bottigheimer and Ute Lotz-Heumann, "The Irish Reformation in European Perspective," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 87 (1998): 268–309.

⁴ Joshua Hoyle, *A Reioynder to Master Malone's Reply Concerning Reall Presence* (Dublin: Societie of Stationers, 1641), sig. a4v.

⁵ *The Creeds of Christendom: With a History and Critical Notes*, ed. Philip Schaff, 6th ed., 3 vols (New York: Harper, 1931; repr. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1998), 3:540.

⁶ Ford, *James Ussher*, 164–73.

The independence and flexibility of the Irish church jarred with the vision of ecclesiastical uniformity pursued by King Charles I and William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1633. Their agents in Ireland, Thomas Wentworth, Lord Deputy from 1633 and later Earl of Strafford, and John Bramhall, Bishop of Derry, set about remodelling the church to reflect the discipline and ceremonialism of the English Arminian party.⁷ They sought to impose the English Articles and the canons of 1604 on the Church of Ireland in the Convocation of 1634. Ussher and others found the English form of subscription abhorrent and resisted, but a new set of Irish canons were drafted, following the English precedent. The English Articles were adopted but the more explicitly Reformed Irish Articles were not thereby overturned and Ussher henceforth insisted that clergy assent to both at ordination.⁸ The Irish Articles would thus, in a sense, interpret the

⁷ What is often dubbed English Arminianism cannot be simply equated with the theology of Arminius and the Dutch Remonstrants. The latter could be regarded as a humanist and liberalizing movement, their distinctives centred on issues of soteriology. The former were more interested in ceremonial, sacramentalism, the aesthetics of worship, and discipline within the church. Their sacramental theology did have implications for the doctrine of grace, so it was easy for their opponents to brand them as Arminians and gain much polemical mileage in doing so. The literature on the phenomenon is extensive, but important works include Nicholas Tyacke, "Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution," in *The Origins of the English Civil War*, ed. Conrad Russell (London: Macmillan, 1973), 119–43; idem, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism c.1590–1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); Peter White, "The Rise of Arminianism Reconsidered," *Past & Present* 101 (1983): 34–53; idem, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic: Conflict and Consensus in the English Church from the Reformation to the Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); idem, "The *Via Media* in the Early Stuart Church," in *The Early Stuart Church, 1603–1642*, ed. Kenneth Fincham (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993), 211–30; Kevin Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 275–402, 731–65; Peter Lake, "The Laudian Style: Order, Uniformity and the Pursuit of the Beauty of Holiness in the 1630s," in *The Early Stuart Church, 1603–1642*, ed. Kenneth Fincham (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993), 161–85; Anthony Milton, "The Creation of Laudianism: A New Approach," in *Politics, Religion and Popularity in Early Stuart Britain*, ed. Thomas Cogswell, Richard Cust, and Peter Lake (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 162–84. For perceptive reappraisal of certain aspects, see Jay T. Collier, *Debating Perseverance: The Augustinian Tradition in Post-Reformation England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

⁸ Amanda Louise Capern, "The Caroline Church: James Ussher and the Irish Dimension," *Historical Journal* 39 (1996): 57–85; Alan Ford, "Dependent or Independent? The Church of Ireland and Its Colonial Context, 1536–1649," *Seventeenth Century* 10 (1995): 163–87.

potential ambiguities of the English Articles for the Irish clergy. The appointment of William Chappell as provost of Trinity College in 1634 was another indication of the growing strength of Arminianism in Ireland and the changing ethos of its institutions.⁹ By 1635, though still primate, Ussher had lost effective control of the Irish church. He withdrew from public affairs into scholarly seclusion.

Ussher's scholarly output was considerable. His first published work, *Gravissimae quaestionis, de Christianarum ecclesiarum ... continua successione et statu, historica explicatio* (London, 1613) chronicled the succession of the Christian Church from the earliest times to the twelfth century through the lens of Revelation 20. He traced the continuity of truth in the proto-Protestantism of various fringe and heretical groups in the medieval period, dismissing evidence of their heterodoxy as Catholic distortion, and charted the rise of Antichrist in Rome.¹⁰ Another important work was published in 1621 appended to a tract by Christopher Sibthorp, and later expanded and published separately as *A Discourse of the Religion Anciently Professed by the Irish and British*. Here Ussher attempted to demonstrate the essential harmony between the reformed Irish church and a pristine Celtic Christianity untainted by popery.¹¹ *An Answer to a Challenge Made by a Jesuite in Ireland* (Dublin, 1624) soon followed, arguing that Rome had strayed from its early purity on

⁹ Alan Ford, "That Bugbear Arminianism?: Archbishop Laud and Trinity College, Dublin," in *British Interventions in Early Modern Ireland*, ed. Ciaran Brady and Jane Ohlmeyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 135–60.

¹⁰ *WJU*, 2:1–413 (from revised edition, 1687); an unpublished English translation by Ambrose Ussher, his brother, can be found in Trinity College Dublin, MS 2940; On this work and Ussher's apocalypticism more broadly, see Crawford Gribben, *The Puritan Millennium: Literature & Theology, 1550–1682* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 80–100; Ford, *James Ussher*, 70–84.

