

# THE ACTS AND MONUMENTS OF JOHN FOXE:

A NEW AND COMPLETE EDITION:

WITH A PRELIMINARY DISSERTATION,

BY THE

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The Two Examinations of the worthy Servant of God. Mistress  
Anne Askew, Daughter of Sir William Askew, knight, of  
Lincolnshire.

MARTYRED IN SMITHFIELD FOR THE CONSTANT AND FAITHFUL  
TESTIMONY OF THE TRUTH.

Here next follow the true examinations of Anne Askew, which here thou shalt have, gentle reader, according as she wrote them with her own hand, at the instant desire of certain faithful men and women: by which, if thou mark diligently the communications, both of her, and of her examiners, thou mayest easily perceive the tree by the fruit, and the man by his work.

The First Examination before the Inquisitors, A.D. 1545.

To satisfy your expectation, good people (said she), this was my first examination, in the year of our Lord 1545, and in the month of March.

First Christopher Dare examined me at Sadler's Hall, being one of the quest, and asked, if I did not believe that the sacrament hanging over the altar was the very body of Christ really. Then I demanded this question of him, Wherefore was St. Stephen stoned to death? and he said, he could not tell. Then I answered that no more would I assoil [assuage] his vain question.

Secondly, he said, that there was a woman who did testify that I should read, how God was not in temples made with hands. Then I showed him chapters vii. and xvii. of the Acts of the Apostles; what Stephen and Paul had said therein. Whereupon he asked me how I took those sentences? I answered, I would not throw pearls amongst swine, for acorns were good enough.

Thirdly, he asked me, wherefore I said, I had rather to read five lines in the Bible, than to hear five masses in the temple. I confessed that I said no less; not for the dispraise of either the epistle or the gospel, but because the one did greatly edify me, and the other nothing at all. As St. Paul doth witness in 1 Cor. xiv., where he saith, 'If the trumpet giveth an uncertain sound, who will prepare himself to the battle?'

Fourthly, he laid unto my charge, that I should say, If an ill priest ministered, it was the devil and not God.

My answer was, that I never spake any such thing. But this was my saying: that whosoever he were that ministered unto me, his ill conditions could

not hurt my faith, but in spirit I received, nevertheless, the body and blood of Christ.

Fifthly, he asked me what I said concerning confession. I answered him my meaning, which was, as St. James saith, that every man ought to acknowledge his faults to other, and the one to pray for the other.

Sixthly, he asked me what I said to the king's book: and I answered him that I could say nothing to it, because I never saw it.

Seventhly, he asked me if I had the Spirit of God in me. I answered, if I had not, I was but a reprobate or castaway.

Then he said, he had sent for a priest to examine me, who was there at hand. The priest asked me what I said to the sacrament of the altar, and required much to know my meaning therein. But I desired him again to hold me excused concerning that matter: none other answer would I make him, because I perceived him to be a papist.

Eighthly, he asked me, if I did not think that private masses did help the souls departed. I said, it was great idolatry to believe more in them, than in the death which Christ died for us.

Then they had me thence unto my lord mayor, and he examined me, as they had before, and I answered him directly in all things, as I answered the quest before. Besides this, my lord mayor laid one thing to my charge, which was never spoken of me, but by them; and that was, whether a mouse, eating the host, received God or no? This question did I never ask, but indeed they asked it of me, whereunto I made them no answer, but smiled.

Then the bishop's chancellor rebuked me, and said that I was much to blame for uttering the Scriptures. For St. Paul, he said, forbade women to speak or to talk of the word of God. I answered him that I knew Paul's meaning as well as he, which is, in 1 Cor. xiv., that a woman ought not to speak in the congregation by the way of teaching: and then I asked him how many women he had seen go into the pulpit and preach? He said he never saw any. Then I said, he ought to find no fault in poor women, except they had offended the law.

Then my lord mayor commanded me to ward. I asked him if sureties would not serve me; and he made me short answer, that he would take none. Then was I had to the Compter, and there remained eleven days, no friend admitted to speak with me. But, in the meantime, there was a priest sent unto me, who said that he was commanded of the bishop to examine me, and to give no good counsel, which he did not. But, first, he asked me for what cause I was put in the Compter; and I told him, I could not tell. Then he said, it was great pity that I should be there without cause, and concluded, that he was very sorry for me.

Secondly he said, it was told him that I should deny the sacrament of the altar. And I answered him again, that what I had said, I had said.

Thirdly he asked me, if I were content to be shriven. I told him, so that I might have one of these three, that is to say, Dr. Crome, sir Guillam, or Huntington, I was contented, because I knew them to be men of wisdom. As for you, or any other, I will not dispraise, because I know you not. Then, said he, 'I would not have you think but that I, or any other that shall be brought you, shall be as honest as they: for if we were not, you may be sure the king would not suffer us to preach.' Then I answered with the saying of Solomon, 'By communing with the wise I may learn wisdom, but by talking with a fool I shall take scathe.' [Prov. i. 5.]

Fourthly, he asked, If the host should fall, and a beast did eat it, whether the beast did receive God or no? I answered, 'Seeing that you have taken the pains to ask the question, I desire you also to assail it yourself: for I will not do it, because I perceive you come to tempt me.' And he said it was against the order of schools, that he who asked the question should answer it. I told him I was but a woman, and knew not the course of schools.

Fifthly he asked me, if I intended to receive the sacrament at Easter, or no? I answered, that else I were no christian woman and thereat I did rejoice, that the time was so near at hand. And then he departed thence with many fair words.

