# Answer to the Humble Desires of the Covenanters (1639)

Charles I

## Transcript

British Library, Additional MS 11045, ff. 31r–32r

**31r**

In my last I sett downe in breefe the propositions, and humble desires of the Covenanters, with the kings aunsweare more breifly, which I will nowe sett downe at large that the true manner of his Ma[jes]t[y']s resolution maye bee seene, which is as followeth: wee haveing considered the papers, and humble petitions presented to us, [*Left margin:* Letter from E R] by those of our subiects of Scotland, whoe are admitted to attend our pleasure in the Campe, and after a full heareing by our selfe of all that they could saye, or alleadge thereupon, haveing communicated the same to our Counsell of both kingdomes, upon mature deliberation with their vnanimous advise, wee haue thought fitt to give his iust and gratious aunsweare: That though wee cannot condiscend to ratifie and approve the Acts of the pretended Assembly at Glasco, for the reasons contayned in our severall proclamations, and for many other grave, and waighty considerations, which haue happened both before, and since much importing the honour, and security of that true monarchicall goverment lineally discended uppon vs from soe many of our Ancestors; yet such is our gratious pleasure, that not with standing the many disorders committed of late, wee are pleased not onely to confirme, and approve our Commissioners declaration given vnder his hand, and by our commaund in the pretended generall Assembly at Glasco, anent the waye takeing of the service booke, booke of Cannons high Commission, and dispensing with the five Articles of Pearth, And that noe other oath bee administred to ministers at their admission, then what is prescribd by Act of Parliament And that all, and every one of the present B[isho]pps, and their successors shall bee aunswearable, and accordingly from tyme to tyme sensurable according to their merritts by the generall Assembly: But alsoe wee are further gratiously pleasd to declare, and assure that according to the petitioners humble desires, all matters ecclesiasticall shall bee determined by the Assembly of the Kirke, And matters civill by the Parliament, and other inferiour Iudicatories established by lawe, which accordingly shall bee kept once a yeare, or soe oft as the affaires of the kirke, and kingdome shall require: And for setling the present distractions of that our auntient kingdome, our will, and pleasure is, That a free generall Assembly bee kept at Edenburge daye of next

**31v**

ensueing for ratifieing of what shall bee concluded in the said Assembly, and setling such other things, as maye conduce to the peace, and good of our native kingdome, and there in an Act of pardon ~~Parliament~~ and of oblivion to bee passed: And where as wee are further humbly desired that our shipps, and forces by land bee recalld, and all persons, goods, and shipps restored, and they made safe from Invation: wee are gratiously pleased to decalre, that vpon their disarmeing, and disbanding of their forces, dissolveing, and discharging all their pretended Tables, and conventicles, and restoreing vnto vs all our Castles, forts, ammunition of all sorts, and likewise our royall honours, And to every one of our good subiects their liberty, lands, houses, goods, and meanes what soever taken, and detayned from them since the last pretended gen[er]all Assembly, wee will presently thereafter recall our

Fleete, and retire our land forces, and cause restitution to bee made of all ~~{*gap: illegible*}~~ persons, of their shipps, and goods detayned, and arrested since the fore said tyme, where by it maye appeare that our intention of takeing armes was noe wayes for invadeing of our native kingdome, or to innovate their Religion, or lawes, but meerely for the mayntayning, and vindicateing of $^{our}$ royall Authority: And since that hereby it doth plainely appeare that wee neither have, nor doe intend any alteration in Religion, or lawe, but that both shall bee mayntayned by vs in their full integrety, wee expect the performance of that humble and dutifull obedience, which becometh loyall, and dutifull subiects and as in their severall protestations, they haue often promised And as wee haue iust reason to beleive, that to our peaceable, and well affected subiects, this will bee satisfaction, soe wee take God, and the world to wittnesse, that whatsoever ~~{*gap: illegible*}~~ calamity shall come by our necessitated suppressing of the Insolencies of such as shall continue in their disobedient courses, it is not occasioned by us, but by their owne procurements: This was the kings aunsweare to their humble propositions, which were to haue bine agreed vppon Mondaye the last weeke, but there was much adoe, whether there should bee B[isho]pps yea, or noe, The Kinge prest to haue Bi[sho]pps, and the scotch Commissioners, (Mr. Hinderson the moderator, being nowe admitted for one) most humblie presented it to his Ma[jes]tie, that the order of B[isho]pps was against the lawe of the land, which his Ma[jes]tie had promisd to mayntayne, wherefore, at last (as I heare) his Ma[jes]tie was gratiously $^{pleasd}$ to haue that, about b[isho]pps, to bee disputed in their next Assembly to bee held the 6th of August at Edenburge, and the Parliament the 20th followeing. Then, the word pretended generall Assembly at Glasco, had almost broake off the treaty, The Kinge would haue that a pretended generall Assembly, but the Commissioners prest to leave the word pretended out, whoe hath prevaild, I am not certaine, but I heare the kinge hath his desire, as is fitt he should: nowe for their meetings, treateings, consultations, and convocations, they are to haue none but such as are warranted by acts of Parliaments: Tuesdaie last weeke all things were agreed vppon according to the foresaid aunsweare for vppon wensdaie lord Marquesse Hambleton went to Edenburge to take possession of the Castle there, and to give order to the Fleete in the in the Freith to retire: the same daye, the kinge sent severall persons to take possession of all the forts, and Castles in the hands of the Covenanters: This last Sundaye, the kinges order was read at the Counsell table

**32r**

here, to sett all scotch men, nowe in prison, at liberty, and to free all their shipps and goods arrested: This agreement was proclaymed in both armyes, The scotch army gave {} a greate shoute, crying God save the kinge, and the Devill take all their B[isho]pps: It was desired, that the kinge would haue pleasd to come into the scotch armye, that all the collours might bee layd downe at his feete, but some reasons were alleadged, that hee went not; lord Rothus, and Mr Hinderson, as it is commonly reported, haue gaind a greate reputation by their most humble mannageing of this treaty, for although they p[er]formd every poynt of their Commission to their best advantage, yet they did it with that humillity, and temper, as his Ma[jes]tie was well pleasd with the manner of it: In the mannageing of this treaty it come to bee a question made by his Ma[jes]tie whether an Assembly might bee kept without him, which lord Rothus, and Mr Hinderson cleard both of them concludeing that by their lawes, It might bee kept without his Ma[jes]t[ies] presence, but yet much better with it: Alsoe, the kinge demaunded, or rather said, yee will excommunicate mee alsoe in your Assembly; noe,

saith lord Rothus, It is not in the power of an Assembly to excommunicate your Ma[jes]tie because you are soe iust soe pious, and soe vertuous a Prince, and this was Mr Hindersons opinion alsoe; Mr Hinderson had some ~~oppertunty~~ oppertunity to touch uppon the kings declaration, the printed booke, that relates all passages of scotch disorders published by his Ma[jes]tie and by the waye, hee insinuates yt to his Ma[jes]tie: That if soe bee hee were sicke a man, as that booke makes him to bee, hee were verie vnworthy to appeare in his Ma[jes]t[ies] presence: Thursdaie last, the scotch Army disbanded, and the english armye the Saterdaye followeing

## Other manuscript witnesses

- British Library, Additional MS 28011, ff. 42r–v
- British Library, Sloane MS 650
- Hatfield House, CP 131, item 73, ff.ir–iir
- Northamptonshire Record Office, IC 3553

© 2017–2026 University of Birmingham, University of Bristol. Provided under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) licence.

https://mpese.ac.uk/t/CharlesAnswerCovenanters1639.html