¹¹ Ussher, *An epistle [...] concerning the religion anciently professed by the Irish and Scottish; Shewing it to be for substance the same with that which at this day is by publick authoritie established in the Church of England*, in Christopher Sibthorp, *A Friendly Advertisement to the pretended Catholickes of Ireland* (Dublin, 1622); Ussher, *A Discourse of the Religion Anciently Professed by the Irish and British*, in *The Workes of the Most Reverend Father in God, James Ussher* (London, 1631). This is the version found in *WJU*, 4:235–381. On this, see Ute Lotz-Heumann, "The Protestant Interpretation of History in Ireland: The Case of James Ussher's *Discourse*," in *Protestant History and Identity in Sixteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Bruce Gordon, 2 vols (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996), 2:107–20; Alan Ford, "James Ussher and the Creation of an Irish Protestant Identity," in *British Consciousness and Identity: The Making of Britain, 1533–1707*, ed. Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 185–212.

issues such as real presence, confession, purgatory, prayer for the dead, images, free will, and merit.¹² This was still regarded as a useful guide to these controversies in the nineteenth century.¹³

Ussher's publications in the 1630s indicate serious concern about Arminianism but with increasing censorship there were limits on what could be stated in print. His *Gotteschalci historia* (1631) was, on the surface, a historical treatment of Gottschalk of Orbais (c.804–c.869), but the Saxon monk's strident anti-Pelagianism implicitly spoke into the controversies of the 1630s.¹⁴ Ussher was able to take a similar oblique approach in *Britannicarum ecclesiarum antiquitates* (1639), which traced the progress of Christianity in the British Isles down to the seventh century with an account of attempts to eradicate Pelagianism.¹⁵

As a regular visitor to England, initially to buy books for the fledgling college and later for scholarly pursuits, Ussher built up a network of friends and acquaintances that included great scholars such as William Camden and Sir Henry Savile, and puritan clergy such as John Preston and Richard Sibbes.¹⁶ This extensive network meant that when he returned to England in 1640 after a long absence he had friends on both sides of the deepening political divide between king and parliament. His principled royalism meant that when forced to choose he had to side with the king even though he had so much in common with the theologians and preachers who aligned themselves with parliament. In April 1642 Ussher was nominated by the Commons to represent Oxford University at the synod which would become the Westminster Assembly but he could not attend a gathering proscribed by the king.¹⁷ Prior to this parting of the ways he had attempted to act as a mediator, especially on the difficult question of the government of the church, as discussed below.

¹² *WJU*, vol. 3.

¹³ Ford, *James Ussher*, 70.

¹⁴ *WJU*, 4:1–233.

¹⁵ *WJU*, vols 5–6.

¹⁶ On Ussher's Puritan connections, see Elizabethanne Boran, "An Early Friendship Network of James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh, 1626–1656," in *European Universities in the Age of Reformation and Counter Reformation*, ed. Helga Robinson-Hammerstein (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 116–34.

¹⁷ *Journal of the House of Commons: Volume 2, 1640–1643* (London, 1802), 540.

Ussher fled from Oxford in 1645 as the parliamentary armies advanced. After sojourning in Wales he returned to London in 1647 and was appointed Lecturer at Lincoln's Inn. Approval for this appointment was only passed by a narrow majority in the House of Commons,¹⁸ so whilst some held him in high regard, to others he was still suspect on account of his royalist and episcopalian inclinations. He preached regularly until 1654 when his health began to fail, and from then only occasionally. In these final years in London he continued to work on his biblical and historical chronology, including the famous *Annales* which calculated the date of creation as Sunday 23 October 4004 BC.¹⁹

James Ussher died on 21 March 1656 at the home of the Countess of Peterborough at Reigate. His friends intended a private burial at Reigate but Oliver Cromwell insisted on a state funeral at Westminster Abbey, and the ceremony followed the liturgy of the banned Book of Common Prayer.²⁰

At the Temple Church, 1620

Ussher's sermon at the Temple Church on 2 July 1620 is printed here for the first time. The Temple Church is a round church, originally built in the twelfth century by the Knights Templar. By the seventeenth century it was serving as the chapel for Inner Temple and Middle Temple, two of the Inns of Court, large institutions where barristers trained, lodged, and practiced their profession. Ussher's auditors on this occasion were predominantly lawyers, men of affairs, some of whom would have been actively involved in the political life of the nation. The religious ethos would have inclined towards moderate Puritanism and sympathy for the European Reformed churches in their afflictions.²¹

The sermon was preached in the wider context of Europe's descent into one of the most destructive wars of its history. In 1618 the Protestant

¹⁸ *Journal of the House of Commons: Volume 5, 1646–1648* (London, 1802), 393.

¹⁹ See *WJU*, vols 8–11. Also available in a revised English translation as *The Annals of the World: James Ussher's Classic Survey of World History*, ed. Larry Pierce and Marion Pierce (Green Forest: Master Books, 2003).

²⁰ Parr, *Life*, 78–79.

²¹ Hugh Adlington, "Gospel, Law, and *Ars Prædicandi* at the Inns of Court," in *The Intellectual and Cultural World of the Early Modern Inns of Court*, ed. Jayne Archer, Elizabeth Goldring, and Sarah Knight (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 51–74.

A SERMON AT TEMPLE CHURCH (1620)

Notes taken of Doctor Ussher's Sermon at Temple Church 2nd July 1620.¹

Revelation 19th chap. 20th v: And the beast was taken etc. [insertion: & with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him. &c: These both were cast alive into a fiery lake burning with brimstone.]

THE APOSTLE Paul in the first Epistle of Timothy, the third and the end, having propounded the great mystery of godliness, which is great without all controversy, in the beginnige of the next chapter following parallels it with the mystery of iniquity. And having showed before the rule of faith, and this mystery of God manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory:² this is universal faith believed in the whole world, which all the fury of the enemy could never suppress. But where God builds his church, the devil will be sure to have his chapel. And because the mystery of godli-

¹ All footnotes to this sermon are editorial, there being none in the manuscript source. Square brackets around editorial footnotes have been dispensed with. All quotation marks are supplied by the editor. This sermon survives in Bodleian Library, MS Perrot 9 and has never been published before. Whilst this manuscript witness has its problems, the occasion and the nature of the material are such that its publication would seem to be warranted. Although there is no other known record of the sermon, some of its substance can also be found in Ussher's papers in Bodleian, MS Barlow 13, fols 85v–86r, in which he drafts a response to Edward Warren's request, in a letter of 14 Oct. 1617, for an explanation of Rev. 17:8, 11 (fol. 85r; *CJU*, 1:134–35). A neater manuscript copy of the response in another hand is preserved in Bodleian, MS Add. C299, fol. 108 (date unknown) and Ussher's views were published in *The Judgement of the Late Arch-Bishop of Armagh, and Primate of Ireland, of Babylon (Rev. 18.4.) being the present See of Rome*, ed. Nicholas Bernard (London, 1659), 13–20 (*WJU*, 12:545–50).