The 23d day of March, my cousin Brittainne came into the Compter unto me, and asked me whether I might be put to bail, or no? Then went he immediately unto my lord mayor, desiring him to be so good unto me, that I might be bailed. My lord answered him and said, that he would be glad to do the best that in him lay; howbeit he could not bail me, without the consent of a spiritual officer: requiring him to go and speak with the chancellor of London. For, he said, like as he could not commit me to prison without the consent of a spiritual officer, no more could he bail me without the consent of the same.

So, upon that, he went to the chancellor, requiring of him as he did before of my lord mayor. He answered him, that the matter was so heinous, that he durst not of himself do it, without my lord of London were made privy thereunto. But, he said, he would speak unto my lord in it, and bade him repair unto him the next morrow, and he should well know my lord's pleasure. And upon the morrow after, he came thither, and spake both with the chancellor and with my lord bishop of London. The bishop declared unto him, that he was very well contented that I should come forth to communication; and appointed me to appear before him the next day after, at three of the clock at afternoon. Moreover he said unto him, that he would there should be at the examination such learned men as I was affectioned to, that they might see, and also make report, that I was handled with no rigour. He an-

swered him, that he knew no man that I had more affection to, than to other. Then said the bishop, 'Yes, as I understand, she is affectioned to Dr. Crowe, sir Guillam Whitehead, and Huntington, that they might hear the matter, for she doth know them to be learned and of a godly judgment.' Also he required my cousin Brittainne, that he should earnestly persuade me to utter even the very bottom of my heart; and he sware by his fidelity, that no man should take any advantage of my words, neither yet would he lay ought to my charge for any thing that I should there speak; but, if I said any manner of thing amiss, he, with others more, would be glad to reform me therein, with most godly counsel.

On the morrow after, the bishop of London sent for me at one of the clock, his hour being appointed at three; and as I came before him, he said he was very sorry for my trouble, and desired to know my opinions in such matters as were laid against me. He required me also, in any wise, boldly to utter the secrets of my heart, bidding me not to fear in any point, for whatsoever I did say in his house, no man should hurt me for it. I answered, forasmuch as your lordship appointed three of the clock, and my friends will not come till that hour, I desire you to pardon me of giving answer till they come. Then said he, that he thought it meet to send for those four men who were aforenamed and appointed. Then I desired him not to put them to pain, for it should not need, because the two gentlemen which were my friends, were able enough to testify what I should say.

Anon after he went into his gallery with Master Spilman, and willed him in any wise that he should exhort me to utter all that I thought. In the meanwhile he commanded his archdeacon to commune with me, who said unto me, 'Mistress, wherefore are you accused and thus troubled here before the bishop?' To whom I answered again and said, 'Sir, ask, I pray you, my accusers; for I know not as yet.' Then took he my book out of my hand, and said, 'Such books as this, have brought you to the trouble that you are in. Beware,' said he, 'beware, for he that made this book, and was the author thereof, was a heretic, I warrant you, and burned in Smithfield.' And then I asked him, if he were certain and sure that it was true which he had spoken. And he said, he knew well the book was of John Frith's making. Then I asked him if he were not ashamed to judge of the book before he saw it within, or yet knew the truth thereof. I said also, that such unadvised hasty judgment is a token apparent of a very slender wit. Then I opened the book and showed it him. He said he thought it had been another, for he could find no fault therein. Then I desired him no more to be so unadvisedly rash and swift in judgment, till he thoroughly knew the truth: and so he departed from me.

Immediately after came my cousin Brittainne in, with divers others, as Master Hall of Gray's Inn, and such other like. Then my lord of London

persuaded my cousin Brittainne, as he had done oft before, which was, that I should utter the bottom of my heart in any wise. My lord said after that unto me, that he would I should credit the counsel of such as were my friends and well-willers in this behalf, which was, that I should utter all things that burdened my conscience; for he assured me, that I should not need to stand in doubt to say any thing. For, like as he promised them (he said), he promised me, and would perform it; which was, that neither he, nor any man for him, should take me at advantage for any word that I should speak: and therefore he bade me say my mind without fear. I answered him, that I had nought to say, for my conscience (I thanked God) was burdened with nothing.

Then brought he forth this unsavoury similitude; that if a man had a wound, no wise surgeon would minister help unto it before he had seen it uncovered. 'In like case,' saith he, 'can I give you no good counsel, unless I know wherewith your conscience is burdened.' I answered, that my conscience was clear in all things, and to lay a plaster unto the whole skin, it might appear much folly.

'Then you drive me,' saith he, 'to lay to your charge your own report, which is this: you did say, he that doth receive the sacrament by the hands of an ill priest, or a sinner, received the devil, and not God.' To that I answered, 'I never spake such words: but, as I said before, both to the quest and to my lord mayor, so say I now again, that the wickedness of the priest should not hurt me, but in spirit and faith I received no less than the body and blood of Christ.' Then said the bishop unto me, 'What saying is this, in spirit? I will not take you at that advantage.' Then I answered, 'My lord, without faith and spirit, I cannot receive him worthily.'

Then he laid unto me, that I should say, that the sacrament remaining in the pix, was but bread. I answered that I never said so; but indeed the quest asked me such a question, whereunto I would not answer (I said) till such a time as they had assoiled me this question of mine, Wherefore Stephen was stoned to death? They said, they knew not. Then said I again, no more would I tell them what it was.

Then said my lord unto me, that I had alleged a certain text of the Scripture. I answered that I alleged none other but St. Paul's own saying to the Athenians, in the 17th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, that 'God dwelleth not in temples made with hands.' Then asked he me, what my faith and belief was in that matter? I answered him, 'I believe as the Scripture doth teach me.'

Then inquired he of me, 'What if the Scripture doth say, that it is the body of Christ?' 'I believe,' said I, as the Scripture doth teach me.' Then asked he again, 'What if the Scripture doth say, that it is not the body of Christ?' My answer was still, believe as the Scripture informeth me.' And upon this argument he tarried a great while, to have driven me to make him

an answer to his mind: howbeit, I would not, but concluded this with him, that I believed therein, and in all other things, as Christ and his holy apostles did leave them.