² 1 Tim. 3:16.

SERMON AT TEMPLE CHURCH

ness was great indeed, therefore the foundation must be laid deep in the earth and sure. For if popery had lifted itself up in the ancient fathers' time, they would have been the first that would have torn the flesh of the whore and burnt her with fire. But then popery wrought underground; whereas now it is as a leprosy in their foreheads, that a man may run and read it in their faces.³ Yet in those times it was thought the part of a good minister of Jesus Christ to forearm the people and put them in mind of these things.⁴ Therefore the Apostle warns them, and the Spirit speaks expressly and evidently, that in the latter time there should be a departure from the faith, and that there would be a controversy and giving heed to seducing spirits.⁵ And as the church of Rome say, that we have made the revolt, so we say, it is they: and therefore because we have an evidence to discern of what so[rt]⁶ the error is, let us consider where the defection lieth. The Apostle saith that such should come as should speak lies in hypocrisy;⁷ such as should come and preach lies openly, as Marcion,⁸ and Arius, but lies in hypocrisy, lies gilded over as a cup full of fornication⁹ presented in a gilded bowl: that some false doctrines might have a veil of piety cast over them. And what are those? The Apostle sets down, that the simplest may understand. The Apostle names not the most dangerous and deep doctrines, such as were the disputations of the schoolmen, and the like, but the most evident, such as the simplest may understand and cannot baulk, as forbidding marriage, and making a difference of meats, which God hath created to be received

³ This point is developed at greater length in Ussher, *An Answer to a Challenge Made by a Jesuite in Ireland* (Dublin, 1624), 1–3 (see *WJU*, 3:9–10), where Ussher responds to William Malone's challenge to specifically name the pope in whose reign the Christian faith was overthrown in Rome. Just as Ussher did not believe that Rome had been built in a day, he did not hold that "the great dunghill of errors, which now we see in it" was erected within the reign of any single pope. Rome's errors were not the type of flagrant heresies that would have been instantly recognisable in their frank opposition to the foundations of the faith. They were, rather, a manifestation of the "mystery of iniquity" (2 Thess. 2:7), wickedness cloaked by the semblance of piety. Their rise was insidious, their origins forgotten.

⁴ 1 Tim. 4:6.

⁵ 1 Tim. 4:1.

⁶ Ending lost to binding.

⁷ 1 Tim. 4:2.

⁸ "Martins" in MS.

⁹ See Rev. 17:4. Ending lost to binding.

SERMON AT TEMPLE CHURCH

with thanksgiving that they might believe and know the truth.¹⁰ The simple cannot comprehend the mystery of transubstantiation and other high school points: but every one can discern and conceive the doctrine named by the Apostle: as forbidding marriage, and commanding to abstain from meats, etc.

Why then, is marriage absolutely forbidden? Or to abstain from meats absolutely? No certainly, it is not so meant, for then the seducers shall have few followers. But it is meant of those, that under the colour of religion, for the taming of the flesh do teach these doctrines.

Fasting is a duty, not a thing left to a man's liberty but a thing enjoined, but under colour of fasting only to change our dishes and to make a choice of meats, which God hath commanded to be received with thanksgiving, every creature being good and sanctified by the word of God and prayer.¹¹

But this may be thought a matter not pertinent for this place and time, and you may say the minister hath a great want of matter when he brings controversies into the pulpit. But I see this error is spread abroad so far, and many have so favourable a conceit of these things, that if the Apostle to Timothy speaking of the same things said, "If thou put thy brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine where unto thou hast attained": If then Timothy did discharge his duty well in the beginning to put the brethren in remembrance when no such danger was, how much more now is it the part of a good minister when we are in the midst of these evil devices of Satan.

The man of God ought not to strive, nor to be contentious. If any man contend, we have no such custom, nor the Church of God.¹² For in matters indifferent, the man of God ought not to be so eager. There be great matters in the service of God for him to spend his spirits in.

These are the last days: let the adversary show me a matter of thirteen hundred years old: yet if it fall from the apostles' time the longer it holds, the worse it smells. For the truth was but once delivered unto the Church, if it comes afterward it comes into the Church too late to be received by a Christian from a very angel.

¹⁰ 1 Tim. 4:3.

¹¹ 1 Tim. 4:3–5.

¹² 1 Cor. 11:16.

SERMON AT TEMPLE CHURCH

This Book of the Revelation unto the Church now, is instead of the prophesies of the Old Testament to the Church of old.

I choose this place to show, what should become of this whore that shall after so long time perish.

Here is the people deceived.

Here is the means, by which they were deceived.

And the number of them that were deceived.

And the issue: these both were cast into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. That though men think it a small matter to join with popery, yet those that are branded with this mark of the beast and worship his image, professing this religion and following this spirit, they must go together with the man of sin into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. You may think we speak somewhat censoriously: but when we find it recorded plainly in the word of God who shall then bid the minister hold his peace? John is a perpetual prophet and nothing shall fall unto the Church of God unto the end of the world, but this book shall reveal it.

In the 10th of the Revelation after John had eaten the book it is said, "Thou must prophesy again before many people, and nations, and tongues and kings."¹³ That whereas before John was as it were tongue-tied, and as if he had not been, because the people understood him not, yet now God stirs up the hearts and eye[s]¹⁴ of men to discern the words of this prophecy better than formerly, and blessed are they that read and hear the words of this prophecy and keep those things which are written therein, for the time is at hand. And happy had many that had lived in the darkness of popery been, if they had read the book of the Revelation well, they had been in a blessed and happy case, and had not been then so enticed with the whore, as they have been. There is the beast that was taken and with him the false prophet. And mark in the former parts of the chapter, how they bind themselves together, and the kings of the earth their armies gathered together. There was great armies and great provision, to make war against him that sat on the horse.¹⁵ Now, say they, we shall devour them at once. But against whom are they gathered? It is against the Lord and against his Christ. In the former part of this chapter, saith John: "I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and he that sat upon him was called faithful and true; and in

¹³ Rev. 10:11.

¹⁴ Ending lost to binding.

¹⁵ Rev. 19:19.

SERMON AT TEMPLE CHURCH

righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns, and he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself, and he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called the word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness of the anger of the wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.”¹⁶

To prove that he that sits upon the white horse here is Christ, look in the 6th of the Revelation, the 2nd verse where there is mention made again of the white horse: “And I saw, and behold a white horse, and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.”

Ancient interpreters and the papists themselves confess, that Christ riding on this horse, &c. signifieth the victory that Christ made over the heathen.¹⁷ Now the second time, in the chapter of my text, where Christ comes on a white horse, he comes to conquer another enemy worse than heathenism which is popery and Antichristianism. And as Christ is brought in upon a white horse, so the Pope when he goes abroad must be carried on a white horse in imitation of Christ. This doctrine is the doctrine of devils, yet look to his authority, it is like the Lamb, so though he be the beast yet he hath two horns like the Lamb, but Christ comes to take him. Here in my text, in which first is set down, how they rustle in the church, and how they prevail and what a do they make.

Secondly, their end.

Hence are the seducers beast and false prophet. The people seduced, which are those that receive the mark of the beast, and worshipped his image. These that received not the love of the truth to be saved, it was just with God to make them a prey unto seducers, the false prophet that

¹⁶ Rev. 19:11–16.

¹⁷ The identification of the rider of the white horse in Rev. 6:2 with the victorious Christ, or the triumph of the gospel, goes back as far as Irenaeus in *Adversus Haereses* 4.21.3 (PG 7:1045A; ANF 1:493). See Primasius, *Commentaria in Apocalypsim* 2.6 (PL 68:836B–C). For an early modern example, see Francisco Ribera, *In Sacram b. Iohannis Apostoli & Euangelistae Apocalypsin Commentarii* (Salamanca, 1591), 101–103.

SERMON AT TEMPLE CHURCH

wrought miracles, and the beast. “Evil men,” saith the Apostle, “wax worse and worse deceiving and being deceived.”¹⁸ It is certain that at this day popery is brought to as high a degree of abomination as ever.

There is new orders of seducers and never known of before in former ages.

But when they are in they are in the height of their jollity and pride then the Word¹⁹ comes and takes the beast and the false prophet, both these are cast alive into a lake of fire, burning with brimstone.

A beast. What, are there any beasts in the Church of God?

Consider this book is written with the style of the prophets in the Old Testament where the church afflicted is called Zion, and Jerusalem. And the afflicting church is called Babel and Babylon, because they of the north afflicted the Church of old.²⁰ So here, in this place, the affl[icting]²¹ church is called Babel and the delivery of the true²² Church from the tyranny of the church of Rome, and so we see by beast in the old prophets in the seventh of Daniel, the third verse, it is showed where the prophet saw a rising of four great beasts. Afterward the Spirit of God in the seventeenth verse saith that these four beasts are four great kings, or states, or potentates, not meaning four individual kings. For all the world knows the meaning is four monarchies so that though the word be kings, yet by it is meant four kingdoms or monarchies. In the Book of the Revelation there is set down unto us two beasts and here we must well consider which of them is taken and cast into the lake of fire. 13th Revelation, 1: “And I saw a beast rise up out of the sea having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his head the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion, and the dragon gave him his power and his seat²³ and great authority. And I beheld another beast,” verse 11, “coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and

¹⁸ 2 Tim. 3:13.

¹⁹ Clearly “worlde” in MS but should almost certainly be read as “Word” in light of Rev. 19:13.

²⁰ For example, Jer. 1:14–15; 4:6; 6:1; 10:22; 46:20; 50:3; Ezek. 26:7.

²¹ Ending lost; “afflicting” assumed.

²² “true” repeated in MS.

²³ “and his seat” repeated in MS.

SERMON AT TEMPLE CHURCH

causeth the earth, and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast. And he doeth great wonders, for he makes fire come down from heaven on earth in the sight of men.”²⁴

So that this second beast is wholly compounded of the first beast: as in the seventh of Daniel the beast[s] came up divers one from another. The first like a lion, the second like a bear, the third like a leopard, and the fourth was “dreadful and terrible,” and “devoured and brake empires and stamped the residue with the feet of it etc., and was divers from all the beasts that were before it, and had ten horns etc.”²⁵

This prophecy of Daniel was in the days of Belshazzar, last king of Persia, so that that was not a prophecy of Persia. For that monarchy was now to end and to go out of the world: but that showeth the Roman state and government, which is compounded of all the rest because it trod down all that went before, and so is compounded of them all and is described as a great empire, compounded of all the other kingdoms, in regard it had mastered them. Then in the 13th Revelation, 11, after he had described the first beast to rise out of the sea, then he saith, another beast came “up out of the earth and had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as the dragon and exercised all the power of the first beast before him,” so the second beast must come to be where the first beast was in the Roman state. And what shall he do? He shall do great miracles and wonders, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast:

The first beast is the Roman state.