Then he asked me, why I had so few words? And I answered, 'God hath given me the gift of knowledge, but not of utterance: and Solomon saith, That a woman of few words is the gift of God.' [Prov. ix. 13.]

Thirdly, my lord laid unto my charge, that I should say that the mass was superstitious, wicked, and no better than idolatry. I answered him, 'No, I said not so. Howbeit I say the quest did ask me whether private mass did relieve souls departed or no? Unto whom then I answered, O lord! what idolatry is this, that we should rather believe in private masses, than in the healthsome death of the dear Son of God?' Then said my lord again, 'What an answer is that!' 'Though it be but mean,' said I, 'yet is it good enough for the question.'

Then I told my lord, that there was a priest who did hear what I said there before my lord mayor and them. With that the chancellor answered, Who was the same priest? 'So she spake it in very deed,' saith he, 'before my lord mayor and me.'

Then were there certain priests, as Dr. Standish and others, which tempted me much to know my mind. And I answered them always thus: 'That I said to my lord of London, I have said.' Then Dr. Standish desired my lord to bid me say my mind concerning the same text of St. Paul's [I answered, that it was against St. Paul's]<sup>1</sup> learning, that I, being a woman, should interpret the Scriptures; especially where so many wise learned men were.

Then my lord of London said, he was informed that one should ask of me, if I would receive the sacrament at Easter, and I made a mock of it.

Then I desired that mine accuser might come forth; which my lord would not. But he said again unto me, 'I sent one to give you good counsel, and at the first word you called him papist.' That I denied not, for I perceived he was no less, yet made I him none answer unto it.

Then he rebuked me, and said that I should report, that there were bent against me threescore priests at Lincoln. 'Indeed,' quoth I, 'I said so. For my friends told me, if I did come to Lincoln, the priests would assault me, and put me to great trouble, as thereof they had made their boast: and when I heard it, I went thither indeed, not being afraid, because I knew my matter to be good. Moreover I remained there nine days, to see what would be said unto me. And as I was in the minster, reading upon the Bible, they resorted unto me by two and two, by five and by six, minding to have spoken unto me, yet went they their ways again without words speaking.'

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<sup>1</sup> These words are supplied from 'The First Examinasyon of Anne Askew, with the Elucydicyon of Johan Bale,' (16mo. Marpurg. 1546), p. 32.—Ed.

Then my lord asked if there were not one that did speak unto me. I told him, yes; that there was one of them at last, who did speak to me indeed. And my lord then asked me what he said? And I told him his words were of small effect, so that I did not now remember them. Then said my lord, 'There are many that read and know the Scripture, and yet follow it not, nor live thereafter.' I said again, 'My lord! I would wish that all men knew my conversation and living in all points; for I am sure myself this hour, that there are none able to prove any dishonesty by me. If you know that any can do it, I pray you bring them forth.' Then my lord went away, and said he would entitle somewhat of my meaning, and so he wrote a great circumstance: but what it was, I have not all in my memory; for he would not suffer me to have the copy thereof. Only do I remember this small portion of it:

'Be it known,' saith he, 'of all men, that I, Anne Askew, do confess this to be my faith and belief, notwithstanding many reports made afore to the contrary. I believe that they which are houseled at the hands of a priest, whether his conversation be good or not, do receive the body and blood of Christ in substance really. Also, I do believe, that after the consecration, whether it be received or reserved, it is no less than the very body and blood of Christ in substance. Finally, I do believe in this and all other sacraments of holy church in all points, according to the old catholic faith of the same. In witness whereof, I, the said Anne, have subscribed my name.'

There was somewhat more in it, which because I had not the copy, I cannot now remember. Then he read it to me, and asked me if I did agree to it. And I said again, I believe so much thereof, as the holy Scripture doth agree unto: wherefore I desire you, that ye will add that thereunto.' Then he answered, that I should not teach him what he should write. With that he went forth into his great chamber and read the same bill before the audience, who inveigled and willed me to set to my hand; saying also, that I had favour showed me. Then said the bishop, I might thank others, and not myself, for the favour that I found at his hand; for he considered, he said, that I had good friends, and also that I came of a worshipful stock.

Then answered one Christopher, a servant unto Master Denny: 'Rather ought you, my lord, to have done it in such case for God's sake, than for man's.' Then my lord sat down, and took me the writing to set thereto my hand, and I wrote after this manner: Anne Askew, do believe all manner of things contained in the faith of the catholic church.'

And forasmuch as mention here is made of the writing of Bonner, which this godly woman said before she had not in memory, therefore I thought in this place to infer the same, both with the whole circumstance of Bonner, and with the title thereunto prefixed by the registrar, and also with her own subscription: to the intent the reader, seeing the same subscription neither to



agree with the time of the title above prefixed, nor with the subscription after the writing annexed, might the better understand thereby what credit is to be given hereafter to such bishops, and to such registrars. The tenor of Bonner's writing proceedeth thus:

"The true Copy of the Confession and Belief of Anne Askew, otherwise called Anne Kyme, made before the Bishop of London, the twentieth day of March, in the year of our Lord God, after the computation of the Church of England, 1545; and subscribed with her own hand in the presence of the said bishop and others whose names hereafter are recited, set forth, and published at this present: to the intent the world may see what credence is now to be given unto the same woman, who, in so short a time, hath so damnably altered and changed her opinion and belief; and therefore was rightly, in open court, arraigned and condemned."<sup>2</sup>

Be it known to all faithful people, that, as touching the blessed sacrament of the altar, I do firmly and undoubtedly believe, that after the words of consecration be spoken by the priest, according to the common usage of this church of England, there is present really the body and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, whether the minister which doth consecrate be a good man or a bad man; and that also, whensoever the said sacrament is received, whether the receiver be a good man or a bad man, he doth receive it really and corporally. And moreover, I do believe that, whether the said sacrament be then received of the minister, or else reserved to be put into the pix, or to be brought to any person that is impotent or sick, yet there is the very body and blood of our said Saviour; so that whether the minister, or the receiver, be good or bad, yea, whether the sacrament be received or reserved, always there is the blessed body of Christ really.

And this thing, with all other things touching the sacrament and other sacraments of the church, and all things else touching the christian belief; which are taught and declared in the king's majesty's book, lately set forth for the erudition of the christian people, I, Anne Askew, otherwise called Anne Kyme, do truly and perfectly believe; and so here presently confess and acknowledge. And here I do promise, that henceforth I shall never say or do any thing against the premises, or against any of them. In witness whereof, I, the said Anne, have subscribed my name unto these presents.

Written the 20th day of March, in the year of our Lord God 1545.<sup>3</sup>

By me, Anne Askew, otherwise called Anne Kyme.

Witnesses: Edmund, bishop of London; John, bishop of Bath; Owen Oglethorp, doctor of divinity; Richard Smith, doctor of divinity; John Rud-

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<sup>2</sup> Ex regist. Lond.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

de, bachelor of divinity; William Pie, bachelor of divinity; John Wimsley, archdeacon of London; John Cook; Robert John; Francis Spilman; Edward Hall; Alexander Bret; Edmund Buts, with divers others more being then present.

Here mayest thou note, gentle reader, in this confession, both in the bishop and his register, a double sleight of false conveyance. For although the confession purporteth the words of the bishop's writing, whereunto she did set her hand, yet by the title prefixed before, mayest thou see that both she was arraigned and condemned before this was registered; and also, that she is falsely reported to have put to her hand, which indeed, by this her own book, appeared not so to be, but after this manner and condition: "I, Anne Askew, do believe all manner of things contained in the faith of the catholic church, and not otherwise." It followeth more in the story:

Then, because I did add unto it 'the catholic church,' he flung into his chamber in a great fury. With that, my cousin Brittayne followed, desiring him, for God's sake, to be good lord unto me. He answered, that I was a woman, and that he was nothing deceived in me. Then my cousin Brittayne desired him to take me as a woman, and not to set my weak woman's wit to his lordship's great wisdom.

Then went in unto him Dr. Weston, and said, that the cause why I did write there the catholic church, was, that I understood not the church written afore. So, with much ado, they persuaded my lord to come out again, and to take my name, with the names of my sureties, which were my cousin Brittayne, and Master Spilman of Gray's Inn.

This being done, we thought that I should have been put to bail immediately, according to the order of the law: howbeit he would not suffer it, but committed me from thence to prison again until the next morrow, and then he willed me to appear in the Guildhall, and so I did. Notwithstanding they would not put me to bail there neither, but read the bishop's writing unto me, as before, and so commanded me again to prison. Then were my sureties appointed to come before them on the next morrow, in Paul's church, which did so indeed. Notwithstanding, they would once again have broken off with them, because they would not be bound also for another woman, at their pleasure, whom they knew not, nor yet what matter was laid unto her charge! Notwithstanding at the last, after much ado and reasoning to and fro, they took a bond of them of recognisance for my forth-coming: and thus I was at the last delivered.

Written by me, Anne Askew.

The latter Apprehension and Examination of the worthy

## Martyr of God, Mistress Anne Askew, A.D. 1546.

I do perceive, dear friend in the Lord, that thou art not yet persuaded thoroughly in the truth concerning the Lord's supper, because Christ said unto his apostles, 'Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you.'

In giving forth the bread as an outward sign or token to be received with the mouth, he minded them in perfect belief to receive that body of his which should die for the people, and to think the death thereof to be the only health and salvation of their souls. The bread and the wine were left us for a sacramental communion, or a mutual participation of the inestimable benefits of his most precious death and blood-shedding, and that we should, in the end thereof, be thankful together for that most necessary grace of our redemption. For, in the closing up thereof he said thus, 'This do ye in remembrance of me: yea, so oft as ye shall eat it or drink it.'<sup>4</sup> Else should we have been forgetful of that we ought to have in daily remembrance, and also have been altogether unthankful for it. Therefore it is meet that in our prayers we call unto God to graft in our foreheads the true meaning of the Holy Ghost concerning this communion. For St. Paul saith, 'The letter slayeth; the Spirit is it only that giveth life.'<sup>5</sup> Mark well the sixth chapter of John, where all is applied unto faith: note also the fourth chapter of St. Paul's second Epistle to the Corinthians, and in the end thereof ye shall find, that 'the things which are seen are temporal, but they that are not seen are everlasting.' Yea, look in Hebrews iii., and ye shall find that Christ as a son (and no servant) ruleth over his house, 'whose house are we,' and not the dead temple, 'if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of that hope to the end.'<sup>6</sup> Wherefore,' as said the Holy Ghost, 'To-day if ye shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts,'<sup>7</sup> &c.

### The sum of my Examination before the King's Council at Greenwich.

Your request as concerning my prison-fellows I am not able to satisfy, because I heard not their examinations. But the effect of mine was this: I, being before the council, was asked of Master Kyme.<sup>8</sup> I answered, that my lord chancellor knew already my mind in that matter. They with that answer

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<sup>4</sup> Luke xxii. 19. 1 Cor. xi. 25.

<sup>5</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Heb. iii. 14.

<sup>7</sup> Psalm xcv. 7, 8.