The second is that which is spoken of in the text, for the same things are said of this beast, that are spoken of the first beast.

The first beast.²⁶

The last beast that steps up, and thrusts the emperor out of his seat, is a number of the grand beast, and for his extraordinary power is a beast by himself. That this is so, consider the 17th Revelation, where it is said, that “the seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, one is, and the other is not yet come, and when he cometh, he must continue a short space, and the beast that was and is not, even he is the eighth and is of the seventh, and goeth into

²⁴ Rev. 13:1–2, 11–13.

²⁵ Dan. 7:3–7.

²⁶ Some text may have been lost following this or it could be erroneous repetition.

perdition.”²⁷ Here is the mind of him that hath wisdom, so the second beast is parcel²⁸ of the first and the woman sits upon this beast.

Now for the better understanding of this, you must consider that there are four things distinguished in the Revelation.

- 1: The harlot.
- 2: The first beast.
- 3: The second beast.
- 4: The false prophet.

The harlot or woman is plainly set down, verse 17 [17:18], to be “the great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”

So it is a city and a great city, that rules over the kings of the earth.

So then there is the woman, and the witch, etc.

As it is *urbs* [city], or as it is *civitas* [state]:²⁹ If you regard it as it is *urbs*: so the seven heads signify seven mountains on which the woman sits. But if you regard it as it is *civitas* in respect of the government, then it is seven kings, which are seven such regiments, as have no superior above them, not subordinate offices, but high offices, having none above them.

The woman sits upon the beast.

The woman is so described, that no city can be meant but Rome. What he that was so infallible, that if you missed of any doctrine, you shall surely have it at Rome?³⁰ Is she a harlot? Therefore it is rather a prejudice.

I will not stand to prove that Rome stands on seven hills.

The very description of Rome doth plainly prove it. But I will tell you an argument that I myself have seen the papists stand amazed at. The heathen writers that never knew Scriptures have described Rome in the same manner, as the Spirit of God hath described it in the Revelation in the place

²⁷ Rev. 17:9–11.

²⁸ An integral portion.

²⁹ This distinction between *urbs* and *civitas*, between the physical city and the political entity, can be found in Cicero. In a sermon on Rev. 18:4, preached at Lincoln’s Inn in 1650, Ussher attributes this “difference” to “the master of words, Tully,” i.e. Marcus Tullius Cicero (CUL, MS Mm.6.55, fol. 183v). Clear examples include *Pro Sestio* 42.91 (LCL 309:160–61) and *Academica* 2.45.137 (LCL 268:646–47).

³⁰ The sentence as given is difficult, perhaps mangled in copying. The general idea is clear enough. Ussher ventriloquizes an opponent who complains that it is Reformed prejudice to assume that Rome is the fount of theological heterodoxy and thus identify her with the harlot.

before mentioned, where it is called the great city that reigneth over the kings of the earth:

Antonius Pius, an heathen emperor, did describe Rome in a piece of coin by a city or woman crowned being seated upon seven hills, etc.³¹

And that they may not think that it is any of our own coining³² Ortelius a writer of their own hath it, and it stands printed in a corner of Ortelius over his old map of Italy, so that Rome is printed out precisely by the heathen writers that know not the Scriptures, as it is in the Revelation.³³ As a woman sitting on seven hills and ruling the whole world, and *Roma* written under it. As the ancient poet: *Septem urbs alta jugis totam quae regulat orbem*,³⁴ which proofs are so plain, that he hath no wisdom (but puts out voluntarily his own eyes) that will not lay this for a ground, that by the harlot in the Revelation is meant the city of Rome.

So now you have found the place where the beast is, but where's the time when the beast shall reign? For if you can make both time and place to concur, then the matter is done.

Rome must be the mistress of seduction. Why then, say the papists, that time of Rome is past, for that is Rome in the days of St. John in the heathenish time, before it professed Christianity. It³⁵ could not be Rome in her first days, because this prophecy is revealed unto John as a wonderful thing, and when John saw it he marvelled with a very great marvel to see Rome bloody, with the blood of the saints, and to see Rome bloody with

³¹ An apparent slip. It has not been possible to identify a coin from the reign of Antoninus Pius (138–161 AD) that matches this description. The Ortelius map (see below) indicates Vespasian (69–79 AD) on the legend and there are coins issued in his reign which precisely match the iconography found there. One example is reproduced in Caroline Vout, *The Hills of Rome: Signature of an Eternal City* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 129.

³² A rare Ussher pun.

³³ See, for example, Abraham Ortelius, *Parergon, sive Veteris Geographiae Aliquot Tabulae* (Antwerp, 1601), xviii, “Italia.”

³⁴ Propertius, *Elegies* 3.11. Ussher’s quotation does not quite match the original *Septem urbs alta jugis, toti quae praesidet orbi* (“The city set high on seven hills which presides over the whole world”; LCL 18:260–61, rev. ed. 1990). The text is given correctly in *The Judgement of the Late Arch-Bishop of Armagh, and Primate of Ireland, of Babylon (Rev. 18.4.) being the present See of Rome* (London, 1659), 4 (WJU, 12:540), so perhaps on this occasion Ussher was quoting from memory.

³⁵ “In” in MS.

SERMON AT TEMPLE CHURCH

the blood of the martyrs of Jesus would John have wondered, that heathen Rome should have presented[?]

This is a thing subject to sense, and he could not marvel at it. But that Rome Christian should imbrue³⁶ her hands in the blood of Christians this was a greater marvel. Revelation 18:2: “An angel came down from heaven having great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory. And they cried mightily with a strong voice saying Babylon the great is fallen, it is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.” Admit that it were meant that heathenish Rome was fallen and destroyed: what consequence is this, or what marvel is there that there should be such a change.

But will you have a third demonstration.

This prophecy must be here plainly meant of Rome in the last days, and that Rome must be a harlot then. For this Rome, this Babylon here spoken of by John, God hath foretold that in this prophecy it shall be overthrown and destroyed, that it shall be never re-edified again. For though Rome hath been sacked and taken many times, yet it never end that calamity and utter ruin, as not to be built again. But in the Revelation, the 18th, 22v, it is said that “a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all, and the voice of harpers and musicians and of pipers and trumpeters shall be heard no more at all in thee. And no craftsman of whatsoever craft he be shall be found any more in thee. And the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee. And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee. And the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more in thee.”³⁷

So then by these words I prove that Rome shall be restored again, and that her fornication shall continue unto the end, and to the last hour of the destruction of Rome as it is Revelation 18, 9 v, where it is said: “And the kings of the earth who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her shall bewail her and lament for her when they shall [see] the smoke of her burning standing afar off for the fear of her torment saying, Alas, Alas, the great city Babylon, that mighty city. For in one hour is thy judgement come.”³⁸ So they shall bemoan her, that did commit fornication and

³⁶ Drench or soak.

³⁷ Rev. 18:21–23.

³⁸ Rev. 18:9–10.

THE REDUCTION OF EPISCOPACY (1657)

The reduction of episcopacy unto the form of synodical government, received in the ancient Church; proposed in the year 1641 as an expedient for the prevention of those troubles, which afterwards did arise about the matter of church government.

To the reader.

The original of this was given me by the most reverend Primate, some few years before his death, wrote throughout with his own hand, and of late I have found it subscribed by himself, and Doctor Holsworth, and with a marginal note at the first proposition, which I have also added.¹ If it may now answer the expectation of many pious, and prudent persons, who have

¹ [The text followed here is that found in *The Judgement of the Late Arch-Bishop of Ar-magh, ... Of the Extent of Christs death, and satisfaction, &c.* (ed. Nicholas Bernard; London, 1657; published again in 1658). Bernard had already issued *The Reduction of Episcopacie* as a separate treatise in 1656 on the heels of another edition from earlier the same year. Bernard's 1656 preface assures the reader that his copy of the manuscript was in Ussher's own hand "according to his own last correction." His most serious complaint about the earlier edition is the lack of chronological reference. The reader could be easily misled into thinking that these proposals spoke to the problems of 1656 rather than the crisis of 1641, "as an expedient of the prevention of what fell out afterwards." Amongst other changes he removes the marginal notes pointing out the parallels with the Scottish system of church government from the proposals in line with Ussher's wishes: "these by his orders to me were to be wholly left out, if ever they should be thought fit to be published." This, of course, is an admission that these notes were present in the manuscript copies that were circulating, presumably part of the original. The tract was published again in London (1679, as *Episcopal and Presbyterial Government Conjoyned*), and Edinburgh (1689, 1703, and 1706), and also in Latin with extensive commentary by Johannes Hoornbeek at Utrecht (*De Reductione Episcopatus, ad formam regiminis synodici, in antiqua ecclesia recepti*, 1661). It can be found in *WJU*, 12:527–36.]

desired the publishing of it, as a seasonable preparative to some moderation in the midst of those extremes, which this age abounds with, it will attain the end intended by the author; and it is likely to be more operative, by the great reputation he had, and hath in the hearts of all good men, being far from the least suspicion to be biased by any private ends, but only aiming at the reducing of order, peace, and unity, which God is the author of, and not of confusion.² For the recovery of which, it were to be wished, that such as do consent in substantials for matter of doctrine, would consider of some conjunction in point of discipline, that private interests and circumstantial, might not keep them thus far asunder.

N. Bernard

Gray's Inn

Octob. 13th. 1657.

Episcopal and Presbyterian Government Conjoined

BY ORDER of the Church of England, all presbyters are charged “to administer the doctrine and sacraments, and the discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this realm hath received the same”;³ and that they might the better understand what the “Lord hath commanded” therein, the exhortation of St. Paul to the elders of the church of Ephesus is appointed to be read unto them at the time of their ordination: “Take heed unto your selves, and to all the flock among whom the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers to rule⁴ the congregation of God, which he hath purchased with his blood.”⁵

Of the many elders, who in common thus ruled the church of Ephesus, there was one president, whom our Saviour in his epistle unto this

² [1 Cor. 14:33.]

³ The book of ordination [‘The Form of Ordering Priests’ (1559), in *Liturgical Services: Liturgies and Occasional Forms of Prayer Set Forth in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, ed. William Keatinge Clay (Cambridge: Parker Society, 1847), 290].

⁴ ποιμαίνειν so taken in Matt. 2:6 and Rev. 12:5 and 19:15.

⁵ Acts 20:28 [See Clay, ed., *Liturgical Services*, 284].

church in a peculiar manner styleth “the angel of the Church of Ephesus”;⁶ and Ignatius in another epistle, written about twelve years after unto the same church, calleth the bishop thereof. Betwixt the bishop and the presbytery⁷ of that church, what an harmonious consent there was in the ordering of the church government, the same Ignatius doth fully there declare,⁸ by the presbytery, with St. Paul,⁹ understanding the community of the rest of the presbyters, or elders, who then had a hand not only in the delivery of the doctrine, and sacraments, but also in the administration of the discipline of Christ. For further proof of which, we have that known testimony of Tertullian in his general *Apology* for Christians: “In the church are used exhortations, chastisements, and divine censure; for judgment is given with great advice as among those who are certain they are in the sight of God, and it is the chiefest foreshowing of the judgment which is to come, if any man have so offended, that he be banished from the communion of prayer, and of the assembly, and of all holy fellowship. The presidents that bear rule therein are certain approved elders, who have obtained this honour not by reward, but by good report,”¹⁰ who were no other, as he himself intimates elsewhere, but those from whose hands they used to receive the sacrament of the Eucharist.¹¹

For with the bishop, who was the chief president (and therefore styled by the same Tertullian in another place, *Summus Sacerdos* [“chief priest”] for distinction’s sake),¹² the rest of the dispensers of the word and

⁶ Rev. 2:1.