<sup>8</sup> Concerning that which they here demanded, as touching Master Kyme, read in the century of John Bale writing upon this place. [See the *Lame Examinatyon of Anne Askew*, with the *Elucydacyon of Johan Bale*, (16mo. Marpurg, 1547), p 15.—ED.]

were not contented, but said it was the king's pleasure that should open the matter unto them. I answered them plainly, I would not so do; but if it were the king's pleasure to hear me, I would show him the truth. Then they said, it was not meet for the king to be troubled with me. I answered, that Solomon was reckoned the wisest king that ever lived, yet misliked he not to hear two poor common women, much more his grace a simple woman and his faithful subject. So, in conclusion, I made them none other answer in that matter. Then my lord chancellor<sup>9</sup> asked of me my opinion in the sacrament. My answer was this, 'I believe that so oft as I, in a christian congregation, do receive the bread in remembrance of Christ's death, and with thanksgiving, according to his holy institution, I receive therewith the fruits, also, of his most glorious passion. The bishop of Winchester bade me make a direct answer: I said, I would not sing a new song of the Lord in a strange land. Then the bishop said, I spake in parables. I answered, it was best for him, 'for if I show the open truth,' quoth I, 'ye will not accept it.' Then he said I was a parrot. I told him again, I was ready to suffer all things at his hands, not only his rebukes, but all that should follow besides, yea, and all that gladly.

Then had I divers rebukes of the council, because I would not express my mind in all things as they would have me. But they were not in the meantime unanswered for all that, which now to rehearse were too much, for I was with them there about five hours. Then the clerk of the council conveyed me from thence to my lady Garnish.

The next day I was brought again before the council. Then would they needs know of me what I said to the sacrament. I answered, that I already had said what I could say. Then, after divers words, they bade me go by. Then came my lord Lisle, my lord of Essex, and the bishop of Winchester, requiring me earnestly that I should confess the sacrament to be flesh, blood, and bone. Then, said I, to my lord Parre and my lord Lisle, that it was a great shame for them to counsel contrary to their knowledge. Whereunto, in few words, they did say, that they would gladly all things were well.

Then the bishop said he would speak with me familiarly. I said, 'So did Judas, when he unfriendly betrayed Christ.' Then desired the bishop to speak with me alone. But that I refused. He asked me, why. I said, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every matter should stand, after Christ's and Paul's doctrine.<sup>10</sup>

Then my lord chancellor began to examine me again of the sacrament. Then I asked him how long he would halt on both sides. Then would he needs know where I found that. I said, in the Scripture.<sup>11</sup> Then he went his

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<sup>9</sup> This lord chancellor was Wrisley or Wriothesley.

<sup>10</sup> Matt. xviii. 16. Cor. xiii. i.

<sup>11</sup> 1 Kings xviii. 21.

way. 'Then the bishop said I should be burned. I answered, that I had searched all the Scriptures, yet could I never find that either Christ, or his apostles, put any creature to death. 'Well, well,' said I, 'God will laugh your threatenings to scorn.'<sup>12</sup> Then was I commanded to stand aside.<sup>13</sup> Then came to me Dr. Cox, and Dr. Robinson. In conclusion, we could not agree.

Then they made me a bill of the sacrament, willing me to set my hand thereunto; but I would not. Then, on the Sunday, I was sore sick, thinking no less than to die: therefore I desired to speak with Master Latimer, but it would not be. Then was I sent to Newgate in my extremity of sickness; for in all my life afore I was never in such pain. Thus the Lord strengthen us in the truth. Pray, pray, pray!

### The Confession of me Anne Askew, for the time I was in Newgate, concerning my belief.

I find in the Scripture, that Christ took the bread and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take, eat, this is my body which shall be broken for you;' meaning in substance, his own very body, the bread being thereof an only sign or sacrament. For, after like manner of speaking, he said he would break down the temple, and in three days build it up again, signifying his own body by the temple, as St. John declareth it,<sup>14</sup> and not the stony temple itself. So that the bread is but a remembrance of his death, or a sacrament of thanksgiving for it, whereby we are knit unto him by a communion of christian love; although there be many that cannot perceive the true meaning thereof: for the veil that Moses put over his face before the children of Israel, that they should not see the clearness thereof,<sup>15</sup> I perceive the same veil remaineth to this day. But when God shall take it away, then shall these blind men see. For it is plainly expressed in the history of Bel in the Bible, that, God dwelleth in nothing material. 'O king,' saith Daniel, 'be not de-

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<sup>12</sup> Psalm ii. 7.

<sup>13</sup> The following passage is omitted by Foxe, but is given by John Bale:—"Then came Master Paget to me with many glorious words, and desired me to speak my mind unto him: I might, he said, deny it again if need were. I said that I would not deny the truth. He asked me, how I could avoid the very words of Christ, 'Take, eat, this is my body which shall be broken for you?' answered that Christ's meaning was there as in these other places of the Scripture. 'I am the door;' 'Behold the Lamb of God;' 'The rock-stone was Christ;' as well as others. Ye may not here, said I, take Christ for the material thing that he is signified by; for these ye will make him a very door, a vine, a lamb, a stone; clean contrary to the Holy Ghost's meaning. All these do signify Christ, like as the bread doth signify his body in that place. And though he did say there, 'Take, eat this in remembrance of me; yet did he not bid them hang up that bread in a box and make it a god, or bow to it.'" The song which Anne Askew sang at her death, is given by Bale, and will be found in the appendix.—ED.

<sup>14</sup> John ii. 21.

<sup>15</sup> Exod. xxxiv. 35; 2 Cor. iii. 13.

ceived;<sup>16</sup> for God will be in nothing that is made with hands of men. ‘Oh! what stiff-necked people are these, that will always resist the Holy Ghost. But, as their fathers have done, so do they, because they have stony hearts.’<sup>17</sup>

Written by me, Anne Askew, that neither wish death, nor yet fear his might; and as merry as one that is bound towards heaven.

‘Truth is laid in prison.’<sup>18</sup> ‘The law is turned to wormwood.’<sup>19</sup> And there can no right judgment go forth.’<sup>20</sup>

‘Oh! forgive us all our sins, and receive us graciously.’ As for the works of our hands, we will no more call upon them; for it is thou, Lord, that art our God. Thou showest ever mercy unto the fatherless.’

‘Oh! if they would do this,’ saith the Lord, ‘I should heal their sores, yea with all my heart would I love them.’

‘O Ephraim, what have I to do with idols any more?’ ‘Whoso is wise, shall understand this; and he that is rightly instructed will regard it, for the ways of the Lord are righteous. Such as are godly, will walk in them; and as for the wicked, they will stumble at them.’<sup>21</sup>

‘Solomon,’ saith St. Stephen, builded a house for the God of Jacob. Howbeit, the Highest of all dwelleth not in temples made with hands, as saith the prophet, Heaven is my seat, and earth is my footstool. What house will ye build for me, saith the Lord? or what place is it that I shall rest in? Hath not my hand made all things?’<sup>22</sup>

‘Woman, believe me,’ saith Christ to the Samaritan, ‘the time is at hand, that ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye wot not what; but we know what we worship: for salvation cometh of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and is now, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and verity.’<sup>23</sup>

‘Labour not,’ saith Christ, for the meat that perisheth, but for that endureth into life everlasting, which the Son of man shall give you: for him hath God the Father sealed.’<sup>24</sup>

### The sum of the Condemnation of me Anne Askew at the Guildhall.

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<sup>16</sup> Bel and the Dragon, 7.

<sup>17</sup> Acts vii. 51.

<sup>18</sup> Luke xxi. 7.

<sup>19</sup> Amos v. 7.

<sup>20</sup> Isa. lix. 14.

<sup>21</sup> Hosea xiv. 9.

<sup>22</sup> Isa. lxvi. 1; Acts vii. 48.

<sup>23</sup> John iv. 21.

<sup>24</sup> John vi. 27.

They said to me there, that I was a heretic, and condemned by the law, if I would stand in my opinion. I answered, that I was no heretic, neither yet deserved I any death by the law of God. But, as concerning the faith which I uttered and wrote to the council, I would not, I said, deny it, because I knew it true. Then would they needs know, if I would deny the sacrament to be Christ's body and blood. I said, 'Yea: for the same Son of God that was born of the Virgin Mary, is now glorious in heaven, and will come again from thence at the latter day like as he went up.'<sup>25</sup> And as for that ye call your God, it is a piece of bread. For a more proof thereof (mark it when you list,) let it but lie in the box three months, and it will be mouldy, and so turn to nothing that is good. Whereupon I am persuaded that it cannot be God.'

After that, they willed me to have a priest; and then I smiled. Then they asked me, if it were not good; I said, I would confess my faults unto God, for I was sure that he would hear me with favour. And so we were condemned by a quest.<sup>26</sup>

My belief which I wrote to the council was this: That the sacramental bread was left us to be received with thanksgiving, in remembrance of Christ's death, the only remedy of our soul's recovery; and that thereby we also receive the whole benefits and fruits of his most glorious passion.

Then would they needs know, whether the bread in the box were God or no: I said, 'God is a Spirit, and will be worshipped in spirit and truth.'<sup>27</sup> Then they demanded, 'Will you plainly deny Christ to be in the sacrament?' I answered, that I believe faithfully the eternal Son of God not to dwell there; in witness whereof I recited again the history of Bel,<sup>28</sup> Dan. xix., Acts vii. and xvii., and Matt. xxiv., concluding thus: I neither wish death, nor yet fear his might; God have the praise thereof with thanks.'

### My Letter sent to the Lord Chancellor.

The Lord God, by whom all creatures have their being, bless you with the light of his knowledge. Amen.

My duty to your lordship remembered, &c.: It might please you to accept this my bold suit, as the suit of one who, upon due consideration, is moved to the same, and hopeth to obtain. My request to your lordship, is only that it may please the same to be a mean for me to the king's majesty, that his grace may be certified of these few lines which I have written concerning my belief, which when it shall be truly conferred with the hard judgment

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<sup>25</sup> Acts i. 11.

<sup>26</sup> Without a jury.—ED

<sup>27</sup> John iv. 24.

<sup>28</sup> Bel and the Dragon, 7.

given me for the same, I think his grace shall well perceive me to be weighed in an uneven pair of balances. But I remit my matter and cause to Almighty God, who rightly judgeth all secrets. And thus I commend your lordship to the governance of him, and fellowship of all saints, Amen.

By your handmaid, Anne Askew.

### My Faith briefly written to the King's Grace.

Anne Askew, of good memory, although God hath given me the bread of adversity, and the water of trouble, yet not so much as my sins have deserved, desire this to be known into your grace, that, forasmuch as I am by the law condemned for an evil doer, here I take heaven and earth to record, that I shall die in my innocency: and, according to that I have said first, and will say last, I utterly abhor and detest all heresies. And as concerning the supper of the Lord, I believe so much as Christ hath said therein, which he confirmed with his most blessed blood. I believe also so much as he willed me to follow and believe, and so much as the catholic church of him doth teach: for I will not forsake the commandment of his holy lips. But look, what God hath charged me with his mouth, that have I shut up in my heart. And thus briefly I end, for lack of learning. Anne Askew.

### THE CRUEL HANDLING AND RACKING OF ANNE ASKEW AFTER HER CONDEMNATION.

#### The Effect of my Examination and Handling since my Departure from Newgate.

On Tuesday I was sent from Newgate to the sign of the Crown, where Master Rich, and the bishop of London, with all their power and flattering words went about to persuade me from God: but I did not esteem their glossing [flattering] pretences.