⁷ [Elrington gives as “presbyter,” in *WJU*, 12:532.]

⁸ [Ignatius, *Ad Ephesios* 4; *PG* 5:648A–B; *ANF* 1:50–51.]

⁹ 1 Tim. 4:14.

¹⁰ *Ibidem etiam exhortationes, castigationes et censura divina; nam et judicatur magno cum pondere, ut apud certos de Dei conspectu, summumque futuri iudicii praedictum est, si quis ita deliquerit, ut a communicatione orationis, et conventus, et omnis sancti commercii relegatur; praesident probati quique seniores, honorem istum non pretio, sed testimonio adepti.* Tertullian, *Apologeticus Adversus Gentes Pro Christianis* 39 [PL 1:469A–70A {532A–533A}; *ANF* 3:46].

¹¹ *Nec de aliorum manibus quam praesidentium sumimus* [“We receive [the sacrament of the Eucharist] from the hands of none but the presidents”]. Idem, *De Corona Militis* 3 [PL 2:79A–B {99A}; *ANF* 3:94; *manu* in original].

¹² *Dandi quidem baptismi habet jus summus sacerdos, qui est episcopus, dehinc presbyteri et diaconi* [“The chief priest, who is the bishop, has, of course, the right of conferring baptism, then the presbyters and deacons”]. Idem, *De Baptismo*, 17 [*CCSL* 1:291; *ANF* 3:677].

sacraments joined in the common government of the church; and therefore, where in matters of ecclesiastical judicature, Cornelius bishop of Rome used the received form of “gathering together the presbytery,”¹³ of what persons that did consist, Cyprian sufficiently declareth, when he wisheth him to read his letters “to the flourishing clergy, which there did preside,” or rule, “with him”;¹⁴ the presence of the clergy being thought to be so requisite in matters of episcopal audience, that in the fourth council of Carthage it was concluded, “That the bishop might hear no man’s cause without the presence of the clergy: and that otherwise the bishop’s sentence should be void, unless it were confirmed by the presence of the clergy”;¹⁵ which we find also to be inserted into the canons of Egbert, who was Archbishop of York in the Saxon times,¹⁶ and afterwards into the body of the canon law itself.¹⁷

True it is, that in our church this kind of presbyterial government hath been long disused, yet seeing it still professeth that every pastor hath a right to rule the church (from whence the name of rector¹⁸ also was given at first unto him) and to administer the discipline of Christ, as well as to dispense the doctrine and sacraments, and the restraint of the exercise of that right proceedeth only from the custom now received in this realm, no man can doubt, but by another law of the land, this hindrance may be well removed. And how easily this ancient form of government by the united suffrages of the clergy might be revived again, and with what little show of alteration the synodical conventions of the pastors of every parish might be accorded with the presidency of the bishops of each diocese and province,

¹³ *Omni actu ad me perlato placuit contrahi presbyterium* [“The news being brought before me of all these proceedings, I decided to gather together the presbytery”]. Cornelius to Cyprian, in Cyprian, *Epistolae* 46.2 [PL 4:341B {351A}; See 3:719B–720A {742A}; ANF 5:323, where numbered 45.2].

¹⁴ *Florentissimo illic clero tecum praesidenti*. Cyprian to Cornelius, in Cyprian, *Epistolae* 55.20 [PL 4:348B–C {358B–C}; See 3:828A {854A}; ANF 5:346, where numbered 54.20].

¹⁵ *Ut episcopus nullius causam audiat absque praesentia clericorum suorum, alioquin irrita erit sententia episcopi nisi clericorum praesentia confirmetur*. Fourth Council of Carthage, 23 [e.g. PL 84:202B].

¹⁶ Egbertus Eboracensis, *Excerptiones* 45 [PL 89:385C].

¹⁷ Gratian, *Decreti Pars Secunda* 15, q. 7 [PL 187:987A].

¹⁸ [Rector (a guider, leader, director, ruler, master), from *rego* (to keep straight or from going wrong, to lead straight; to guide, conduct, direct). *A Latin Dictionary*, ed. Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879), s.v. rector, rego.]

the indifferent reader may quickly perceive by the perusal of the ensuing propositions.

I

In every parish,¹⁹ the rector, or incumbent pastor, together with the church-wardens and sidesmen, may every week take notice of such as live scandalously in that congregation, who are to receive such several admonitions and reproofs, as the quality of their offence shall deserve; and if by this means they cannot be reclaimed, they may be presented to the next monthly synod, and in the mean time debarred by the pastor from access unto the Lord's table.

II

Whereas by a statute in the six-and-twentieth year of King Henry the eighth, revived in the first year of Queen Elizabeth, suffragans are appointed to be erected in 26 several places of this kingdom,²⁰ the number of them might very well be conformed unto the number of the several rural deaneries, into which every diocese is subdivided; which being done, the suffragan supplying the place of those, who in the ancient church were called *chorepiscopi*,²¹ might every month assemble a synod of all the rectors,²² or incumbent pastors within the precinct, and according to the major part of their voices, conclude all matters that shall be brought into debate before them.

To this synod the rector and church-wardens might present such impenitent persons, as by admonitions and suspension from the sacrament would not be reformed; who if they should still remain contumacious and

¹⁹ How the Church might synodically be governed, archbishops and bishops being still retained. [Bernard's marginal note. But in the first edition of 1656 one finds instead the first of a series of notes setting forth parallels between Ussher's scheme and the presbyterian government of the Scottish church: "The parochial government answerable to the church session in Scotland."]