Then came there to me Nicholas Shaxton, and counselled me to recant as he had done. I said to him, that it had been good for him never to have been born; with many other like words.

Then Master Rich sent me to the Tower, where I remained till three o'clock.

Then came Rich and one of the council,<sup>29</sup> charging me upon my obedience, to show unto them, if I knew any man or woman of my sect. My answer was, that I knew none. Then they asked me of my lady of Suffolk, my

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<sup>29</sup> This counsellor was sir John Baker.



lady of Sussex, my lady of Hertford, my lady Denny, and my lady Fitzwilliam. To whom I answered, if I should pronounce any thing against them, that I were not able to prove it. Then said they unto me, that the king was informed that I could name, if I would, a great number of my sect. I answered, that the king was as well deceived in that behalf, as dissembled with in other matters.

Then commanded they me to show how I was maintained in the compters, and who willed me to stick to my opinion. I said, that there was no creature that therein did strengthen me: and as for the help that I had in the compters, it was by means of my maid. For as she went abroad in the streets, she made moan to the prentices, and they, by her, did send me money; but who they were I never knew.

Then they said that there were divers gentlewomen that gave me money: but I knew not their names. Then they said that there were divers ladies that had sent me money. I answered, that there was a man in a blue coat who delivered me ten shillings, and said that my lady of Hertford sent it me; and another in a violet coat gave me eight shillings, and said my lady-Denny sent it me: whether it were true or no, I cannot tell; for I am not sure who sent it me, but as the maid did say. Then they said, there were of the council that did maintain me: and I said, No.

Then they did put me on the rack, because I confessed no ladies or gentlewomen to be of my opinion, and thereon they kept me a long time; and because I lay still, and did not cry, my lord chancellor and Master Rich took pains to rack me with their own hands, till I was nigh dead.

Then the lieutenant caused me to be loosed from the rack. Incontinently I swooned, and then they recovered me again. After that I sat two long hours reasoning with my lord chancellor upon the bare floor; where he, with many flattering words, persuaded me to leave my opinion. But my Lord God (I thank his everlasting goodness), gave me grace to persevere, and will do, I hope, to the very end.

Then was I brought to a house, and laid in a bed, with as weary and painful bones as ever had patient Job; I thank my Lord God there-for. Then my lord chancellor sent me word, if I would leave my opinion, I should want nothing: if I would not, I should forthwith to Newgate, and so be burned. I sent him again word, that I would rather die, than break my faith.

Thus the Lord open the eyes of their blind hearts, that the truth may take place. Farewell, dear friend, and pray, pray, pray!

Touching the order of her racking in the Tower thus it was; first she was let down into a dungeon, where sir Anthony Knevet, the lieutenant, commanded his jailor to pinch her with the rack. Which being done as much as he thought sufficient, he went about to take her down, supposing that he had

done enough. But Wriothesley, the chancellor, not contented that she was loosed so soon, confessing nothing, commanded the lieutenant to strain her on the rack again: which because he denied to do, tendering the weakness of the woman, he was threatened therefore grievously of the said Wriothesley, saying, that he would signify his disobedience unto the king. And so consequently upon the same, he and Master Rich, throwing off their gowns, would needs play the tormentors themselves; first asking her, if she were with child. To whom she answering again, said, "Ye shall not need to spare for that, but do your wills upon me." And so, quietly and patiently praying unto the Lord, she abode their tyranny, till her bones and joints were almost plucked asunder, in such sort as she was carried away in a chair. When the racking was past, Wriothesley and his fellow took their horse towards the court.

In the mean time, while they were making their way by land, the good lieutenant, eftsoons taking boat, sped him to the court in all haste to speak with the king before the others, and so did; who there making his humble suit to the king, desired his pardon, and showed him the whole matter as it stood, and of the racking of Mistress Askew, and how he was threatened by the lord chancellor, because, at his commandment, not knowing his highness's pleasure, he refused to rack her; which he, for compassion, could not find in his heart to do, and therefore humbly craved his highness's pardon. Which when the king had understood, he seemed not very well to like of their so extreme handling of the woman, and also granted to the lieutenant his pardon, willing him to return and see to his charge.

Great expectation was in the mean season among the warders and other officers of the Tower, waiting for his return; whom when they saw come so cheerfully, declaring unto them how he had sped with the king, they were not a little joyous, and gave thanks to God there-for.

### Anne Askew's Answer unto John Laeel's Letter.

O friend, most dearly beloved in God! I marvel not a little what should move you to judge in me so slender a faith as to fear death, which is the end of all misery. In the Lord I desire you not to believe of me such wickedness: for I doubt it not, but God will perform his work in me, like as he hath begun. I understand the council is not a little displeased, that it should be reported abroad that I was racked in the Tower. They say now, that what they did there was but to fear me; whereby I perceive they are ashamed of their uncomely doings, and fear much lest the king's majesty should have information thereof; wherefore they would no man to noise it. Well! their cruelty God forgive them.

Your heart in Christ Jesu. Farewell and pray.

## The Purgation or Answer of Anne Askew, against the false Surmises of her Recantation.

I have read the process which is reported of them that know not the truth, to be my recantation. But, as the Lord liveth, I never meant a thing less than to recant. Notwithstanding this I confess, that in my first troubles I was examined of the bishop of London about the sacrament. Yet had they no grant of my mouth but this: that I believed therein as the word of God did bind me to believe. More had they never of me. Then he made a copy, which is now in print, and required me to set thereunto my hand; but I refused it. Then my two sureties did will me in no wise to stick thereat, for it was no great matter, they said.

Then with much ado, at the last I wrote thus: 'I, Anne Askew, do believe this, if God's word do agree to the same, and the true catholic church.' Then the bishop, being in great displeasure with me because I made doubts in my writing, commanded me to prison, where I was awhile; but afterwards, by means of friends, I came out again. Here is the truth of that matter. And as concerning the thing that ye covet most to know, resort to John vi., and be ruled always thereby. Thus fare ye well quoth Anne Askew.

## The Confession of the Faith which Anne Askew made in Newgate, before she suffered.

I, Anne Askew, of good memory, although my merciful Father hath given me the bread of adversity, and the water of trouble, yet not so much as my sins have deserved, do confess myself here a sinner before the throne of his heavenly Majesty, desiring his forgiveness and mercy. And forasmuch as I am by the law unrighteously condemned for an evil doer concerning opinions, I take the same most merciful God of mine, who hath made both heaven and earth, to record, that I hold no opinions contrary to his most holy word. And I trust in my merciful Lord, who is the giver of all grace, that he will graciously assist me against all evil opinions which are contrary to his blessed verity. For I take him to witness, that I have done, and will, unto my life's end, utterly abhor them to the uttermost of my power.

But this is the heresy which they report me to hold: that after the priest hath spoken the words of consecration, there remaineth bread still. They both say, and also teach it for a necessary article of faith, that after those words be once spoken, there remaineth no bread, but even the self-same body that hung upon the cross on Good Friday, both flesh, blood, and bone. To this belief of theirs say I, nay. For then were our common creed false,

which saith, that he sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, and from thence shall come to judge the quick and the dead. Lo, this is the heresy that I hold, and for it must suffer the death. But as touching the holy and blessed supper of the Lord, I believe it to be a most necessary remembrance of his glorious sufferings and death. Moreover, I believe as much therein as my eternal and only Redeemer Jesus Christ would, I should believe.

Finally, I believe all those Scriptures to be true, which he hath confirmed with his most precious blood. Yea, and as St. Paul saith, those Scriptures are sufficient for our learning and salvation, that Christ hath left here with us; so that I believe we need no unwritten verities to rule his church with. Therefore look, what he hath said unto me with his own mouth in his holy gospel, that have I, with God's grace, closed up in my heart, and my full trust is, as David saith, that it shall be a lantern to my footsteps.<sup>30</sup>

There be some do say, that I deny the eucharist or sacrament of thanksgiving; but those people do untruly report of me. For I both say and believe it, that if it were ordered like as Christ instituted it and left it, a most singular comfort it were unto us all. But as concerning your mass, as it is now used in our days, I do say and believe it to be the most abominable idol that is in the world: for my God will not be eaten with teeth, neither yet dieth he again. And upon these words that I have now spoken, will I suffer death.

### A Prayer of Anne Askew.

O Lord! I have more enemies now, than there be hairs on my head: yet Lord, let them never overcome me with vain words, but fight thou, Lord, in my stead; for on thee cast I my care. With all the spite they can imagine, they fall upon me, who am thy poor creature. Yet, sweet Lord, let me not set by them that are against me; for in thee is my whole delight. And, Lord, I heartily desire of thee, that thou wilt of thy most merciful goodness forgive them that violence which they do, and have done, unto me. Open also thou their blind hearts, that they may hereafter do that thing in thy sight, which is only acceptable before thee, and to set forth thy verity aright, without all vain fantasies of sinful men. So be it, O Lord, so be it!

By me, Anne Askew.

Hitherto we have entreated of this good woman: now it remaineth that we touch somewhat as concerning her end and martyrdom. After that she (being born of such stock and kindred that she might have lived in great wealth and prosperity, if she would rather have followed the world than Christ), now had been so tormented, that she could neither live long in so great distress,

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<sup>30</sup> Psalm cxix. 105.

neither yet by her adversaries be suffered to die in secret, the day of her execution being appointed, she was brought into Smithfield in a chair, because she could not go on her feet, by means of her great torments. When she was brought unto the stake, she was tied by the middle with a chain, that held up her body. When all things were this prepared to the fire, Dr. Shaxton, who was then appointed to preach, began his sermon. Anne Askew, hearing and answering again unto him, where he said well, confirmed the same; where he said amiss, "There," said she, "he missed and speaketh without the book."

The sermon being finished, the martyrs, standing there tied at three several stakes ready to their martyrdom, began their prayers. The multitude and concourse of the people was exceeding; the place where they stood being railed about to keep out the press. Upon the bench under St. Bartholomew's church sat Wriothesley, chancellor of England; the old duke of Norfolk, the old earl of Bedford, the lord mayor, with divers others. Before the fire should be set unto them, one of the bench, hearing that they had gunpowder about them, and being alarmed lest the faggots, by strength of the gunpowder, would come flying about their ears, began to be afraid: but the earl of Bedford, declaring unto him how the gunpowder was not laid under the faggots, but only about their bodies, to rid them out of their pain; which having vent, there was no danger to them of the faggots, so diminished that fear.

Then Wriothesley, lord chancellor, sent to Anne Askew letters, offering to her the king's pardon if she would recant; who, refusing once to look upon them, made this answer again, that she came not thither to deny her Lord and Master. Then were the letters likewise offered unto the others, who, in like manner, following the constancy of the woman, denied not only to receive them, but also to look upon them. Whereupon the lord mayor, commanding fire to be put unto them, cried with a loud voice, "Fiat justitia."

And thus the good Anne Askew, with these blessed martyrs, being troubled so many manner of ways, and having passed through so many torments, having now ended the long course of her agonies, being compassed in with flames of fire, as a blessed sacrifice unto God, she slept in the Lord A. D. 1546, leaving behind her a singular example of christian constancy for all men to follow.