²⁰ [*The Statutes: Revised Edition*, Vol. 1. Henry III to James II, A.D. 1235/6–1685 (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1870), 447–49, 578.]

²¹ [Once numerous, these were bishops of country districts, in full episcopal orders but with limited powers and acting under their diocesans. ODCC, s.v. *chorepiscopus*.]

²² [Margin of first 1656 edition: "The presbyterial monthly synods answer to the Scottish presbyteries or ecclesiastical meetings."]

incorrigible, the sentence of excommunication might be decreed against them by the synod, and accordingly be executed in the parish where they lived. Hitherto also all things that concerned the parochial ministers might be referred, whether they did touch their doctrine, or their conversation, as also the censure of all new opinions, heresies, and schisms, which did arise within that circuit, with liberty of appeal, if need so require, unto the diocesan synod.

III

The diocesan synod²³ might be held once or twice in the year, as it should be thought most convenient. Therein all the suffragans, and the rest of the rectors, or incumbent pastors, or a certain select number of every deanery within the diocese, might meet, with whose consent, or the major part of them, all things might be concluded by the bishop, or superintendent²⁴ (call him whether you will), or in his absence, by one of the suffragans, whom he shall depute in his stead to be moderator of that assembly.

Here all matters of greater moment might be taken into consideration, and the orders of the monthly synods revised, and, if need be, reformed; and if here also any matter of difficulty could not receive a full determination, it might be referred to the next provincial, or national synod.

IV

The provincial synod²⁵ might consist of all the bishops and suffragans, and such other of the clergy as should be elected out of every diocese within the province. The archbishop of either province might be the moderator of this meeting, or in his room some one of the bishops appointed by him, and all matters be ordered therein by common consent as in the former assemblies.

²³ [Margin of first 1656 edition: “Diocesan synods answerable to the provincial synods in Scotland.”]

²⁴ Ἐπισκοποῦντες, *id est, superintendentes; unde et nomen episcopi tractum est* [“Ἐπισκοποῦντες, that is, overseeing, and from which the name overseer [or bishop, ἐπίσκοπος] is derived”]. Jerome, *Epist. ad Evagrium* [the recipient has more recently been identified as Evangelus; *PL* 22:1193; *NPNF2* 6:288].

²⁵ [Margin of first 1656 edition: “The provincial and national synod answerable to the General Assembly in Scotland.”]

This synod might be held every third year, and if the parliament do then sit, according to the act of a triennial parliament, both the archbishops and provincial synods of the land might join together, and make up a national council, wherein all appeals from inferior synods might be received, all their acts examined and all ecclesiastical constitutions which concern the state of the church of the whole nation established.

We are of the judgment that the form of government here proposed is not in any point repugnant to the Scripture, and that the suffragans mentioned in the second proposition may lawfully use the power both of jurisdiction and ordination, according to the word of God, and the practice of the ancient Church.

Ja. Armachanus.

Rich. Holdsworth.²⁶

[Bernard:] After the proposal of this, An. 1641, many queries were made, and doubts in point of conscience resolved by the Primate, diverse passages of which he hath left under his own hand, showing his pious endeavours to peace and unity, which how far it then prevailed is out of season now to relate; only I wish it might yet be thought of, to the repairing of the breach, which this division hath made, and that those, who are by their office messengers of peace, and whose first word to each house should be peace,²⁷ would earnestly promote it, within the walls of their mother church, wherein they were educated, and not thus by contending about circumstantial²⁸ lose the substance, and make our selves a prey to the adversary of both, who rejoice in their hearts, saying, “so would we have it.”²⁹

²⁶ [Richard Holdsworth (1590–1649), Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge from 1637 to 1643. Later Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity and Vice-Chancellor, and a member of the Westminster Assembly.]

²⁷ [Luke 10:5.]

²⁸ [Matters incidental, not essential.]

²⁹ [Ps. 35:25, the words of those who delight in David’s distress.]

ABOUT THE DAVENANT INSTITUTE

The Davenant Institute aims to retrieve the riches of classical Protestantism in order to renew and build up the contemporary church: building networks of friendship and collaboration among evangelical scholars committed to Protestant resourcement, publishing resources old and new, and offering training and discipleship for Christians thirsting after wisdom.

We are a nonprofit organization supported by your tax-deductible gifts.
Learn more about us, and donate, at www.davenantinstitute.org.

MORE FROM DAVENANT PRESS

RICHARD HOOKER MODERNIZATION PROJECT

Radicalism: When Reform Becomes Revolution

Divine Law and Human Nature

The Word of God and the Words of Man

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION

Reformation Theology: A Reader of Primary Sources with Introductions

DAVENANT GUIDES

Jesus and Pacifism: An Exegetical and Historical Investigation

The Two Kingdoms: A Guide for the Perplexed

Natural Law: A Brief Introduction and Biblical Defense

DAVENANT RETRIEVALS

People of the Promise: A Mere Protestant Ecclesiology

DAVENANT ENGAGEMENTS

Enduring Divine Absence: The Challenge of Modern Atheism

CONVIVIUM PROCEEDINGS

For the Healing of the Nations: Essays on Creation, Redemption, and Neo-Calvinism

For Law and for Liberty: Essays on the Trans-Atlantic Legacy of Protestant Political Thought

Beyond Calvin: Essays on the Diversity of the Reformed Tradition

God of Our Fathers: Classical Theism for the Contemporary Church

MONTHLY PUBLICATIONS

Ad Fontes: A Journal of Protestant Resourcement

Davenant Digests: Protestant Wisdom in Focus for the Whole Church